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Orientalist Images of Morocco in Select Works of Jean and Jérôme Tharaud, Montherlant and Le Clézio

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Doctorate Degree**

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DECLARATION

I certify that this is my own work and that all references to other sources have been duly
acknowledged.

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تهدف هذه الأطروحة كيفية تمثيل المغرب في أعمال أربعة كُتّاب فرنسيين، وهم الأخوان

وهنري دو -ماري غوستاف لو كليز يو. و تسعى الدراسة، على وجه

التحديد، صياغة رؤية جديدة حول صورة المغرب في الكتابات الرحلية الفرنسية تختلف بعض

الشيء عما قدمته الدراسات التي تبنت النهج السعدي. إذ بالفعل منذ ظهور

دوارد سعيد 1978 هيمن هذا التصور بشكل شبه تام على المقاربات الأكاديمية

التمثيلات الأدبي الفرنسي للمغرب بشكل عام من حيث ارتباطه بالمؤسسة الإمبريالية الفرنسية.

تركز هذه الأ صور المغرب في أعمال الكتاب الأربعة المختارين لتقديم تصور جديد

. يمكن اعتباره . تطبيق

دوارد سعيد. ليها من خلال التحليل تبين بو أنه في

الوقت الذي تنسم فيه آ الأخوين بنفس العنصرية والإمبريالية التي تحدث عنها

إدوار سعيد، مونثر لان ولو كليزيو تقوض الأفكار النمطية و الكليشيهات التقليدية مما يوفر

لنا نموذجين لتصور غربي للشرق يتعارض مع ما توصل إليه سعيد في دراسته للاست .

تؤكد هذه الأطروحة أن التمثيل الأدبي الفرنسي للشرق (المغرب) ليس عنصرياً وإمبريالياً

كما يزعم سعيد و أتباعه، ولا بريئاً و موضوعياً بالكامل كما يدعي المستشرقون. فالاست

الفرنسي (كما يتم تصويره في هذا البحث) يتضمن مزيجاً من وجهات النظر والمواقف المخ

هنا جاء استخدام صيغة الجمع " " " " .

تي : سعيد الخطاب، العلاقة بين السلطة والمعرفة، الهيمنة الثقافية،

ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to examine how Morocco is represented in the works of four French writers: The Tharaud brothers (Jean and Jérôme), Henry de Montherlant and Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio. More specifically, it attempts to develop a more nuanced vision of how Morocco is viewed in French travel writing than what studies following the Saidian approach suggest. Indeed, since Edward Said's *Orientalism* came into being in 1978, French literary representations of Morocco have generally been examined in terms of their engagement with the French imperial establishment. This thesis focuses on the images of Morocco in the works of the four selected writers to offer a new conceptualization of French Orientalism, one that can be considered as both an application and a criticism of Said's *Orientalism*. The outcome of the analysis shows clearly that while the Tharauds' views and attitudes are marked by the same racism and imperialism Said talks about, Montherlant's and Le Clézio's views seem to subvert traditional clichés and stereotypes, providing two paradigms of a Western portrayal of the Orient that go against Said's study of Orientalism. It is therefore argued that the French literary construction of the Orient (Morocco) is neither completely racist and imperialist as Said and his followers pretend, nor completely objective and innocent as the Orientalists would have us believe. French Orientalism, as conceptualized in this research, contains a mixture of different views and attitudes. Hence the use of the plural form 'images' instead of the singular 'image' in the title.

Keywords: Orientalism, Edward Said, discourse, power-knowledge nexus, cultural hegemony, Morocco, French colonialism.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Le Maroc a ce charme exceptionnel d'être un pays d'Islam tempéré par l'Océan, un pays arabe nuancé par la population berbère, un pays de soleil où les neiges ne sont pas rares, un pays à part dans le monde musulman. (Potier, 2006, p. 4)

[Morocco has this particular charm of being an Islamic country tempered by the Ocean, an Arab country nuanced by the Berber population, a country of sunshine where snowfalls are not rare, a special country in the Muslim world.(My translation)¹]

Despite the valuable assets which Potier (2006) ascribes to Morocco in the above quotation and despite its strategically important location as the closest African country to Europe, the Sherifian kingdom remained for a long period of time unexplored and its people unknown to most European countries. As a consequence of this, what was known about it was most often tainted by imagination and fantasy.

The mystery of the North African country had not been revealed until the French conquest of Algeria in 1830. Following this serious historical event, a French delegation was sent to Morocco in 1832 to secure the Sultan's neutrality. Among the delegation was the famous painter Eugène Delacroix. The latter, as Lyazidi (2013) makes the point, did not content himself with producing a large body of drawings and sketches about the country, but he also made notes of all that he saw in that part of the Orient. (p. 23) Little by little, Morocco became more and more accessible to the French. Hence, the country turned into an interesting object of study in French literary works.

¹ All translations in this thesis are mine, unless otherwise indicated.

However, it was only thanks to Pierre Loti that Morocco really found its way to French literature. The French writer travelled to the kingdom and recorded all his observations and impressions of the country in a book published in 1890 under the title *Au Maroc*. Loti's text was received with so much enthusiasm in France because it gave an image of Morocco as a very strange, foreign, different and exotic country:

In France, Loti's report was snapped up by the hungry home audience, which most certainly would never have the opportunity to go to that mysterious and closed land. Much like many middle-class American readers of *National Geographic* today, those 19th century French bourgeois devotees were quite content to accompany vicariously and comfortably their ambassador and favorite travel-writer to the inner sanctum of an Islamic kingdom, which they also expected one day would become French. (Hartman, 1994, p. 61)

Given the impressive success which Loti's book *Au Maroc* enjoyed in France, it comes as no surprise that a huge number of French travellers chose to head towards the still unknown kingdom to unravel its mysteries. While the list of these travellers is too long to present here, it is enough to cite, from among them, François Bonjean (1884-1963), André Chevrillon (1864- 1957), Claude Farrère (1876-1957), Maurice Le Glay (1868-1936), Henry De Montherlant (1895-1972), Jean Orieux (1907-1990), Robert Brasillach (1909-1945) and Paul Morand (1888- 1976). All these travellers made the trip to Morocco to disclose it, to "render [it] completely open, to make it totally accessible to European scrutiny." (Said, 1979, p. 83) The result was the production of large amounts of information about the country. Needless to say this information, which reflects the travellers' views and visions of Morocco, played a central and determinative role in

shaping how the world viewed the Sherifian kingdom. For this reason, a serious effort has to be made from the part of Moroccan scholars and researchers to check whether this information is innocent and objective in describing Morocco and its inhabitants, or it is, on the contrary, inaccurate and politically motivated. This research will hopefully be part of such effort.

It is to be hoped that this study would contribute to the enrichment of the ongoing research on the West's "construction" of the Orient. Indeed, an increasing number of research studies have been conducted over the years to explore the ways in which Morocco has been represented in French literature, yet up to now Moroccan scholars and researchers, much like Said in *Orientalism*, have been highly selective in their choice of material, focusing mainly on those texts which manifestly convey racist and imperialist views of Morocco. On the contrary, those texts which speak sympathetically of the country and its inhabitants have been widely ignored. As a consequence, the French literary representation of Morocco has often been reduced to only one thread of thought.

For example, in his study entitled "The Image of Morocco in the Writings of the French Missions (1889/1832)," Bouzouita (1992) examines the works of three French travellers to Morocco: Eugène Delacroix, Charles de Foucauld and Pierre Loti. Through his analysis of their works, Bouzouita demonstrates their full commitment to the imperial affairs of their country. He shows how these travellers used their artistic and literary creations to promote and disseminate false and biased images about Morocco to justify its conquest. Therefore, due to the serious role which these figures played in the exercise of French power in the North African country, the Moroccan researcher doesn't hesitate to

characterize them as auxiliary forces for the French expansionist campaign against Morocco. (p.286)

In her study entitled “‘The Harem Revealed’ and the Islamic-French Family: Aline de Lens and a French Woman’s Orient in Lyautey’s Morocco,” Amster (2009) demonstrates how de Lens’ portrayal of Morocco uses the same stereotypes and prejudices by which the Orient is traditionally viewed: “‘Half-Moorish homes of an idiotic style,’ yellowing laundry limp on clotheslines, roving dogs, dirty white children, ‘large stupid roads that lead nowhere,’ piles of garbage, soaking rains, typhus, flies, malaria, dysentery” (as cited in Amster, 2009, p. 291). For this reason, Amster affirms that Lens’ literary and artistic works were not innocent as they were used to serve the larger propaganda goals of French colonialism. (p. 310)

In his study entitled “French Image (s) of Morocco before the Protectorate,” Kninah (2015) demonstrates how the writings from the 17th through the early 20th century provided the justifications for the future protectorate. Kninah notes that the first French writings described Morocco under the reign of Mouly Ismail through the use of a set of depreciative and disparaging images. (p.16) According to him, the same contemptuous images were reiterated by subsequent writers such as Louis Chénier, Eugène Delacroix, Gabriel Charmes, Pierre Loti and André Chevrillon. All these writers conveyed the image of a dark and contrasted Morocco as well as a radically hostile and impenetrable population. (Kninah, 2015, p.470) The purpose of these vilifying images was to maintain Morocco and its people in an inferior position to justify their conquest. This imperial end became even more obvious in the works of Charles de Foucauld, Auguste Moulières, Eugène Aubin, Gabriel Veyre and Frédéric Weisgerber. These authors offered a

description of Morocco as a country “in suspension” of an announced colonial occupation. (Kninah, 2015, p. 17)

In his study entitled “The Legitimacy of Conquest and Annexation: Morocco in French Colonial Writings”, Meziane (2016) demonstrates how the French knowledge of Morocco and its people paved the path for the occupation of Morocco. After studying the works of Charles de Foucauld, Pierre Loti, André Chevrillon, Gabriel Charmes, Eugène Aubin, René de Segonzac ...etc, Meziane argues that these travel writers were unable to go beyond the images inherited from the Crusades. Among the images which these authors associated with Morocco in their works, Meziane mentions the absence of the modern state apparatuses, the inter-tribal conflict, the backwardness of the natives and the local authoritarian power. (p. 127) For him, these images were meant to maintain the country and its people in states of primitivity and backwardness to justify their conquest.

In his study entitled “Sociology of the Colonial Knowledge Production: Education in Morocco”, Faoubar provides an analysis of the most important French writings on education in Morocco published in the first half of the 20th century, focusing particularly on the works of Georges Hardy, Roger Le Tourneau, Louis Bruno, Jacques Berque and Lucien Paye. Faoubar affirms that what these authors did in their works was to disseminate those colonial concepts and ideologies that justify and legitimize the French colonial project in Morocco. (Faoubar, 2016, p. 86)

What all these researchers have in common is their focus on those texts with manifest imperialist attitudes. No wonder they reiterate Said’s thesis about the relationship between the West’s knowledge of the Orient and the exercise of imperial power. To my knowledge, among the large body of academic literature available on the

French textual construction of Morocco, there is almost no contribution with primary focus on the anticolonial stand which some French writers adopted against the expansionist policy of their country. Perhaps Lahjomri (1973) is the only Moroccan researcher who devotes in his book *L' image du Maroc dans la littérature française* a few passages to Montherlant's novel *La Rose de Sable*. However, although Lahjomri affirms that the novel is written entirely in favor of the other (p. 295), he does not examine the manifest stand which Montherlant adopts against the abusive behaviour of the French in the colonized Morocco as well as the man's refusal of the concept of colonialism in itself. Therefore, the contribution of the present study resides in its attempt to develop a more nuanced view of how the Orient is portrayed in French travel writing than that provided by the late Said in his masterpiece *Orientalism*.

My thesis proposes to carry out a detailed analysis of the ways in which Morocco and its people are conceptualized in French Orientalism. It is particularly concerned with the works of four French writers: The two brothers Jérôme (1874-1953) and Jean Tharaud (1877-1952), Henry De Montherlant (1895-1972) and Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio (1940-...). Indeed, these writers can be divided into two different categories: whereas the first category, represented by the Tharaud brothers, seeks to provide a kind of ideological accompaniment to the French expansionist policy in North Africa, the second category, represented by Montherlant and Le Clézio, takes a clear stand against the French presence in Morocco. The purpose of such choice is to avoid the essentializing view of Western scholarship as being necessarily racist and imperialist.

The idea not to homogenize Western discourse on the Orient came to me when I first read Marvine Howe's *Morocco*. Before my reading of Howe's text, I had a dim view

of the kind of portrayal I could find in a book produced by a Western writer on the Orient. In general, Western scholarship, I used to believe, is based on preconceived assumptions and stereotypes, thus, has nothing to do with the reality of the Orient. Besides, it is necessarily racist and imperialist. This negative view I had of Western scholarship was largely influenced by Said's *Orientalism*, which I studied when I was a BA student. Indeed, Said's controversial book managed to make me believe that "every European, in what he could say about the Orient, was consequently a racist, an imperialist, and almost totally ethnocentric." (Said, 1979, p. 204) Therefore, when I read Howe's book, I was really surprised by the way in which she portrays Morocco. Unlike what the author of *Orientalism* would have us believe, the American woman really breaks away with the common racial stereotypes. Therefore, due to my reading of Howe's book, I was led to question the commonly held assumption that all Western writers are necessarily racists, imperialists and incapable of producing true knowledge on the Orient.

The main reason why this research proposes to test the validity of such assumption in the French literary representations of Morocco is because the North African country was part of the French empire. The purpose is, therefore, to prove that although France had entertained a direct link of colonialism with Morocco, some French writers were not committed to the idea of empire and their works were totally in favor of the colonized. Indeed, the idea to challenge Said's thesis about the serious implication of Western scholarship on the Orient in the West's imperial project arises in large part from the existence of such anticolonial writers.

The preliminary idea of the research was to select only the works of those writers, such as Paul Odinet, François Bonjean, Henry de Montherlant, Jean-Marie Gustave Le

Clézio...etc, who manifestly adopt sympathetic views and attitudes towards Morocco and its people. But the idea was soon abandoned because a selection such as this itself would be problematic as it would give the impression that the French discursive construction of Morocco is always innocent and has nothing to do with the West's imperialist project. Therefore, to avoid such trap, the decision was made to study the works of two colonial writers (Jérôme and Jean Tharaud) and two anticolonial writers (Montherlant and Le Clézio). This is the only way for this research to reflect the diversity of voices within French travel writings on Morocco.

The focus of analysis in the present study would be on whether or not the four authors inscribe their textual representations of Morocco and Moroccans within the discourse of power which Said calls Orientalism. Within this frame of analysis, the paper attempts to answer the following questions: How are Morocco and its people represented in the texts under study? What images these texts convey of them? To what extent these images reflect the reality of the country and its people? Are these images objective and innocent or inaccurate and ideologically charged? To what extent they reflect the concern for power? In other words, do they really keep Morocco and its people in an inferior position to justify their invasion and conquest? All these questions are taken up in detail in the analysis.

A mixture of two approaches is used in this research: a descriptive approach and an analytical one. The descriptive approach is employed when exposing the ways in which the authors under study represent Morocco and Moroccans. The analytical approach, on the contrary, is adopted either to confirm or challenge Said's thesis. That is, in the case of the Tharauds' trilogy, where Morocco and its inhabitants are represented in

Orientalist terms as backward, inferior and in dire need of the French “civilizing” mission, the analytical approach is used to confirm Said’s arguments. Whereas in the case of Montherlant’s *La Rose de Sable* and Le Clézio’s *Désert*, where the authors launch a harsh attack on the French presence in Morocco, the analytical approach is used to challenge Said’s monolithic project.

This research falls into five chapters. Chapter One, “Orientalism and its Misconceptions in Said’s *Orientalism*,” aims to help foster a better understanding of Said’s seminal text. It explains how the author of *Orientalism* manages to subvert the traditional meaning of Orientalism as a purely academic discipline and turn it into a political doctrine that can create not only knowledge, but also the very reality which it appears to describe. (Said, 1979, p. 94) The chapter also proposes to explore Foucault’s theorization of discourse, his nexus of power/knowledge on the one hand, and Gramsci’s theory of cultural hegemony, on the other. These concepts are necessary for a better understanding of Said’s thesis as they form the theoretical foundation for his assault on the West’s construction of the Orient. In other words, it is Foucault’s notion of discourse that allows Said to view Orientalism as a way of thinking that defines how the Orient should be talked about and represented. It is also his concept of power/knowledge that enables Said to uncover the link between Orientalism as a form of knowledge and colonialism as a form of power. Besides, thanks to Gramsci’s understanding of cultural hegemony, Said manages to explain how the West, instead of using direct force and coercion to subdue the Orient and its people, employs those ideological and persuasive means (“the civilizing mission” and “the White Man’s Burden”) to establish their consent.

For all this, the chapter explores these concepts in detail to show how they are reinvested in Said's analysis.

Chapter Two, "the Saidists: Rana Kabbani, Mary Louise Pratt and David Spurr," proposes to analyse the works of these authors to demonstrate how they support the author of *Orientalism* in his violent assault on Western scholarship. Like Said, these authors explain the link between Orientalism as a form of knowledge and colonialism as a form of power. In *Imperial Fictions*, for example, Kabbani (1986) argues that the nineteenth and twentieth centuries travel writers' views of the Orient were all biased and hostile. For her, these vilifying views were often used to confirm and promote the exercise of imperial power. In the same line of argument, Pratt (1992) argues in her *Imperial Eyes* that Western travel writings contributed to Western imperialism by constructing a world for the West to colonize and dominate. In *The Rhetoric of Empire*, Spurr (1993) demonstrates the implication of Western scholarship in the West's imperial project. He uncovers what he calls the twelve rhetorical features which colonial discourse uses in its portrayal of the East to justify its domination and conquest.

Chapter Three, "Critical Responses to Edward Said's Assault on Orientalism," is meant to provide a general overview on the range of critical reactions which Said's *Orientalism* has prompted. More specifically, the chapter highlights the most common flaws and contradictions inherent in his analysis. Said, as the chapter demonstrates, has been harshly attacked not only for his tendency to ignore the richness and complexity of Western discourse on the Orient, but also for a number of inconsistencies contained in his research.

Chapter Four, “The Discourse of Empire: Applying Said’s Insights to Read the Tharauds’ Views of Morocco and Moroccans in Three Select Works,” sets a detailed analysis of the ways in which the brothers represent Morocco and its people. The purpose is to detect the traces of colonial discourse inherent in their texts. The analysis shows how the brothers’ portrayal of Morocco and Moroccans remain faithful to the discourse of power Said calls Orientalism. That is, they adhere to the same ideology of difference that looks on the Orient and its people as always inferior to the West. That’s why in addition to their construction of Morocco as a primitive and backward country and their portrayal of the natives as immoral and inferior, the brothers insist to associate the colonizing race with the values of progress and civilization. Such portrayal, it should be clear, can only reflect the extent to which the Tharauds are fully committed to the idea of empire as it gives the impression that the “backward” Moroccans are badly in need of the “philanthropic” intervention of the “civilized” West.

Chapter Five, “Writing Morocco Beyond the Ideology of Empire: Using Montherlant’s *La Rose de Sable* and Le Clézio’s *Désert* as Case Studies,” examines two examples of a Western portrayal of the Orient that goes against Said’s monolithic project. The chapter highlights the most important points in Montherlant’s *La Rose de Sable* and Le Clézio’s *Désert*, which obviously present a problem for any analysis that follows Said’s model. For example, unlike the colonialist texts, in which the crimes and atrocities that the colonizer commits in the colony go unnoticed, the chapter shows how the novels under study expose the French abusive behaviours against the natives. Therefore, far from providing an ideological support for their country, Montherlant and Le Clézio fiercely denounce its expansionist policy in Morocco. Besides, the common

contemptuous attitudes which are usually adopted against the Orient and Orientals are not found to characterize Morocco and its people in Montherlant's and Le Clézio's texts. The novelists' valorization of Morocco and its inhabitants, as well as their sympathy with their ordeal under French colonialism, are clear and explicit. For this reason, the chapter demonstrates that many of Said's arguments in *Orientalism* become problematic when applied to Montherlant's and Le Clézio's novels.

CHAPTER ONE:

ORIENTALISM AND ITS MISCONCEPTIONS IN EDWARD SAID'S

ORIENTALISM

1.1 Introduction

As probably goes without saying, a great amount of academic ink has been spilt on the discussion of Edward Said's masterpiece *Orientalism*², and yet the book, because of its importance, still needs to be thought about and investigated. In other words, although Said's *Orientalism* was published in 1978, the book is still recognized as one of the most important texts which launched a harsh attack on the discipline of Orientalism. The latter was previously a respectable academic discipline, standing for "the tradition of Occidental literary and scholarly interest in countries and peoples of the East." (Lowe, 1991, p. 3) This interpretation of Orientalism as being purely academic and scholarly is what Edward Said rejects. For him, besides being an academic discipline, Orientalism is a tool of oppression which Europeans and Americans rely on to keep Orientals³ under control.

Relatedly, Said's reflection on the West's construction of the Orient⁴ has provoked different responses and views⁵: some of them are critical and hostile, but the

² The word *Orientalism*, when written in italics, refers to Said's seminal text. But when the word is not italicized, it refers to the discourse of power which Said criticizes.

³ The term "Orientals" is used here to mean the people living in the Orient. In the past the Orient referred mainly to the Middle East and India. But later the term was extended to include African countries, China, Japan, etc. In the case of Said's *Orientalism*, the Orient refers mainly to Arabs and Islam, which, as he makes the point, "for almost a thousand years together stood for the Orient." (Said, 1979, p. 17)

⁴ It is to be noted that the word "Orient" and all its derivatives will be spelt with a capital letter in order to keep with the same format employed by Edward Said.

⁵ See the two subsequent chapters for further discussion of these views: The second chapter explores the writings of three of the most prominent names (Rana Kabbani, Mary Louise Pratt and David Spurr), known for supporting Edward Said in his analysis of Orientalism. On the other hand, the third chapter examines

majority of these views remain positive and favorable. In the Third World, for example, younger students are more and more excited by Said's work. For them, it is a "Gospel" that gives expression to what is in their hearts. On the contrary, other scholars refuse Said's arguments and attack his work as being unscholarly and politically-motivated.

Controversial as it is, Said's *Orientalism* remains a monumental work. Apart from its sweeping generalization, the book's arguments are difficult to ignore. Indeed, even those who disagree with Said acknowledge the importance of his book. To argue this idea, Moore-Gilbert (1997) insists that even Said's most hostile opponents, such as Mackenzie or Aijaz Ahmad, recognize his *Orientalism* as a seminal and influential work. (p. 34) For instance, even though he rejects some of Said's arguments, Mackenzie (1995) stresses the importance of *Orientalism*:

Few books have at the same time stimulated so much controversy or influenced so many studies. Not only has it become impossible to consider the relationship between West and East without grappling with *Orientalism*'s insights, but its method has also been applied to Europe's relationship with other parts of the globe.⁶ (p. 4)

Important as it is, Said's *Orientalism* still needs to be thought about and investigated.

This purpose is exactly what the present chapter seeks to achieve. In other words, the chapter aims to foster a better understanding of the most important arguments advanced

the writings of many of Said's opponents (Bernard Lewis, Sadik Jalal al-'Azm, Aijaz Ahmad, James Clifford, David Kopf, Robert Young, etc) to get an idea on the range of critical responses which Said's *Orientalism* has provoked.

⁶ Similarly, Winder (1981) emphasizes the importance of Said's seminal text, asserting that "*Orientalism* is a controversial and important book. It has become a jingoistic by-word in the Third World; younger students in and of the Middle East are excited by it; and it has probably destroyed a once respectable if rather a fusty academic word, Orientalism." (p. 615)

by Edward Said in support of his criticism of Orientalism. However, this goal, it can be assumed, can not be fully achieved without turning back to those authors Said draws on to build up his thesis.

In this respect, it can be argued that the famous French philosopher Michel Foucault is really a fundamental source of inspiration to Edward Said.⁷ For instance, his books, mainly *The Archeology of Knowledge* (1972) and *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison* (1979) can help a lot to grasp Said's thesis. In other words, since Said borrows from Foucault some of his ideas such as the concept of discourse and the nexus of power and knowledge, one can only feel the extent to which understanding Foucault can pave the path to understanding Said's *Orientalism*. In addition to Foucault, Said is deeply influenced by Antonio Gramsci. The latter's theorization of cultural hegemony appeals a lot to the author of *Orientalism*, who uses the concept to explain how Europeans and Americans manage to dominate the rest of the world without using coercion and direct force.

In brief, since Foucault's interpretation of discourse and his nexus of power and knowledge, as well as Antonio Gramsci's interpretation of cultural hegemony, are obviously re-invested in Said's study, one can only assume that *Orientalism* can not be fully understood unless these concepts are made clear in the first place. Therefore, in addition to exploring Said's main arguments, the chapter aims to examine those notions by which Said is manifestly inspired.

⁷ Indeed, the author of *Orientalism* himself acknowledges that he is greatly indebted to Michel Foucault. For further details on this particular point, see Said's book on page 23.

1. 2 Deconstructing Orientalism

1.2.1 The Meaning of Orientalism in Edward Said's *Orientalism*

Edward Said's seminal work, *Orientalism*, is concerned with the investigation of a long European tradition "of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience." (Said, 1979, p. 1) This tradition is, indeed, what Said calls Orientalism. The latter, Said (1979) maintains, can be held to designate three interrelated and interdependent things. First, Orientalism is an academic discipline "by which the Orient was (and is) approached systematically, as a topic of learning, discovery, and practice." (p. 73) Therefore, Said goes on, "anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient – and this applies whether the person is an anthropologist, sociologist, historian, or philologist – either in its specific or its general aspects, is an Orientalist, and what he or she does is Orientalism."⁸ (p. 2)

Second, Said (1979) provides an other definition of Orientalism, in which he moves away from a conception of Orientalism as having purely academic meaning to become "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'." (p. 2) Indeed, this epistemological and ontological distinction between the Orient and the Occident is what perpetuates such stereotypical images as developed/barbaric, advanced/primitive, superior/inferior, rational/aberrant, and so on, all of which fall into the larger binaries of 'Self' and 'Other'. (Walia, 2001, p. 40) According to Said (1979), this second

⁸ It must be made clear that academic Orientalism still goes on today because researches are still conducted, books are still written and congresses are still held with the Orient and Orientals as their major topic. Therefore, as Said (1979) makes the point, although it "does not survive as it once did, Orientalism lives on academically through its doctrines and theses about the Orient and the Oriental." (p. 3)

interpretation of Orientalism can cover any Orientalist making the distinction between the Orient and the Occident as their main focus, including novelists, poets, political theorists, economists, philosophers and imperial administrators who have made the basic distinction between the Orient and Occident the starting point for their writings on the “rest” of the world. (pp.2-3) In fact, this type of Orientalism is deeply rooted in the West’s imagination. It is perhaps in this light that the author of *Orientalism* contends that the absolute demarcation between East and West, which Balfour and Cromer accept with such complacency, had been years, even centuries in the making. (p. 39)

Said (1979) explores a third meaning of Orientalism as being “the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, as a Western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient.”⁹ (p. 3) In Said’s point of view, this is the context within which the Orient emerged as an object to be studied in the academy, displayed in the museum, reconstructed in the colonial office. (p. 7) Indeed, although some of these institutions seem to be purely academic, they were complicit in the West’s imperialist project. Lockman (2010) holds the same opinion when he asserts that Scholarly institutions were often involved in the colonial enterprise. To illustrate the point, Lockman insists that the Société Asiatique which Sacy had helped found, and the other new learned societies and academic disciplines established in Europe for the sake of studying non-Western peoples and cultures, generally took colonialism for granted. That is, the West’s domination over the rest of the world was often the reality

⁹ In this definition Said adopts Michel Foucault’s theorization of discourse in which the perceived connection between knowledge and power allow Westerners to produce an imperial discourse which enables them to dominate the “rest” of the world.

which framed their intellectual horizons and defined the questions in which they took an interest. (p. 89) It is especially important to note that the assumptions made by the above-mentioned institutional network, though imaginative sometimes and have nothing to do with the reality of the Orient, are often taken as hard facts. This is to mean that when the imaginative assumptions, opinions, views and theses which Orientalism constructs about the Orient find their way into these scholarly institutions, they become objective knowledges, wholly reliable truths. (McLeod, 2000, p. 42)

1.2.2 Said's Approach to the Knowledge of Orientalism

As is probably well known, deconstructing Orientalism is Said's main concern in *Orientalism*. In this respect, he strongly rejects the traditional meaning of Orientalism as the academic study by Westerners of the cultures, languages, and the peoples of the East. This is to imply that Orientalism in the past was believed to produce scholarly, objective, and non-political knowledge. Such interpretation of Orientalism as a pure academic discipline is exactly what Edward Said strongly refuses. For him, Orientalism is fundamentally a political doctrine which can produce not only knowledge about the rest of the world, but it can also construct the very reality which it appears to study and describe. (Said, 1979, p. 94) Therefore, no wonder Said is fully opposed to the notion of Western scholarship for its own sake: "fields of learning, as much as the works of even the most eccentric artist, are constrained and acted upon by society, by cultural traditions, by worldly circumstances and by stabilizing influences like schools, libraries, and governments." (Said, 1979, p. 201)

According to Said (1979), since Western Scholars belong to a part of the world with a definite involvement in the Orient, their images of the place can never be "raw,

unmediated, or simply objective.” (p. 273) That is, their political, military, and economic involvement in Oriental lands necessarily affects the way in which they view that part of the world. Therefore, Said is so certain about the impossibility of Western scholarship being scientific and disinterested. This is, may be, the reason why he confidently evinces that no “artistic genius, [...] original talent, or [...] powerful intellect can leap beyond the confines of its time and place in order to put before the world a new work.” (p. 202) Put differently, the knowledge produced in such fields as literature, history and anthropology is never produced in a vacuum, but rather in specific cultural, military, economic, and political contexts that, in a way or another, has certain implications on how the Orient should be looked at. Said goes so far as to argue that no scholar can avoid the shackles imposed on him by the society in which he lives. He blindly adopts the idea, stating that “no one has ever devised a method for detaching a scholar from the circumstances of his life, from the fact of his involvement (conscious or unconscious) with a class, a set of beliefs, a social position, or from the mere activity of being a member of society.” (p. 10)

Just to be clear, Said’s fundamental premise (1979) is that when a European or American studies the Orient, he or she does so as a European or American first and only secondly as an individual. Therefore, it is not surprising that if an Orientalist is bound to decide whether his loyalties and sympathies lay with the Orient or with the imperialist Occident, (s)he always chooses to side with the latter. (p. 80) In fact, it is with this idea in mind that Said tends to study Orientalism as a “dynamic exchange between individual authors and the large political concerns shaped by the three great empires – British, French, American – in whose intellectual and imaginative territory the writing was produced.” (pp. 14- 15)

On the other hand, many factors constitute stumbling blocks to the artistic genius of the author, thus, preventing him from being objective. For instance, in addition to the economic and social circumstances of the individual scholar, the works of previous scholars, the institutional life of a scholarly field and the collective nature of any learned enterprise tend to decrease the objectivity of the West's construction of the Orient. (Said, 1979, p. 202) By implication, therefore, what follows is that the orient described in Western scholarship does not necessarily correspond to the real Orient. To argue this point, Lockman (2010) states that "Europeans (and later Americans) had created and perpetuated a certain image or "representation" of "the Orient", a representation that had little to do with what the parts of the world so depicted were actually like." (p. 185) In a similar vein, Said (1979) asserts that the Orient "is not an inert fact of nature." (p. 4) It is rather an invention of the West. The point here is that European and American images of the Orient are not necessarily the result of what Europeans and Americans observe in Oriental lands. On the contrary, "the Orient exists as a set of already available and already spoken ideas that permeate through civil society in a wide range of texts – novels, plays, economic theorems, political treaties, administrative manuals, and so on – and the institutions that produce them." (Childs & Fowler, 2006, p. 163) Indeed, these "already available and already spoken ideas" are what shape how Westerners view the Orient. They are, one may assume, the lens through which the Orient is observed. In other words, no Western scholar can study the Orient in a fully scientific way. For Said, even those Westerners who have first-hand experience of the Orient, their views are often limited by the already-said about the Orient which he calls Orientalism. The implication of this is that every Western text on the Orient is necessarily implicated in Orientalism.

On the other hand, Said takes the view that no Western writer investigating the Orient tries to revise the preexisted myths and stereotypes about the Orient. They all affirm and confirm them in their works. To illustrate this point, Said (1979) discusses d'Herbelot and shows how his *Bibliothèque Orientale* confirms, even promotes those myths. That is, far from revising the commonly received ideas about the Orient, d'Herbelot tends to confirm the images which his predecessors provide for the Orient. He neither tries nor wants to break away from already firm convictions. (p. 65) Therefore, it can be argued that Orientalism imposes shackles and limitations on Western thought on the Orient, which instead of being discovered for its true identity, is, Said stresses, “reconstructed, reassembled, crafted, in short, born out of the Orientalists’ efforts.” (p. 87)

It is especially important to note that the idea of the Orient being an invention of the West is repeatedly echoed in Said’s thesis. For example, Said (1979) points out that the Orient is itself a constituted entity. For him, the belief that there are geographical spaces inhabited by radically “different” peoples who can be portrayed according to their race, religion and culture is itself a highly controversial idea. (p. 322) Therefore, he insists that the concepts of Orient and Occident are man-made, or as he bluntly puts it, the Orient is almost a European invention, standing for “something more than what was empirically known about it.” (p. 55)

To sum-up, Western scholarship on the Orient, according to Edward Said, is always ideological and politically motivated. Therefore, dealing with Orientalism, one

should always take into consideration the cultural, political, ideological, and institutional contexts in which Orientalist knowledge is produced.¹⁰

1.2.3 Strategies of Othering: Binary Opposition and Stereotypes

1.2.3.1 Binary Opposition

It is an admitted fact that writers can frame, consciously or unconsciously, how the reader should understand what they tell and write. Indeed, by controlling what happens and how it happens in their texts, they are able to spread whatever ideology they want. In this respect, it can be argued that the colonized people are made subservient to ways of seeing the world which affirm and confirm colonialist values. Accordingly, “a particular value-system is taught as the best, the truest world-view. The cultural values of colonized peoples are deemed as lacking in value, or even as being ‘uncivilized’ from which they must be rescued.” (McLeod, 2000, p. 19) For Said (1979), one of these ways of regarding is the idea that the world is made up of two unequal halves: Orient and Occident. (p. 12) This imperial idea of dividing the world into two opposing entities is at the core of Orientalism.¹¹ In fact, it is invested not only in Orientalist novels such as those of Conrad and Kipling, but in travel narratives as well. To make the point, Campbell (1988) maintains that it is in part the result of such travels and such narratives that European scholars have come to see themselves as “the West” at all – a world different and opposed to another World they call “the East”. (p. 21) Relatedly, by dividing the

¹⁰ In this regard, it should be noted that at the end of his book, Said (1979) makes a very severe judgment about Orientalist knowledge: “If the knowledge of Orientalism has any meaning,” he says, “it is in being a reminder of the seductive degradation of knowledge, anywhere, at any time.” (p. 328)

¹¹ It should be emphasized here that this is the context in which Said tends to consider Orientalism more than just a discourse, but “a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident’.” (p. 2)

world, Orientalism creates an artificial boundary between the so-called Orient and Occident, making, therefore, the clear-cut difference between the two more and more visible. Consequently, it can be said that Orientalism promotes a mode of seeing and thinking in which the East is most different, most foreign to the West. Such a mode of seeing the world is, for instance, so obvious in the first stanza of the *Ballad of East and West*, where Kipling (1946) makes it clear that “East is East and West is West, and never the Twain shall meet.” (p. 233)

It needs to be emphasized here that the binary opposition which Orientalism creates constitutes a pre-established assumption which Orientalists often take into consideration whenever the Orient is brought into Western scrutiny. To illustrate this, Said (1979) offers the following telling example: “Cromer says, “. . . I content myself with noting the fact that somehow or other the Oriental generally acts, speaks, and thinks in a manner exactly opposite to the European.”” (p. 39) Therefore, it can be argued that the boundary notion of East and West, the images of inferiority and superiority ascribed to them, the books written about the Orient: all these bear witness to what Said calls “a willed imaginative and geographic division made between East and West, and lived through during many centuries.” (p. 201) For Said, the binary oppositional reasoning of Orientalism plays a decisive role in the construction of identity. To make the point, he argues:

The construction of identity – for identity, whether of Orient or Occident, France or Britain, while obviously a repository of distinct collective experiences, is finally a construction – involves establishing opposites and “others” whose actuality is always subject to the continuous interpretation and re-interpretation of

their differences from “us”. Each age and society recreates its “others”. Far from a static thing then, identity of self or of “Other” is a much worked – over historical, social, intellectual, and political process that takes place as a contest involving individuals and institutions in all societies. (p. 332)

This is to imply that the construction of the Other is always done according to the Self and vice-versa. Like Said, Richards (1994) asserts that the representation of other peoples and cultures requires the presentation of self-portraits, in that the observer always overshadows or eclipses the observed. (p. 289) In this respect, it can be said that Orientalism helped formulate Europe’s self-image because it has less to do with the East than it does with the West. As Said maintains in one of his interviews, “the idea of the West [itself] comes largely from opposition to the Islamic and Arab world.” (Viswanathan, 2001, p. 388) Therefore, it can be argued that Orientalism is a better tool for telling the West about itself than for revealing the truths of the East. (Nechamkin, 1993, p. 27)

What is nonetheless noteworthy is that the binary opposition constructed by Orientalism is often made in favor of the West. The latter is often depicted as having all the qualities lacking in the East. For example, if, as Said (1979) maintains, “the Oriental is irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, “different”, the European is rational, virtuous, mature, “normal.” (p. 40) The same idea is put forward by Reina Lewis, who asserts that Orientalism establishes a set of polarities in which the Orient is characterized as irrational, exotic, erotic, despotic, and heathen, thereby securing the West in contrast as rational, familiar, moral, just, and Christian. (Lewis, 1996, p. 16) In the same line of argument, McLeod (2000) affirms that Orientalism often constructs the Orient in a way that the

higher position of the Occident is by all means guaranteed. For him, the Orient is often provided with a set of negative images that serve to promote the West's superiority and strength. That is, if the West is the cradle of Knowledge and learning, then it will follow that the Orient is the place of ignorance and gullibility. (p. 41) Therefore, to borrow from Said (1979), the "European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self." (p. 3) Regarding the origin of this dualistic mode of thinking which characterizes Orientalism, Said affirms that it comes from "a framework constructed out of biological determinism and moral-political admonishment," according to which non-Europeans are thought to be intrinsically inferior.¹² (p. 207)

1.2.3.2 Stereotypes

Orientalism, Said argues, creates a false and prejudicial description of the Orient. According to him, the latter is often depicted in a negative light. It is often seen through a lens that distorts its actual reality. This lens, which Said names Orientalism, knowingly distorts the image of the Orient, painting it mostly as an exotic place, and sometimes as a place of cannibals and animal-like creatures. In this respect, Delanty (1995) argues that the Orient, during the enlightenment period, came to be seen as stagnant, lacking innovation and rationality, immature, child-like, and inherently incapable of progress. Such racist ideas served only as a distorted mirror image of Europe's own identity, or as a foil for the articulation of a discourse of civilization. (p. 90) In other words, for the sake

¹² Indeed, Said's analysis of the dualistic reasoning of Orientalism can help us to understand the purpose behind the binary opposition which characterizes the present-day discourses. The West, for example, continues to use its media to depict the Muslim World as its other. It is shown as an enemy that may threaten the Western values of peace and human rights.

of “disregarding, essentializing, denuding the humanity of another culture, people, or geographical region,” the Europeans tend to project the Orient in the most vilifying way. (Said, 1979, p. 108) Therefore, it is no wonder that such adjectives as backward, savage, stagnant, inferior and the like are often the exact ones used in the portrayal of the Orient.

More than that, Said (1979) asserts that Orientals themselves are the target of Western stereotypes. That is, they are often described in a different range of negative and sometimes contradictory images, from being irrational, backward and violent, to being a symbol of “exoticism, glamour, mystery, and promise.” (p. 341) Westerners, on the contrary, are none of these things because they are shown to be “rational, peaceful, liberal, logical, capable of holding real values, without natural suspicion.” (p. 49) Indeed, these negatives images with which the Orient and Orientals are charged are inherited from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During this period, Shaheen (2001) maintains “European artists and writers helped reduce the region to colony. They presented images of desolate deserts, corrupt palaces and slimy souks inhabited by the cultural “Other” – the lazy, bearded heathen Arab Muslim.” Orientals, Shaheen goes on, “were portrayed as sinister cultists bent upon the destruction of the white race; blacks were merely ignorant natives who followed the leader who most successfully played upon their primitive superstitions.” ¹³ (p. 7)

Said believes that such “Orientalizing” of the Orient and its people is impossible to avoid in Orientalist texts. The Oriental Other can not escape the negative traits in which he is projected because he is, as Said (1979) phrases it, “first an Oriental, second a

¹³ Jack Shaheen writes his *Reel Bad Arabs* to denounce the inhuman portrayal of Arabs on Hollywood Screen. He examines about 1000 Hollywood films in which Arab characters appear. He notes that over 900 of these films perpetuate a vilifying image of Arabs and contribute to the creation of many cultural misconceptions about them.

human being, last again an Oriental.” (p. 102) In this context, Kh. Bekkaoui (1998) takes a similar stance. He makes it clear that Orientals are often vilified and stereotyped through characterization. That is, they are often characterized as racially, culturally and religiously inferior. For Bekkaoui, the secondary roles which Orientals are assigned aim to project them as different and less human. To put it in his own words, “fiction dehumanizes the natives through a characterization which deprives them of psychology or history and renders them decontextualized objects.” (p. 19)

Back to *Orientalism*, to illustrate his thesis that Orientalism has yielded a systematic and purposeful misrepresentation of Oriental lands and those living there, Said offers many telling examples. To begin with the religion of Islam, the latter, according to Said, has always been attacked as a violent religion that promotes not only violence but terrorism and hatred as well. Indeed, since its appearance, Islam, because it threatened Christianity, was for the Europeans the enemy number one. In this sense, Hourani (1991) stresses that “from the time it first appeared, the religion of Islam was a problem for Christian Europe. Those who believed in it were the enemy on the frontier.” (p. 102) This deep-rooted hatred for Islam was the driving force behind its distorted images in the West. “Not for nothing,” Said (1979) argues, “did Islam come to symbolize terror, devastation, the demonic hordes of hated barbarians. For Europe, Islam was a lasting trauma.” (p. 59) In this sense, Westerners insist that “Islam was just a misguided version of Christianity,” (p. 61) which managed to manipulate the irrational Orientals and turned them into vengeful and violent people. This stereotypical image that Islam encourages violence and terrorism is still widespread in the modern West. Shaheen (2001) criticizes the same opinion when he highlights the unjust treatment of Islam in Hollywood. Relatedly, he

notes that today's imagemakers regularly tie the religion of Islam with male supremacy and acts of terror. Hollywood films often project Arab Muslims in the most vilifying way as "hostile alien intruders, and as lecherous, oily sheikhs intent on using nuclear weapons." (p. 9)

Similarly, in conjunction with the distortion of facts about the religion of Islam, the prophet himself did not escape the harmful target of Orientalism. In this context, after studying Normal Daniel's *Islam and the West*, Said (1979) takes the view that the Prophet was seen as the disseminator of a false revelation and "the epitome of lechery, debauchery, sodomy, and a whole battery of assorted treacheries, all of which derived "logically" from his doctrinal impostures." (p. 62) In like vein, while revealing the ideological and doctrinal values of the prophet in his *Bibliothèque Orientale*, d'Herbelot claims that "this is the famous imposter Mohamet, author and founder of a heresy, which has taken on the name of a religion, which we call Mohammedan." (p. 66) Briefly, the prophet of Islam has often been depicted as an imposter in Orientalist texts. This is sometimes obvious from the very title of the work. "Humphrey Prideaux's famous seventeenth-century biography of Mohammed", for example, "is subtitled the True Nature of Imposture." (p. 72) The Orientalists, Said asserts, attack not only the religion of Islam and its prophet, but also its holy book, the Koran. In this light, Thomas Carlyle makes it clear that "the Koran [...] is "a wearisome confused jumble, crude, incondite; endless iterations, long-windedness, entanglement; most crude incondite – insupportable stupidity, in short."”¹⁴ (As cited in Said, 1979, p. 152)

¹⁴ It must be mentioned that what Thomas Carlyle takes to task here is not the original Koran, but only its translated version. Therefore, as he (1898) himself makes the point: "much perhaps has been lost in the translation here." (p. 65)

Indeed, Said offers (1979) more and more examples about the stereotypical images attributed to the Orient and its people. For example, in Lord Cromer's *Modern Egypt*, Orientals, Said remarks, are described as "gullible, "devoid of energy and initiative," much given to "fulsome flattery," intrigue, cunning, and unkindness to animals; Orientals can not walk on either a road or a pavement." (p. 38) "Orientals", Said goes on, "are [seen as] inveterate liars, they are "lethargic and suspicious," and in everything oppose the clarity of the Anglo-Saxon race." (p. 39)

Similarly, Oriental and Semitic languages also get their share of denigration at the hand of the Orientalists. In the work of Renan, for example, Oriental and Semitic languages are portrayed as primitive and devoid of any possibility to regenerate. Unlike the mature languages and cultures of the Indo-European group, which are "alive and organic", Oriental and Semitic languages are "inorganic, arrested, totally ossified, incapable of self-regeneration." (As cited by Said, 1979, p. 145) The point being made here is that the linguistic traits attributed to the Semites and Orientals reflect their backward and incapable-of-developing character. In the same line of argument, Said notes that the Arabic language itself is delineated in a negative way. It is often viewed through the lens of Orientalism as having a corrupting effect on the psychology of Arab people. To illustrate this point, Said (1979) offers the example of Shouby's essay "The Influence of the Arabic Language on the Psychology of the Arabs." In this essay, Said argues, fabricated stereotypes about Arabic are manifestly omnipresent. Relatedly, "Arabic is characterized by "General vagueness of Thought," "Overemphasis on Linguistic Signs," "Overassertion and Exaggeration." For this reason, "Arabic as a language is a dangerous ideology." (p. 320)

According to Said (1979), these negative images are still frequent in Western media today. Therefore, although the media in the West claim to be objective and impartial, they manifestly too often become subjective and biased whenever Muslims and Arabs are covered. Put differently, the Arab, because he is the Other, is charged with all types of defects, ranging “from a faintly outlined stereotype as a camel-riding nomad to an accepted caricature as the embodiment of incompetence and easy defeat: this is all the scope given the Arab.” (p. 285) Therefore, as Said makes the point, Western media images continue “to keep the region and its people conceptually emasculated, reduced to “attitudes,” “trends,” statistics: in short dehumanized.” (p. 291) Indeed, this stereotypical reduction of the Arab people is so obvious from the roles they are obliged to play in the movies. Said goes on, “in the films and television the Arab is associated either with lechery or bloodthirsty dishonesty. He appears as an oversexed degenerate, capable, it is true, of clearly devious intrigues, but essentially sadistic, treacherous, low slave trader, camel driver, moneychanger, colorful scoundrel: these are some traditional roles in the cinema.”¹⁵ (pp. 286-287)

In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said (1994) seems to elaborate on the point being made even more, asserting that the mass media in the West often connect Muslims and Arabs with violence, bloodshed and death. Arabs are often seen as terrorists and

¹⁵ It is important to note that Said stresses on the point that Westerners do not fabricate these myths and stereotypes only to vilify and tarnish the image of Arabs and Muslims but also to justify conquest and domination by creating the impression that these backward and savage people are in dire need of Western help and civilization. In this way, they give themselves the right to interfere in the affairs of non-Western people. It is perhaps in this light that Said (1979) uses the quote by Karl Marx: “They cannot represent themselves; they must be represented.” (p. xii) This is supposed to be interpreted to mean then that colonialism is not imposed by force, but justified as a duty and a right of the Superior West. For Said (1994), “neither imperialism nor colonialism is a simple act of accumulation and acquisition. Both are supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations that include notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination.” (p. 9) In her *Imperial Fictions*, Kabbani (1986) makes a similar point, asserting that “if it could be suggested that Eastern peoples were slothful, preoccupied with sex, violent, and incapable of self-government, then the imperialist would feel himself justified in stepping in and ruling.” (p. 6)

murderers. They “only understand force; brutality and force are part of the Arab civilization; Islam is intolerant, segregationist, “medieval,” fanatic, cruel, anti-woman religion.” (p. 295) It needs to be emphasized here that these images are so resistant to change. According to Said, they are so deep-rooted in the imagination of the Western scholars that their eradication remains difficult, if not impossible. In this respect, after the publication of her novel *Banat Al-Riyad* (Girls of Riyadh), the Saudi Arabian author, Alsanea (2007) reiterates this view, saying:

It seemed to me, and to many other Saudis, that the Western world still perceives us either romantically, as the land of Arabian Nights and the land where bearded sheikhs sit in their tents surrounded by their beautiful harem women, or politically, as the land that gave birth to Bin Laden and other terrorists, the land where women are dressed in black from head to toe and where every house has its own oil well in the backyard! Therefore, I knew it would be very hard, may be impossible, to change this cliché. (p. VII)

It is, may be, in this light that Said (1979) insists that books and articles continue to be published with Islam and the Arabs as their main focus. However, Said remarks, no change in Western prejudicial attitudes seems to take place. The same old stereotypes continue to be attributed to the Muslim and Arab people. For example, Said argues that a recent article written by Emmett Tyrrell in Harper’s magazine is even more slanderous and racist. This article tends to describe Arabs as murderers by nature as if violence and deceit were carried in the Arab genes. (p. 287)

In a nutshell, drawing on concrete examples, Said manages to uncover the prejudice and falsehood of the Western images attributed to Muslims and Arabs, accusing, therefore, the Orientalists of anti-intellectualism, shallow thinking and superficiality:

It is only a slight overstatement to say that Muslims and Arabs are essentially covered, discussed, and apprehended either as oil suppliers or as potential terrorists [...] what we have instead is a limited series of crude, essentialized caricatures of the Islamic world presented in such a way as, among other things, to make that other world vulnerable to military aggression.” (Said, 1997, p. 28)

1.3 Edward Said's Inspirers

It is widely accepted that the famous French philosopher Michel Foucault has been clustered among the most influential theorists in the modern time. He is “a figure to quote, relate to, comment on, modify and criticize.” (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 12.) His theories, despite the debate which they have sparked, have manifestly been echoed and reinvested by various scholars and writers. Edward Said, for example, has found in his works a useful reservoir of ideas and arguments. More particularly, Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and his *Discipline and Punish* have provided a lot of theoretical help for Edward Said in his vehement assault on Orientalism. Therefore, thanks to these two books, Edward Said has been able to view Orientalism “in Foucauldian terms as a discourse: a manifestation of power/knowledge.” (Ashcroft & Ahluwalia, 2001, p. 68) To be more explicit, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* has been a fundamental source of inspiration to Said because it is “the main work in which Foucault tries to spell out what he means by a discourse.” (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 34)

Similarly, *Discipline and Punish* appeals a lot to Said because it is in this book that Foucault explains well his theory of Knowledge and Power.

Accordingly, since, as has been mentioned previously, Edward Said was influenced by Michel Foucault to the bone, his book *Orientalism* can not be fully grasped without a prior knowledge of Foucault, mainly his notion of discourse and his theory of power/knowledge. Therefore, for the sake of making *Orientalism* more and more understood, this section aims to explore those Foucauldian concepts which have left an obvious mark on Said's thesis.

1.3.1 The Concept of Discourse in Michel Foucault's Philosophy

Discourse is a polysemous and loaded word. It is often used in many ways as its meaning differs according to the context in which it is used. Accordingly, discourse, as Mills (1997) makes the point, "has perhaps the widest range of possible significations of any term in literary and cultural theory, and yet it is often the term within theoretical texts which is least defined." (p. 1) In accordance with the same line of thought, Mills affirms in another place that "discourse, as will be readily observed, can not be pinned down to one meaning, since it has had a complex history and it is used in a range of different ways by different theorists." (p. 6) However, the notion of discourse that interests us in this context is the one that appears in Foucault's works, where Said has found a great deal of inspiration.

By way of opening, it is important to note that Foucault's theorization of discourse has moved the attention away from that ordinary conception of discourse as a linguistic concept. For him, discourse is not the equivalent of language, nor does it designate something which language does: "It is not a language plus a subject to speak

it.” (Foucault, 1972, p. 69) It is, rather, a way of thinking or talking about something. Traditionally, the term ‘discourse’ is used as a linguistic concept. It simply means passages of connected writing or speech. Michel Foucault, however, gave it a different meaning. (Hall, 1977, p. 44) In other words, by discourse, Foucault has in mind a set of statements that allows the creation of a particular way of seeing and thinking about a given topic:

We shall call discourse a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation; [...] it is made up of a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined. Discourse in this sense is not an ideal timeless form [...] it is, from beginning to end, historical – a fragment of history [...] posing its own limits, its divisions, its transformations, the specific modes of its temporality. (Foucault, 1972, p. 117)

The above quotation exhibits the main features characterizing Foucault’s theory of discourse. In this context, although discourse does not contain only one statement, but a group of statements, Foucault’s basic premise is that they all belong to what he calls “the same discursive formation.” That is, they all have some common traits. For example, “they refer to the same object, share the same style and support a strategy [...] a common institutional, or political drift or pattern.” (Cousins & Athar, 1984, pp. 84-85)

It needs to be emphasized here that these shared traits create a kind of unity between the statements of a particular discourse. Therefore, no matter where they appear, in travel narratives, journalistic texts, scholarly researches, or anywhere else, and regardless of the person who employs them, the statements of a particular discourse always carry the same meaning for the same thing. It is perhaps in this context that Smart

(1985) maintains that Foucault's notion of discourse reflects "the unity of a group of statements above and beyond books, texts, authors, through time, and independently of the proximity of epistemological validity, scientificity, or truth. It reveals that within a discourse reference is being made to the same thing with the same conceptual full, at the same level." (p. 40)

Another pillar of Foucault's theory is that discourse creates a set of rules as preconditions for statements in order to be recognized as meaningful and legitimate. This is exactly what he means by saying that discourse contains "a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined." Put differently, although there may be several ways to produce statements about a particular topic, not all of them can belong to the same discursive formation. Therefore, not all of them can be regarded as true or meaningful. In this context, Mills (1997) stresses that "discourses are not simply groupings of utterances, grouped around a theme or an issue, nor are they simply sets of utterances which emanate from a particular institutional setting, but discourses are regulated groupings of utterances or statements with internal rules which are specific to discourse itself." (p. 48) Similarly, Gordon (2002) points out that Foucault refers to discourse as "an identifiable collections of utterances governed by rules of construction and evaluation which determine within some thematic area what may be said, by whom, in which context, and in what effect." (p. xvi)

By setting certain rules, discourse determines the parameters of what can be thought and understood. Therefore, we are not free to think the way we like because we always tend to conform to the dominant discourse. As Foucault (1972) makes the point, "we are not free to just say anything." (p. 216) In other words, when we want to talk

about something, we find ourselves confronted with a repertoire of pre-existing statements and ideas that prevent us from talking about that thing in a kind of free and creative way. Since “all manifest discourse is secretly based on an ‘already-said,’” (p. 25) we are obliged to think within the limits set by what has already been said. Therefore, it can be argued that discourse “links individuals to certain types of utterance while consequently barring them from all others.” (p. 226) The point being made here is that what is said before about an object always influences the manner in which that object is viewed. Accordingly, the ideas of previous scholars often serve as a template for the coming ones, who most of the time draw on the formers to construct their views and opinions. Therefore, it can be claimed that no one can write a completely original work in the sense that one, being conscious or not, always draws one’s inspiration from previous works. Accordingly, the work one produces becomes just a set of fragments borrowed from others. To argue this point, Barthes (1989) affirms that “the text is a fabric of quotations, resulting from a thousand sources of culture [...] the writer can only imitate an ever anterior, never original gesture, his sole power is to mingle writings, to counter some by others.” Barthes goes so far as to claim that his “book itself is but a tissue of signs, endless imitation, infinitely postponed.”¹⁶ (p. 53) It is perhaps in this light that Foucault asserts that the knowledge which scholars seem to produce is but the result of discourse. In other words, discourse inspires and controls what they say about a particular object. Hence, the knowledge which they produce is indeed just a reformulation of already existing ideas and notions. Put differently, scholars, according to Foucault, are

¹⁶ Wa Thiong’o (1986) seems to adopt the same opinion when he says: “Over the years I have come to realise more and more that work, any work, even literary creative work, is not the result of any individual genius but the result of a collective effort. There are so many inputs in the actual formation of an image, an idea, a line of argument and even sometimes the formal arrangement. The very words we use are a product of a collective history.” (p. x-xi)

not the real producers of knowledge. They are, instead, no more than holders of the knowledge which discourse produces.

Just to be clear, discourse, as Foucault understands it, is systematic and rule-governed. This explains why, instead of focusing on individuals and the views they have of the external world, he puts more emphasis on the rules governing discourse. These rules are what determine how the world is talked about and understood. Therefore, Foucault (1994) attempts to “explore scientific discourse not from the point of view of the individuals who are speaking, nor from the point of view of the formal structures of what they are saying, but from the point of the rules that come into play in the very existence of such discourse.” (p. xiv) In this respect, Foucault himself admits that he is the product of the dominant discourse. He is consciously or unconsciously submitted to its rules and conditions. In other words, Foucault is aware that what he has to say about a particular object is by all means said in conformity with the discourse within which he works. In his own words, “there may well be certain similarities between the works of the structuralists and my own work. It would hardly behove me, of all people, to claim that my discourse is independent of conditions and rules of which I am very largely unaware, and which determine other work that is being done today.”¹⁷ (p. xiv)

¹⁷ Building on what is mentioned so far, it can be said that discourse can, indeed does, construct the society's rhetorical codes. That is, it defines what people can say and what they can not say in a given society. To illustrate this, let us take a real life example. Since the prevailing discourse in the United States—this is obvious in the media and popular press—depicts Muslims as terrorists, Americans, at least to a large extent, tend to form a unified view of Muslims as terrorist and violent people. Indeed, what Americans think of Muslims is constrained and shaped by the prevailing discourse. The same argument is echoed by Zachary Karabell, who makes the following suggestion: “Ask American college students, in the elite universities or elsewhere, what they think of when the word ‘Muslim’ is mentioned. The response is inevitably the same: gun-toting, bearded, fanatic terrorists hellbent on destroying the great enemy, the United States.” (As cited in Said, 1997, p. xxvi) Put differently, in a society like the United States, where such discourse dominates, it is inconceivable to think of Muslims as tolerant and peaceful people. To think of them in terms of peace and tolerance means to be outside the dominant discourse, and to be outside the dominant discourse means what you think is meaningless, thus, beyond reason and comprehension.

If discourse, as Foucault thinks, constrains our perceptions and views, can't we say that our knowledge of the world is not necessarily true or objective? In response to such a question, Foucault insists that our knowledge of the world does not necessarily reflect the world as it is, but as it is understood within the frames set by discourse. By implication, therefore, our understanding of the world is absolutely not a pure reflection of reality, but a mere creation of discourse. In Foucault's opinion, "discourse does not simply translate reality into language; rather discourse should be seen as a system which structures the way that we receive reality." (Mills, 2003, p. 55) Therefore, far from being a mirror reflecting the real image of the world, discourse is "a violence which we do to things, or in any case as a practice which we impose on them; and it is in this practice that the events of discourse find the principle of their regularity." (Foucault, 1972, p. 229)

Accordingly, it can be said that universal truth and objectivity in Foucault's theory of discourse are just illusions. For our perceptions of material objects can never be objective or disinterested. They are always "filtered through discursive structures which assign particular meanings and effects to them." (Mills, 2003, p. 56) In this sense, discourses do not just describe objects, but construct them. They, Foucault (1972) argues, "systematically form the objects of which they speak [...] discourses are not about objects, they don't identify objects, they constitute them and in doing so, they conceal their own invention." (p. 49)

The last point that should be made about Foucault's theorization of discourse is that although Foucault believes that discourse, instead of depicting material objects, constructs them, one should not assume that he denies the existence of such objects. Foucault's fundamental premise is that objects do have physical and material presence in

the world, yet they are outside discourse meaningless. It is only through discourse that they acquire meaning. For Foucault, “objects exist and events occur in the real world but we apprehend these events within discursive structures and we are not always aware of the way that discourse structures our understanding.” (Mills, 2003, p. 56) Thus, it can be said that Foucault’s main concern is to discover the source of meaning. He does not aim to see whether things exist or not, but to find where the meaning people assign to material objects comes from.

1.3.2 Foucault’s Concept of Discourse in Said’s Orientalism

As has been referred to previously, Michel Foucault remains for Edward Said a great inspirer who provides, so to speak, a repertory of insightful ideas and arguments. For example, as Chuaqui (2005) makes the point, “in *Orientalism*, the most widely known text among Said’s writings, many notions and concepts are borrowed from Michel Foucault: *archaeology*, *genealogy*, *archive* and, foremost, *discourse*.” (pp. 98-99) In this light, one can claim that without Foucault’s concepts of discourse and of discursive formations, his discussions of the relationship between power and knowledge, and his views that representations are always influenced by the systems of power in which they are located, Said’s seminal book could not have seen light. (Kennedy, 2000, p. 25)

In fact, from the very outset, Said (1979) tries to justify his reliance on Foucault, claiming that “Orientalism expresses and represents that part [the Orient] culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles.” (p. 2) Accordingly, Foucault’s concept of discourse is indispensable for any good analysis of Orientalism. To make the point, Said contends:

My contention is that without examining Orientalism as a discourse one can not possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage – – and even produce – – the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period. (p. 3)

In this respect, to explain how much Foucault's discourse theory is clearly re-invested by Said, it is sufficient to examine the latter's definition of Orientalism. Like Foucault, who defines discourse as a particular way of talking about a particular object, Said defines Orientalism as a specific way of talking and representing the Orient. It is, Said argues, "a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience." (p. 1) This "way of coming to terms with the Orient" reflects the "common sense" in Europe and the United States.

On the other hand, it is important to note that although Said examines the writings of different scholars belonging to different places, Foucault's notion of discourse allows him to study Orientalism with a great deal of unity and coherence. Put explicitly, Said explores the writings of

an array of nineteenth century French and British novelists, poets, politicians, philologists, historians, travelers, and imperial administrators: the voyages and travel narratives of nineteenth century French authors such as Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Nerval, and Flaubert; the Indian journalism of Karl Marx; the writings of the first modern Orientalist Silvestre de Sacy and of the French nineteenth century philologist Ernest Renan; the adventure tales of Richard Burton and T.E

Lawrence; the speeches of Alfred Balfour; and the cables of British colonial governors in Egypt like Lord Cromer. (Bayoumi & Rubin, 2000, p. 64)

However, he treats all this group of texts as a monolithic and unified discourse on the Orient.¹⁸ How is it possible, it is legitimate to ask, that such a big number of Orientalists as Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Nerval, Flaubert, Karl Marx, Silvestre de Sacy, Ernest Renan, Richard Burton, T. E. Lawrence, Alfred Balfour, Lord Cromer and the list may continue, appear in Said's study to adopt the same views and attitudes towards the Orient, whether it is Syria, Egypt, India, or any other Oriental land? Said's answer to this question is quite simple. The unity of the Orientalist views of the Orient, he claims, is due to the fact that Western scholars construct their images of the Orient with respect to each other. That is, they often refer to each other in their texts. And by doing so, they keep repeating the same views of the Orient. According to Said (1979), "every writer on the Orient (and this is true even of Homer) assumes some Oriental precedent, some previous knowledge of the Orient, to which he refers and on which he relies." (p. 20) In this sense, the Orient becomes, Said says,

[...] less a place than a topos, a set of references, a congeries of characteristics, that seems to have its origin in a quotation, or a fragment of a text, or a citation from someone's work on the Orient, or some bit of previous imagining, or an amalgam of all these. Direct observation or circumstantial description of the Orient are the fictions presented by writing on the Orient, yet invariably these are totally secondary to systematic tasks of an other sort. (p. 117)

¹⁸ Porter (2001) argues that Said affirms the unified character of Western scholarship on the Orient over some two millennia. This unity comes from a recurrent and ongoing experience of fascination with the threat from the East, of its irreducible otherness. He is, therefore, led to claim a continuity of representation between the Greece of Alexander the Great and the United States of President Jimmy Carter. (p. 62)

It can, thus, be argued that Orientalism is a self-referential system in the sense that Western scholars most of the time tend to echo each other in what they say about the Orient. This is to imply that the same set of images is repeated across different texts, giving, thus, Orientalism its unified character.¹⁹

To illustrate his argument that Orientalism is after all a system of citing works, Said offers many concrete examples. He shows, for instance, how d'Herbolot's *Bibliothèque Orientale* (1697) made the Orient easily known by almost all Western scholars. The *Bibliothèque*, Said (1979) maintains, became an inevitable bible for anyone studying the Orient. This reference was so interesting that it "diverted the attention of "Orientalists" from studying Oriental sources; instead, consulting Western scholarship about the Orient became the common practice. In a way it generated a textual and schematic attitude which became widespread in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries." (p. 18) In the same line of argument, Said notes the authoritative status of Edward William Lane's *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (1836). Like the *Bibliothèque*, Lane's book was an indispensable reference. For it gave credibility and value to whoever used it. In Said's words, Lane "was an authority whose use was an imperative for anyone writing or thinking about the Orient." (p. 23) Thus, it is not surprising that his book was cited by such important figures as, among others, Richard Burton, Nerval and Flaubert.²⁰

¹⁹ It is, may be, in this light that Said talks about "a textual attitude" that every writer has to adopt whenever he talks or writes about that part of the world called the Orient. For a further discussion of this point, see Said's *Orientalism* on page 92.

²⁰ It is important to note that although Lane's book originally describes the Egyptians, it was referred to in texts about other people, like the Syrians or Indians, on the assumption that the Orientals are all the same

The same as d'Herbolot and Lane, Silvestre de Sacy, the father of modern Orientalism, Said (1979) affirms, creates a way of thinking about the Orient in the sense that "his works virtually put before the profession an entire systematic body of texts, a pedagogic practice, a scholarly tradition, and an important link between Oriental Scholarship and public policy." (p. 124) This body of texts which Sacy produced defines the parameters through which the Orient has to be viewed. Therefore, thanks to Sacy's works, the Orient becomes canonized: "Sacy's work canonizes the Orient; it begets a canon of textual objects passed on from one generation of students to the next. And the living legacy of Sacy's disciples was astounding. Every major Arabist in Europe during the nineteenth century traced his intellectual authority back to him." (p. 129) This "canon of textual objects" inspires and orients everyone talking or writing about the Orient. That is, every Westerner reproduces the Orient within the limits imposed by Sacy's texts: "Each Orientalist re-created his own Orient according to the fundamental epistemological rules [...] supplied and enacted by Sacy. Just as he was the father of Orientalism." (p. 130)

Bearing these examples offered by Said in mind, one can legitimately claim that instead of having first-hand experience of people and places in the East, Orientalist writers were content with repeating some previous knowledge on the Orient. (Saddiqi, 2007, p. 66) Indeed, Said goes so far as to claim that even though they did have first-hand experience in some cases, their views of the Orient were limited by the already-said about the Orient which he calls Orientalism.

regardless of the place where they exist. This is why Said accuses Orientalism of creating an ahistorical image of the Orient, as if the Orient was immobile and placid.

At this very point, one can easily note a great deal of similarity between Said's approach to Orientalism and Foucault's notion of discourse. Put in a more explicit way, like Foucault, who believes that discourse determines what can be thought and said about a particular object, Said asserts that Orientalism defines what is thinkable and sayable about the Orient. Hence, as a consequence of this, no Westerner can talk about or write about the Orient in a kind of free and creative way. For Said (1979), "no one writing, thinking, or acting on the Orient could do so without taking account of the limitations on thought and action imposed by Orientalism." He goes on, "because of Orientalism the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought or action." (p. 3) Said insists that because of Orientalism, no body can address the Orient freely. Orientalism is a set of constraints upon and limitations of thought; thus, only "a limited vocabulary and imagery [...always] impose themselves" on whoever wants to describe the Orient and its people. (p. 60)

The point being made is that no matter how faithful the Orientalist tries to be in his description of the Orient, he always ends up distorting its true image due to the limitation imposed by the Orientalist discourse. For Said (1979), because it is just "a set of structures inherited from the past", and "not a sudden access of objective knowledge about the Orient," Orientalism creates the possible ways of thinking about the Orient. (p. 122) Anybody who, thus, chooses to address the Orient outside these ways, which are often taken for granted, results in the production of "nonsensical knowledge." Put differently, although the Orientalist can express his views on the Orient in many different ways, for the sake of gaining trustworthiness and credibility, he or she has to conform to the dominant discourse of Orientalism, or as Said says, to "that collection of dreams,

images, and vocabularies available to anyone who has tried to talk about what lies east of the divining line.” (p. 73) Accordingly, “only a limited number of statements provided the lenses through which the Orient was experienced, and [...] shaped the language through which the encounter between East and West took place.” (p. 58) This is to imply that Orientalism does not just distort and misrepresent the Orient, but also constructs certain undebatable facts about it. Therefore, any representation of the Orient to be accepted as realistic and true, has to be compatible with these facts.²¹ That is, since these statements are undebatable and are taken for granted, it comes as no surprise that they are frequently used in European and American texts on the Orient. In fact, the more these statements appear in a text, the more credible the text becomes. This explains their widespread use in almost all Western texts on the Orient, whether they are monographs, novels, plays, travel narratives, or academic researches.

Orientalism, in this sense, Said (1979) suggests, is no more than “a sort of consensus: certain things, certain types of statement, certain types of work have seemed for the Orientalist correct.” (p. 202) That is to say, whether a statement on the Orient is false or true does not necessarily depend on the reality of the Orient, but rather on its conformity with the Orientalist discourse. This is to mean that the more a statement conforms to and confirms the taken-for-granted statements on the Orient, constructing, thus, what Foucault calls “a discursive formation”, the truer the statement becomes. This way, Orientalism can be said to establish the sum of possibilities open to any European

²¹ Çırakman (2005) reiterates Said’s argument, insisting that “Orientalism as a systematic “knowledge” is not just depicting the reality of the Orient “falsely” but it creates generally accepted truths about the Orient which Europeans think, research and administer. The European mind considers or takes for granted certain types of statement, certain types of theories as correct, such as the “Oriental character,” “Oriental despotism,” “Oriental sensuality etc.” (p. 12)

writing or thinking on the Orient. (Childs & Fowler, 2006, p. 123) By implication, the Orientalist is not the producer of knowledge, but the bearer of the knowledge which the discourse of Orientalism produces.

Indeed, Said (1979) insists that all texts on the Orient operate within the limits set by Orientalism. Therefore, what these texts say is not necessarily a faithful translation of the reality of the Orient. In this context, Said remarks that “[the language used to describe the Orient] is not even trying to be accurate.” (p. 34) As a consequence, the Orient it describes “is not the Orient as it is, but the Orient as it has been Orientalized” (p. 104) by the discourse of Orientalism, which guides the Orientalist towards choosing specific statements in his or her portrayal of the place and its people.²² Orientalism, in this sense, can be said to have more authority than what it talks about or describes. In Said’s words, “people, places, and experiences can always be described by a book, so much so that the book (or text) acquires a greater authority, and use, even than the actuality it describes.” (p. 93) Therefore, to ascribe value and force to what one says about the Orient requires a kind of conformity with what previous texts tell. For, as Said says, “the value, efficacy, strength, apparent veracity of a written statement about the Orient [...] relies very little, and can not instrumentally depend on the Orient as such.” (p. 21)

In accordance with Foucault, Said (1979) asserts that Orientalism as a discourse imposes certain rules and conditions for knowledge on the Orient to be accepted as true and meaningful. In Said’s words, “what is thought, said, or even done about the Orient

²² To illustrate the argument being made with a telling example, Said (1979) affirms that “what [Western] discourse considers to be a fact – that Mohammed is an imposter [...] is a component of the discourse, a statement the discourse compels one to make whenever the name Mohammed occurs or [is mentioned].” (p. 33) This means that the correctness of such statement as “Mohammed is an imposter” does not stem from the fact that the prophet is really an imposter, but from the fact that this is the only way to describe him within the Orientalist discourse. To portray the prophet differently means to run against the dominant discourse (Orientalism). And to run against the dominant discourse means to be outside the “true.”

follows (perhaps occurs within) certain distinct and intellectually knowable lines.” (p. 13)

Orientalism, in this sense, is no more than “a new habit of thought, a set of rules to dominate truth, to make truth as an issue secondary to the successful ordering and wielding of huge masses of actual present knowledge.” (Said, 1985, p. 291) Therefore, no text on the Orient can be part of the Orientalist “discursive formation” unless the rules²³ imposed by Orientalism are fully obeyed. The main point to get hold of here is that any description of the Orient running against these dogmas will not be recognized as true and meaningful. For, within the discourse of Orientalism, these dogmas are what ascribe to the Orient its correct and acceptable meaning. The implication is that although a great deal of texts have been written on the Orient, Said (1979) claims that they all provide a consistent and unified image of the Orient, constituting what he calls “an analyzable formation.” (p. 20)

In the main, because these texts are quite consistent with themselves, they can be analyzed as a unified entity, that is, as a discourse on the Orient. In this respect, Said (1979) acknowledges that his method of analysis is to “employ close textual readings whose goal is to reveal the dialectic between individual text or writer and the complex collective formation to which his work is a contribution.” (pp. 23-24) Somewhere else in his book, Said writes that one of his principal methodological devices for studying

²³ Among these rules which Said (1979) lists in his book are what he calls the “four dogmas” of Orientalism which must be respected in any text on the Orient: “One is the absolute and systematic difference between the West, which is rational, developed, humane, superior, and the Orient, which is aberrant, undeveloped, inferior. Another dogma is that abstractions about the Orient [...] are always preferable to direct evidence drawn from modern Oriental realities. A third dogma is that the Orient is eternal, uniform, and incapable of defining itself; therefore it is assumed that a highly generalized and systematic vocabulary for describing the Orient from a Western standpoint is inevitable and even scientifically “objective.” A fourth dogma is that the Orient is at bottom something either to be feared [...] or to be controlled.” (pp. 300-301)

authority is “strategic formation, which is a way of analyzing the relationship between texts and the way in which groups of texts, types of texts, even textual genres, acquire mass, density, and referential power among themselves and thereafter in the culture at large.” (p. 20)

Building on what has been discussed, it can be argued that Said draws widely on Foucault’s concept of discourse in his analysis of Orientalism. However, if one examines *Orientalism* deeply, one can easily detect some differences in the theoretical insights of the two men. For instance, Foucault insists to imprison the individual writer in a subordinate position. He or she is not able to act freely, neither is he or she allowed space to form his or her views independently. In brief, the individual writer, as Foucault believes, has no role in what he or she says because it is always determined by discourse. Contrastingly, Said (1979) believes that the role of the individual writer can sometimes be significant. Thus, he leaves a room for what he calls “the play of a personal – or at least non-Orientalist – consciousness.” (p. 158) In contrast to Foucault, Said asserts that the individual writer is not dead, but influential and self-controlling. Therefore, although Said expresses his indebtedness to Foucault, he disagrees with him on this point: “unlike Michel Foucault, to whose work I am greatly indebted, I do believe in the determining imprint of individual writers upon the otherwise anonymous collective body of texts constituting a discursive formation like Orientalism.”²⁴ (p. 23)

²⁴ This is to mean that although Said uses Foucault’s notion of discourse in his analysis of Orientalism, he criticizes it as well: “Unlike Foucault, for whom authorial names function as mere labels for discursive statements, Said’s authors may be accorded psychohistorical typicality and are often made through their texts to have representative Orientalist experiences. [...] Said’s descriptions of Orientalist discourse are frequently sidetracked by humanist fables of suppressed authenticity.” (Clifford, 1988, p. 269)

To illustrate his view that the individual writer is self-conscious and in total control of himself or herself, Said (1979) shows how Gerard de Nerval's carnet for the voyage he made to the Orient "supplies us [...] with two perfect texts for understanding how his Orient untied itself from anything resembling an Orientalist conception of the Orient, even though his work depends on Orientalism to a certain extent." (p. 183) In addition to Gerard de Nerval, Louis Massignon, who can be clustered among French Orientalists, exhibits, through his writings, a kind of dissimilarity from French Orientalist texts. In the words of Said, Massignon's "personal style, [in addition to his] individual genius, may finally supersede the political restraints operating impersonally through tradition and through the national ambience."²⁵ (p. 27)

1.3.3 Michel Foucault's Theory of Power-Knowledge

This section aims to explore Foucault's theorization of power-knowledge, which, needless to say, permeates his whole body of work. Relatedly, Foucault is known to have rejected the traditional belief that the renunciation of power is a prior condition for knowledge to exist and develop. Foucault (1979) refuses such belief and invites us to abandon it: "We should abandon a whole tradition that allows us to imagine that knowledge can exist only where the power relations are suspended and that knowledge can develop only outside its injunctions, its demands and its interests." (p. 27)

Contrastingly, power and knowledge, in Foucault's opinion, are two sides of the same coin. They are always coterminous and interdependent. That is, power does not exist

²⁵Although Said admits that the writers' views can sometimes be different from the common Orientalist conception of the Orient, he affirms that the differences are just manifest differences: "Differences in form and personal style, rarely in basic content." (Said, 1979, p. 206) For instance, although he talks about Massignon's personal style and individual genius in the quoted passage, he insists that "his ideas about the Orient remained thoroughly traditional and Orientalist." (p. 271)

without knowledge and the opposite is also true. In this light, Foucault insists that power and knowledge imply each other. For him, “there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations.” (p. 27)

Therefore, it can be argued that power can not be exercised without knowledge, that knowledge can not be produced away from a certain form of power:

No body of knowledge can be formed without a system of communications, records, accumulation and displacement which is in itself a form of power and which is linked, in its existence and functioning, to the other forms of power. Conversely, no power can be exercised without the extraction, appropriation, distribution or retention of knowledge. On this level, there is not knowledge on the one side and society on the other, or science and the state, but only the fundamental forms of knowledge/power. (Sheridan, 1980, p. 129)

In brief, Foucault, as the passage demonstrates, makes it clear that the exercise of power and the production of knowledge are inseparable. To illustrate this point, Foucault explores three regimes of penalty: torture, punishment and discipline.

However, before the power-knowledge nexus, as explored in *Discipline and Punish*, is further analyzed, a discussion of Foucault’s interpretation of power will be of great use. In this respect, although Foucault is not the first to address the question of power, he provides a different theorization which revolutionizes the way in which power is traditionally viewed. According to Michel Foucault, previous theories of power are too deterministic and place power in the hand of a dominant entity. Thus, he manifests his refusal of these theories, declaring in an interview:

It is hard to see where, either on the Right or the Left, this problem of power could then have been posed. On the Right, it was posed only in terms of constitution, sovereignty, etc., that is, in juridical terms; on the Marxist side, it was posed only in terms of the State apparatus. The way power was exercised-concretely and in detail-with its specificity, its techniques and tactics, was something that no one attempted to ascertain; they contented themselves with denouncing it in a polemical and global fashion as it existed among the 'others', in the adversary camp. Where Soviet socialist power was in question, its opponents called it totalitarianism; power in Western capitalism was denounced by the Marxists as class domination; but the mechanics of power in themselves were never analysed. (Foucault, 1980, pp. 115-116)

Indeed, Foucault's view of power challenges the above-mentioned theories in many ways. First, power, for Foucault, is no longer a thing that a dominant class has and can use oppressively against others. It is not a property that can be had and acquired. In Foucault's opinion (1979), power is not an object or a commodity that is owned and possessed. On the contrary, his main premise is that power "is exercised rather than possessed; it is not the 'privilege', acquired or preserved, of the dominant class." (p. 26) He insists on another occasion that "The power in the hierarchized surveillance of the disciplines is not possessed as a thing, or transferred as a property; it functions like a piece of machinery" in which everyone is caught. (p. 177) Being an interaction rather than a possession, power can not manifest itself unless it is practiced and put into action. Consequently, the appearance of power parallels the construction of relations in society. That is, at the moment when relations are built, power exists. This is to mean that power

exists everywhere, in families, schools, factories and the like. Power, as Foucault understands it, is ubiquitous and pervasive.

Secondly, unlike most Marxist thinkers, Foucault is not concerned with the oppressive character of power. Foucault rejects the idea that power is never anything but repression and prohibition. For Foucault (1979), this negative approach to power must be stopped, or as he says:

We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'. In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production. (p. 194)

The fundamental premise of the Marxist analysis of power is that people are never anything but mere puppets, unable to do anything but submit to the oppressive apparatus of power. Contrastingly, Foucault believes that power is more productive than repressive. If power were never anything other than repression, Foucault asks: “do you really think one would be brought to obey it?” Then, he provides the answer:

What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. (Foucault, 1980, p. 119)

The last feature characterizing Foucault's concept of power is the possibility of resistance. That is, although Foucault believes that power is omnipresent and pervasive as it permeates every aspect of our daily life, he allows the chance to resist it. In Foucault's mind, it is wrong to think that just because power is everywhere, it can not be resisted. In his own words, "to say that one can never be 'outside' power does not mean that one is trapped and condemned to defeat no matter." (pp. 141-142) On the contrary, power and resistance go hand in hand. That is, wherever and whenever power exists, resistance takes place. For Foucault, "there are no relations of power without resistances; the latter are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are exercised." (p. 142) The point being made here is that despite the fact that power manifests itself in all human interactions, Foucault maintains that individuals can always find a way to escape and avoid power. This is to mean that when they get involved in a particular power relation, individuals are not doomed to play a passive role. They are, rather, active agents that can subvert the position they occupy in the power relation. Indeed, Foucault (1979) makes it clear that where there is power, there is resistance. Consequently, although disciplinary power "exerts pressure upon [all individuals], [...] they themselves, in their struggle against it, resist the grip it has on them." (p. 26)

Concerning the power-knowledge nexus, Foucault illustrates the inseparability of the two elements by exploring three regimes of penalty: torture, punishment and discipline. Torture refers to the public and physical punishment of criminals. It is closely connected with the monarchical system, which reflects an understanding of power in which torture is the common penal technique. Foucault (1979) notes that torture which

takes the form of execution is necessarily public and ceremonial. That is, to reestablish the power of the king, torture must be done in a ceremony so as to “show the crime and at the same time the sovereign that mastered it.” (p. 93) Torture, Foucault argues, is centered mainly on inflicting pain and suffering to the body of the condemned. Besides, it is always violent and brutal because it aims to instill fear and terror in the attendees. Put in Foucault’s words, “the punishment is carried out in such a way as to give a spectacle not of measure, but of imbalance and excess.” (p. 49)

According to Foucault (1979), the brutality of torture pushes reformers to suggest a more humane form of punishment. Hence, little by little, punishment ceases to be violent and arbitrary. It is no longer “the symmetry of vengeance, but the transparency of the sign to that which it signifies; what is required is to establish, in the theater of punishments, a relation that is immediately intelligible to the senses and on which a simple calculation may be based: a sort of reasonable aesthetic of punishment.” (p. 106) In other words, punishment depends on establishing “obstacle-signs” (p. 108) which represent crimes and their suitable penalties. This system of signs functions in what Foucault calls the punitive city, which contains many theaters of punishment aiming to prevent future crimes through the representation of how each crime is punished. Therefore, although what people see in these theaters is not real, it makes them internalize punishment. This is to mean that although watching is still important, unlike torture which aims to create fear and terror, this new system of punishment seeks to educate people and stop them from committing crimes. As Foucault maintains, “punishments must be a school rather than a festival; an ever-open book rather than a ceremony.” (p. 111)

Punishment, in its turn, is replaced by discipline. The latter is identified as marking a radical transformation in the way in which power is viewed. To put it more explicitly, power in disciplinary societies is no longer an object which the sovereign possesses and practices from the top down. The point being made here is that discipline is practiced by everyone and not just a central authority. Discipline, as Foucault (1979) argues, “may be identified neither with an institution nor with an apparatus; it is a type of power, a modality for its exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets; it is a ‘physics’ or an ‘anatomy’ of power, a technology.” (p. 215) Unlike torture whose aim is to take revenge and inflict pain and suffering to the body, discipline seeks to create docile bodies, that is, to reform individuals and correct their behaviors. The body in disciplinary societies is viewed as something that can be trained and made to obey.

It is important to note that disciplinary power, as Foucault (1979) maintains, is exercised on the basis of, among other things, the arrangement of individuals into classifications, groups and ranks: “disciplines characterize, classify, specialize, they distribute along a scale, around a norm, hierarchize individuals in relation to one another and, if necessary, disqualify and invalidate.” (p. 223) Indeed, this placing of individuals into hierarchies of subjects is what constructs their identities. That is, by being opposed to one another, individuals become well-known.²⁶ In Foucault’s account, the subjection of individuals to this system of rank and classification allows both the production of

²⁶ Foucault (1979) uses the example of schools to explain his argument that discipline is after all “an art of rank.” In schools, he argues, students are often measured and classified according to their capacities. The result of this classification is that students tend to view themselves as either inferior or superior in comparison with other students. For Foucault, ranking in schools as well as in other disciplinary institutions “marks the gaps, hierarchizes qualities, skills and aptitudes.” Therefore, it creates an environment of rivalry and competition, contributing, therefore, to the reduction of individual singularities. (p. 181)

knowledge and the exercise of power. That is to say, the classificatory logic of disciplinary power enables those in power to efficiently observe individuals. On the other hand, this meticulous system of observation to which individuals are subjected not only forces them to behave as presumed, but also enables to gather knowledge about them. It is this matrix of power and knowledge that enables the creation of a form of individuality that allows bodies to play their presumed role in life as a whole. In Foucault's own words, "[the] subjection [of the body] is not only obtained by the instruments of violence or ideology; [...] there may be a knowledge of the body." (p. 26)

Foucault (1979) finds in Bentham's panopticon²⁷ the perfect architectural model for his theory of disciplinary power. Because of its one-way surveillance, Foucault contends that although the inmates are aware that an observer might be observing them, they can not know exactly when they are being observed. Therefore, they constantly behave as if they are observed all times:

He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection.

(pp. 202-203)

²⁷ "A perimeter building in the form of a ring. At the centre of this a tower, pierced by large windows opening on to the inner face of the ring. The outer building is divided into cells each of which traverses the whole thickness of the building. These cells have two windows, one opening onto the inside, facing the windows of the central tower, the other, outer one allowing daylight to pass through the whole cell. All that is then needed is to put an overseer in the tower and place in each of the cells a lunatic, a patient, a convict, a worker or a schoolboy. The back lighting enables one to pick out from the central tower the little captive silhouettes in the ring of cells. In short the principle of the dungeon is reversed; daylight and the overseer's gaze captures the inmate more effectively than darkness, which afforded after all a sort of protection." (Foucault, 1980, p. 147)

In other words, whether they are being watched or not, the inmates always discipline themselves and regulate their behaviors lest they are caught acting in opposition to the manner prescribed by the institution. The panopticon allows the watcher to see without being seen. That's why it creates in the inmates a feeling of an omniscient surveillance. To put it in Foucault's own words, the panopticon aims to "induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power." (p. 201)

In fact, Foucault (1979) employs the Benthamite panopticon as a metaphor for social control. The idea of the panopticon is integrated into, among other institutions, the school, the hospital, the court, the barrack and the like, giving, thus, rise to what Foucault calls "the formation of the disciplinary society." (p. 209) Therefore, like the prisoners in the panopticon, people in the disciplinary society are instilled with the feeling that they are always watched and controlled. Foucault's basic premise is that people in the disciplinary society, having internalized disciplinary power, take responsibility in regulating their actions lest they are caught acting against their society's norms.²⁸ In Foucault's mind, the panoptic ideals find their way to all society's institutions, affecting all aspects of people's daily life. Therefore, the panopticon "must be understood as a generalisable mode of functioning, a way of defining power relations in terms of the everyday life of men." (p. 205)

Indeed, it should be made clear that the Benthamite panopticon is the best model to highlight Foucault's theory of power-knowledge. For knowledge can be created about

²⁸ The best example that can be used here to illustrate the internalization of power by the members of society is perhaps that of the driver who stops at red light even in the absence of the policeman. That is, having internalized power symbolized by the policeman, the driver acts as if the latter is always observing him, thus, drives as he is supposed to.

individuals the same as power can be exercised over them by subjecting them to a panoptic system of constant surveillance and observation. According to Foucault, observation not only leads to a thorough knowledge of the people observed, but also allows control over them. That is, exposing people to a system of constant observation influences their actions. It is may be in this light that Foucault talks about the panopticon as a tool of creating docile bodies. The panopticon, Foucault (1979) argues, “‘makes’ individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise.” (p. 170) The point Foucault tries to make here is not that power and knowledge are used to denote the same thing, but that power and knowledge have the same origin: the objectification of Man. Foucault locates the power-knowledge nexus in the appearance of the individual as an object. This objectification is what enables the production of knowledge and the exercise of power. It is, as Foucault makes the point, the moment that “constitute[s] the individual as effect and object of power, as effect and object of knowledge.” (p. 192)

1.3. 4 Foucault’s Dialectics of Power and Knowledge in Said’s *Orientalism*

Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* is another major source of inspiration to Edward Said in his analysis of Orientalism. Relatedly, drawing on Foucault’s power-knowledge nexus, Said manages to uncover the link between Orientalism as a form of knowledge and colonialism as a form of power. However, before delving into the meat of the issue, it may be better to detect some points of similarity between Foucault’s critique of the prison system and Said’s critique of Orientalism, which attests to the influence the former exerts on the latter. First, being ‘an art of rank,’ disciplinary power, as Foucault believes, classifies individuals into groups and classes. Thus, it enables them to have a sense of

identity, mainly by being opposed to each other. Similarly, Said argues that Orientalism constructs a binary opposition that allows Westerners to form a sense of identity in total contrast to Orientals.

Additionally, just the same as Foucault argues that the main purpose of disciplinary power is to create docile bodies, Edward Said contends that Orientalism aims mainly to create docile Orientals. That is, Orientals who accept colonial rule and domination with consent and satisfaction. However, the use of the panopticon metaphor, it can be claimed, is the most important similarity, connecting Said's *Orientalism* to Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*. In this respect, in accordance with Foucault's use of the panopticon to illustrate his theory of disciplinary power, Said evokes the panopticon metaphor to stress the visibility of the Orient. In other words, like the inmates in the panopticon, the Orient and Orientals are always visible while the Orientalist represents the invisible guard in the central watchtower. Just the same as the prison guard, Said argues (1979), "the Orientalist surveys the Orient from above, with the aim of getting hold of the whole sprawling panorama before him-culture, religion, mind, history, society." (p. 239) Briefly, the author of *Orientalism* believes that the whole Orient can be viewed panoptically. (p. 240)

Indeed, Said (1979) refers to the gaze of the Orientalist and the visibility of the Orient times and times again, linking them to the panopticon metaphor. For instance, when discussing Flaubert's portrayal of the Orient, he maintains that since "the Orient is watched," and "the European is a watcher," "the Orient becomes a living tableau of queerness." (p. 103) In the same line of argument, Said insists that the Orientalists produce knowledge on the Orient only to make it more and more visible. For example,

the *Description de l'Égypte*, he assumes, is made only “to render Egypt completely open, to make it totally accessible to European scrutiny.” (p. 83) Similarly, Silvestre de Sacy admits that his work has “uncovered, brought to light, rescued a vast amount of obscure matter [...] in order to place it before the student.” For him, the purpose of “knowledge was essentially the making visible of material, and the aim of a tableau was the construction of a sort of the Benthamite panopticon.” (p. 127)

Back to the power-knowledge nexus, it can be assumed that one of Edward Said's main concerns in *Orientalism* is to explore the historical and institutional context that gave rise to Orientalism. In this respect, many critics note that Said locates the rise of Orientalism within the history of imperial expansion. Loomba (2005), for instance, maintains that “Said's project is to show how ‘knowledge’ about non-Europeans was part of the process of maintaining power over them.” (p. 43) Similarly, Moore-Gilbert (1997) asserts that “the urgent aim of *Orientalism* is to expose the degree to which Western systems of knowledge and representation have been involved in the long history of the West's material and political subordination of the non-Western world.”²⁹ (p. 37)

Relatedly, influenced by Michel Foucault's theorization of power-knowledge, Said (1979) insists that Orientalism did not emerge out of the blue; it was, rather, the product of the Western will and desire to control and dominate the so-called Orient. Therefore, he explicitly places the rise of modern Orientalism within the context of Europe's imperial conquest and expansion. In his own words, “within the umbrella of Western hegemony over the Orient, [...] there emerged a complex Orient suitable for study in the academy.” (p. 7) This is to mean that before being a matter of military and

²⁹ Indeed, towards the end of *Orientalism*, Said (1979) himself puts it bluntly that the purpose of his book is to challenge what he calls “the worldwide hegemony of Orientalism and all it stands for.” (p. 328)

political power, the imperial project is “a thing of mind and representation.” (Boehmer, 2005, p. 23) Therefore, it is not surprising that the European conquerors paved the way for their conquest of the Orient through a deep study of the people and lands to be conquered. It is may be in this light that Farghaly (1991) asserts that during the second half of the eighteenth century, Europe possessed a thorough knowledge of the East: a basic documentation of the East within the geographical, political, social, cultural, linguistic and even religious area had been studied and analyzed in the West. (As cited in Hamdi Abdelazim Abdelmaksoud, 2008, p. 61)

In this respect, Said affirms that it is this profound study of the Orient that contributed to those Orientalist attitudes that made the task of the imperial powers easy and efficient. Therefore, it can be argued that the Europeans could not have succeeded in subjecting and dominating the East if they had not studied and surveyed it in advance. To argue this point, Richards (1993) notes that “the British may not have created the longest-lived empire in history, but it was certainly one of the most data-intensive: the several servants of empire pulled together so much information and wrote so many books about their experiences that today we have only begun to scratch the surface of their archive.” (p. 4)

Said’s fundamental premise is that Orientalism as a form of knowledge on the Orient, far from being innocent or objective, was used “to manage-and even produce-the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period.” (Said, 1979, p. 3) Thus, this knowledge was not produced for the sake of knowledge as the Europeans claim, but was part of the imperial project itself. In Said’s mind, Orientalism did not only validate and

promote the imperial rule in the East, but it also made it possible in the first place: “To say simply that Orientalism was a rationalization of colonial rule is to ignore the extent to which colonial rule was justified in advance by Orientalism, rather than after the fact.” (Said, 1979, p. 39)

Therefore, despite their pretended objective to produce scientific and disinterested knowledge on the Orient, Said (1979) asserts that the Orientalists had a hidden agenda which was to serve the interests of rule and domination. Thus, he trusted no one of them; they were all tarred with the same imperial brush. The Orientalists, no matter what they were, professors, politicians, academicians or simply common peoples were empire-builders. To put it in Said’s own words, “it is therefore correct that every European, in what he could say about the Orient, was consequently a racist, an imperialist, and almost totally ethnocentric.”³⁰ (p. 204) In the same line of argument, Waardenburg (2005) claims that every one knowing something about the colonized territories was somehow caught in the machinery of the colonial apparatus. (p. 7) Consequently, the texts which the Orientalists produced, be they historical, literary, anthropological, or whatever were somehow implicated in the imperial project. The point here is that “the linkage between European power and Orientalism as a form of knowledge could be discerned in virtually every text on the Orient produced in Europe and the United States.” (Lockman, 2010, p. 188)

³⁰ Such sweeping generalization which leaves no room for exceptions is what makes Said guilty of the same essentialism for which he criticizes the Orientalists. However, it should be born in mind that the point being made here is concerned only with the first edition of his book. In his ‘afterward’ to the 1995 edition of *Orientalism*, Said begins to break away with some of his generalizations. For example, he says: “nowhere do I argue that Orientalism is evil, or sloppy, or uniformly the same in the work of each and every Orientalist.” (p. 342)

Said (1979) makes of the late eighteenth century the starting-point of his study.³¹

This time is very significant in the sense that it is the moment in which the European imperial project began in earnest, mainly with Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798. According to Said, since the late eighteenth century, Orientalism took off its scholarly and scientific character to become synonymous with power and domination, or as he says, "a Western style for dominating restructuring, and having authority over the Orient." (p. 3)

Indeed, Napoleon's conquest of Egypt, which Said (1979) describes as "the very model of a truly scientific appropriation of one culture by another culture," (p. 42) is identified as marking the beginning of modern Orientalism. Since it was sustained with "ideas and myths culled from texts [...and] not empirical reality," (p. 80) Napoleon's conquest of Egypt is a strong example that Said relies on to illustrate his thesis that Europe's knowledge of the Orient went hand in glove with European imperialism and colonialism. In this respect, for the success of his military move, Napoleon had read a lot of books about the country he intended to conquer. This prior textual attitude with which Napoleon came to Egypt was "put directly to functional colonial use", thus, enabled him to effectively rule Egypt. (p. 80) Suffice it to mention his reading of the work of the

Comte de Volney *Voyage en Egypte et en Syrie*, which appeared in two volumes in 1787.

³¹ However, it must also be noted that although Said (1979) considers the late eighteenth century as the starting point of the discourse of power he calls Orientalism, he sometimes claims that the imperialist character of Orientalism goes back to the time of Homer. (p. 19) In the same line of argument, he affirms: "from at least the second century B.C. on, it was lost on no traveller or eastward-looking and ambitious Western potentate that Herodotus-historian, traveler, inexhaustibly curious chronicler-and Alexander-king warrior, scientific conqueror-had been in the Orient before. The Orient was therefore subdivided into realms previously known, visited, conquered, by Herodotus and Alexander as well as their epigones, and those realms not previously known, visited, conquered." (pp. 57-58) This methodological inconsistency in Said's thesis has been the subject of much criticism. See, for example, Aijaz Ahmad's *In Theory* on page 181.

Indeed, thanks to this work, Napoleon was able to get an idea about what to find in Egypt and what to expect from its people. In other words, Volney's *Voyage en Egypte et en Syrie* enabled Napoleon to predict what Said calls "the obstacles to be faced in the Orient by any French expeditionary force." (p. 81) For example, thanks to the books Napoleon had read, he knew the importance of religious authority in the Egyptian culture. Hence, as a consequence, he tried hard to convince the Egyptians that he was fighting for Islam. Besides, he used to bestow gifts and presents on the local muftis in order to gain their support for the French expedition in return. He also "gave his deputy Kleber strict instructions after he left always to administer Egypt through the Orientalists and the religious Islamic leaders whom they could win over." (p. 82) Therefore, it can be argued that Napoleon did not depend only on military power, but also on manipulation to win the consent of the Egyptians.³²

In addition to his prior reliance on the work of Volney, Napoleon had in mind to construct what Said (1979) calls, "a sort of living archive for the expedition." (p. 81) Thus, along with his huge army of soldiers, Napoleon took with him a large number of scholars specialized in all areas of knowledge: archeologists, botanists, architects, historians, engineers, doctors, and translators, whose job was to survey Egypt, and its culture, which resulted in the production of a huge scholarly research about Egypt *Description de l'Egypte*, published in twenty three volumes. This kind of scientific examination of Egypt was not meant for the natives, but for the invaders. Therefore, in addition to his desire to dominate Egypt, Napoleon wanted "to make it totally accessible

³² El Kharbotly (1988) is also of the opinion that Napoleon Bonaparte appeared before the Egyptians as a real Orientalist; he pretended to embrace Islam; he celebrated with the Egyptians their religious ceremonies, mainly the Mould; he wore the turban, cloak and caftan; he visited Al-Azhar scholars in their homes; he ate his food with his hands like them; the French commander (Jack Mino) also converted to Islam and married an Egyptian woman. (p. 76)

to European scrutiny.” (p. 83) According to Said, these scholars were real participants in the promotion and justification of Napoleon’s conquest of Egypt. No one of them was able to avoid the corrupting effect of Napoleon’s power upon the knowledge they produced. Therefore, they were, as Said says, “the learned division of the army.” (p. 84)

Indeed, throughout his thesis, Said attempts to prove the unavoidable coalition of Western Power and knowledge on the Orient, illustrating his arguments with telling examples from the writings of Chateaubriand, Lamartine, James Balfour, Henry Kissinger, Hugo, Flaubert and Marx to name but a few. For example, in a subsection titled “knowing the Oriental”, Said sets out to analyze public speeches and writings of Arthur James Balfour and Lord Cromer, two British imperialists of the early 20th century. Relatedly, Said notes that Balfour believes that the British have the right to rule Egypt simply because they possess knowledge about it. In the words of Balfour, “we know the civilization of Egypt better than we know the civilization of any other country. We know it further back; we know it more intimately; we know more about it.” (As cited in Said, 1979, p. 32) For Balfour, to have such knowledge about Egypt means to be able to dominate it. Accordingly, knowledge places the British in a position of power and superiority. Balfour imbues the British with power over Egypt not only on the basis of their military capacities, but also on the basis of their knowledge about it.

On the other hand, Said notes that unlike his vilifying portrayal of Orientals, Balfour depicts Westerners in such a way that their superiority is always guaranteed, if not promoted:

Western nations as soon as they emerge into history show the beginnings of those capacities for self-government having merits of their own.... You may look

through the whole history of the Orientals in what is called, broadly speaking, the East, and you never find traces of self-government. (As cited in Said, 1997, p. 32)

Balfour goes further in his derogatory depiction of the Egyptian people; they are, to quote Said, “a subject race, dominated by a race that knows them and what is good for them better than they could possibly know themselves.” (p. 35) Hence, Balfour claims that it is the duty of the British to occupy Egypt so as to take it out of its darkness and backwardness. For him, British occupation of Egypt is a duty because it is “Egypt [that] requires, indeed insists upon British occupation.” (p. 34) Said finds Balfour’s logic in defending British occupation of Egypt quite ridiculous. He summarizes this logic in the following words: “There are Westerners, and there are Orientals. The former dominate; the latter must be dominated, which usually means having their land occupied, their internal affairs rigidly controlled, their blood and treasure put at the disposal of one or another Western power.”³³ (p. 36) Balfour moves on to praise the achievements of Cromer in Egypt, claiming that his wise politics rescued Egypt from its social and economic crises. In Balfour’s words:

Everything he has touched he has succeeded in . . . Lord Cromer’s services during the past quarter of a century have raised Egypt from the lowest pitch of social and economic degradation until it now stands among Oriental nations, I believe, absolutely alone in its prosperity, financial and moral.³⁴ (As cited in Said, 1979, p. 35)

³³ Indeed, Balfour’s whole speech in the House of Commons is nothing but a blatant attempt to justify England’s domination of Egypt, thus, provides the author of *Orientalism* with a solid and grounded evidence to demonstrate how knowledge and power can go hand in hand.

³⁴ It must be noted here that Cromer did not impose himself and his politics on the Egyptians by force. Like Napoleon, Cromer tried to get the natives’ consent and acceptance by knowing their beliefs and attitudes.

On the other hand, in his analysis of Cromer's record of his experience in Egypt titled *Modern Egypt*, Said manages to detect many denigrating epithets used by Cromer in his depiction of Egypt and its people to justify their subjection. Unlike the European, who is "a close reasoner" and always "requires proof before he can accept the truth of any proposition," the Oriental "contradict [s] himself half-a-dozen times before he has finished his story." Cromer continues his denigration of Orientals, claiming that they are "gullible, "devoid of energy and initiative," much given to "fulsome flattery," intrigue, cunning, and unkindness to animals." He adds that "Orientals are inveterate liars, they are "lethargic and suspicious," and "in everything oppose the clarity, directness, and nobility of the Anglo-Saxon race." (pp. 38-39)

Another example offered by Said to demonstrate the link between power and knowledge is Chateaubriand, who bluntly incited Westerners to occupy the East to teach its people the meaning of liberty which they categorically ignore: "Of liberty, they know nothing; of propriety, they have none: force is their God. When they go for long periods without seeing conquerors who do heavenly justice, they have the air of soldiers without a leader, citizens without legislators, and a family without a father." (As cited in Said, 1979, p. 172) Said ridicules such a claim, asserting that Chateaubriand himself argues that "Orientals require conquest, and finding it no paradox that a Western conquest of the Orient was not conquest after all, but liberty." (p. 172) Said uncovers Chateaubriand's double standards, affirming that the only liberty that he was concerned with was his own liberty. That is, he wanted to liberate himself from an Orient that appeared hostile to him.

For him, "knowledge of subject races or Orientals is what makes their management easy and profitable; knowledge gives power, more power requires more knowledge, and so on in an increasingly profitable dialectic of information and control." (Said, 1979, p. 36)

Moreover, the writings of Lamartine, Said notes, are themselves irrevocably committed to the promotion of European Imperialism. Relatedly, Said mentions a quotation where Lamartine maintains that Europe has the right to rule the Orient, which he describes as “nations without territory, patrie, rights, laws or security,” thus, “waiting anxiously for the shelter of European occupation.” (As cited in Said, 1979, p. 179) According to Said, Lamartine’s description of the Orient is not based on the places he has visited, the people he has met and the experiences he has lived. These are replaced by generalizations that served the geopolitical project of Lamartine in conquering the East.

On the other hand, although Said recognizes the genius of Flaubert and the complexity of his work, he attacks his hostile views towards Orientals, mainly the Oriental woman, whom Flaubert describes as promiscuous and easily accessible. For Flaubert, the Oriental woman is no better than an object of his sexual fantasies; she is passive and stupid. Said argues that Flaubert insists to vilify the Oriental woman. For example, in a letter which he wrote to his mistress, Flaubert claims that “the Oriental woman is no more than a machine: she makes no distinction between one man and another man.” (As cited in Said, 1979, p. 187) Indeed, early in the introduction, Said (1979) informs us that Flaubert “was foreign, comparatively wealthy, male, and these were historical facts of domination that allowed him not only to possess Kuchuk Hanem physically but to speak for her and tell his readers in what way she was “typically Oriental.” (p. 6)

Having viewed the ways in which Michel Foucault and Edward Said address the issue of power-knowledge, it becomes clear that although Said acknowledges his intellectual debt to Michel Foucault, the two men seem to offer two different models of

power. For example, in contrast to Foucault, whose work suggests a notion of power that is fluid and not centralized within a specific individual or institution, Edward Said insists to locate power within colonialism. The latter is the only institution that has power and uses it to oppress the colonized. Therefore, unlike the Foucauldian pervasive power, Said (1979) maintains that “Orientalism brings one up directly against that question- colonialism-that is, to realizing that political imperialism governs an entire field of study, imagination, and scholarly institutions-in such a way as to make its avoidance an intellectual and historical impossibility.”³⁵ (pp. 13-14)

Another point upon which Foucault and Said disagree in their views of power is the possibility of resistance. That is, whereas Foucault maintains that resistance is so central to power relations, Said tends to view power as an oppressive thing bearing down on those powerless Orientals who passively submit to its grip. Throughout Said’s research, on no occasion he refers to the Orientals’ participation in the construction of their representation. Therefore, unlike Foucault who allows the individual the possibility to resist power, Said’s *Orientalism* seems to neglect native agency and resistance.³⁶

1.3.5 Gramsci’s Concept of Cultural Hegemony

It is generally agreed upon that Antonio Gramsci shares with Marx and the Marxists as a whole their belief that the struggle between the ruling class and the subordinate working class is what enables society to move forward. However, when it

³⁵ This is to mean that Power in Said’s account is not an interaction as Foucault claims, but a privilege which the colonizer owns and uses oppressively against the colonized. Foucault, on the contrary, rejects such a negative view, claiming that power is more productive than repressive.

³⁶ In fact, Said (1994) himself makes the point clearly when he admits: “What I left out of *Orientalism* was the response to Western dominance which culminated in the great movements of decolonization all across the Third World.” (p. xii)

comes to the way the ruling class dominates and rules, Gramsci distances himself a lot from Marxism. In other words, whereas the Marxists focus on the coercive practices of the ruling class and its tendency to exploit the proletariat by means of force, Gramsci emphasizes the role of ideology. In his opinion, before the ruling class resorts to direct force and coercion, it seeks to make its rule acceptable by all classes. This is what Gramsci calls “hegemony”. And to foster a better understanding of the concept, it is useful to highlight its link to earlier Marxist thought. Relatedly, Marx is of the opinion that the world can not get its real meaning through our views and perceptions as idealist philosophers claim. For him, our ideas and views necessarily appear within certain historical and social contexts: “life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life.” (As cited in Jones, 2006, p. 28)

In this respect, it is important to note that Marx divides society into two major components: a base and a superstructure. The first is represented by the economic structure and the second by socializing mechanisms such as language, religion, education, law, ideology, mass media and the army. It needs to be emphasized here that Marx believes that the economic base of society is what determines its social, political and cultural environment. He argues that “the mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general.” He adds that the society’s economic relations “constitute the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness.” (As cited in Williams, 1977, p. 75)

According to Marx, since the ruling class owns and controls the means of production, it must equally control the means of intellectual and cultural production.

Consequently, the ideas of the ruling class must be the most prevailing ideas in society. Put in Marx's own words, "the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas [. . .] the class which has the means of material production at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production." (As cited in Jones, 2006, p. 28) By implication, therefore, what follows is that since the economic base is the determining element in society, the success of the working class revolution requires a fundamental change in the economic base. According to Marx, the superstructural changes alone can not change the essential characteristics of capitalist exploitation. Therefore, "to truly change society, the base would have to be fundamentally changed and this for Marx, writing in the context of industrial society, entailed workers seizing control of the 'means of production' (above all, the factories)." (As cited in Jones, 2006, p. 29) Therefore, it can be argued that Marx and his followers are so obsessed with the economic factor that they ignore the role culture and ideology can play in the production of social relations. For them, it is always the economic base that determines the status people occupy in society. This is to imply that if the working class wants to become the dominant class in society, it must have total control of the base. That is, revolution would be possible only if there is a fundamental change in the economic base.

Gramsci rejects the Marxist claim that the power of the ruling class is limited to the economic base. For him, a social class becomes hegemonic not only by controlling the means of production and coercing other classes but rather by establishing their consent. In fact, consent is so important to Gramsci's theory of hegemony. The point being made is that before the ruling class resorts to force and coercion, it seeks to indoctrinate the proletariat with those ideas that make them consent to their subordinate

position. Gramsci holds the view that hegemony is always established on the “spontaneous” consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group. As Gramsci (1971) makes the point, “this consent is “historically” caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production.” (p. 12)

In the main, Gramsci’s concept of hegemony can be traced back to Marx’s prediction that the working class revolution which took place in Russia would spread to all advanced capitalist societies. Gramsci notices that this was not the case. On the contrary, although the suffering of the working class was very obvious, the ruling classes of all capitalist societies managed to maintain their rule, in some cases without even using physical force and coercion. According to Gramsci, the subaltern people were so manipulated that it did not even occur to them to question the dominant system of rule which came to be seen as the “norm”. The dominant groups managed to stabilize their rule by seeking to win the approval of other groups.³⁷

The main point to get hold of here is that the consent of the people is what makes the rule of the dominant class secure. This is why the latter relies more on manipulative and ideological means than direct force and oppressive power. Put differently, when the subaltern people believe that it is in their interests to accept the leadership of the ruling class, they do so willingly. Femia (1981) makes the same point, asserting that “those who are consenting must somehow be truly convinced that the interests of the dominant group

³⁷ To argue this point, Strinati (1995) maintains that the “dominant groups in society, including fundamentally but not exclusively the ruling class, maintain their dominance by securing the 'spontaneous consent' of subordinate groups, including the working class, through the negotiated construction of a political and ideological consensus which incorporates both dominant and dominated groups.” (p. 165)

are those of society at large, that the hegemonic group stands for a proper social order in which all men are justly looked after.” (p. 42) With this idea in mind it comes as no surprise that the ruling class does not impose its system of rule by means of force, but rather through “the permeation throughout society of an entire system of values, attitudes, beliefs and morality that has the effect of supporting the status quo in power relations.”

(Boggs, 1976, p. 39) This is how the dominated groups are brainwashed and manipulated into accepting the economic, political and social leadership of the dominant class.

Hegemony, according to Boggs, can be characterized as “the ‘organising principle’ that is diffused by process of socialisation into every area of daily life. To the extent that this prevailing consciousness is internalised by the population it becomes part of what is generally called ‘common sense’ so that the philosophy, culture and morality of the ruling elite comes to appear as the natural order of things.” (p. 39) Therefore, unlike the Marxists’ obsession with the economic base, Gramsci pays more attention to ideology and ideas. For him, as long as the ideas of the subaltern people are dominated, the dominant class will not need to use force and oppression to maintain its rule.

Gramsci takes Marx’s division of the state into a base and a superstructure a step further when he divides the superstructure into what he calls political society and civil society. Whereas political society stands for such coercive institutions as the government, armed forces, police, the legal system and the like, civil society refers to those institutions that are not coercive, including all institutions used in the construction of public opinion. To put it in Gramsci’s own words, “everything which influences or is able to influence public opinion, directly or indirectly, belongs to it: libraries, schools, associations and clubs of various kinds, even architecture and the layout and names of streets.” (Gramsci,

1985, p. 389) In Gramsci's opinion, "the supremacy of a social group or class manifested itself in two different ways: 'domination' or coercion, and 'intellectual and moral leadership'," or hegemony. Whereas the first type of supremacy (i.e. domination) is exercised through force by political society, the second (i.e. hegemony) is exercised through consent by civil society. This is to mean that domination is achieved by the coercive machinery of the state while "Hegemony is attained through the myriad ways in which the institutions of civil society operate to shape, directly or indirectly, the cognitive and affective structures whereby men perceive and evaluate problematic social reality." (Femia, 1981, p. 24)

Therefore, although those in power can achieve social control in two different ways: domination and hegemony, the former is used only when the latter fails. In other words, when the ruling class establishes the consent of the ruled people successfully, oppression and force are no longer needed. Zinn (1991) makes the point in *Declaration of Independence*, suggesting: "If those in charge of our society – politicians, corporate executives and owners of press and television – can dominate our ideas, they will be secure in their power. They will not need soldiers patrolling the streets. We will control ourselves." (As cited in Western, 2008, p. 231) Therefore, Gramsci (1985) insists that physical force is used only against those who refuse to consent: "the apparatus of state coercive power [...] 'legally' enforces discipline on those groups who do not 'consent' either actively or passively. This apparatus is, however, constituted for the whole of society in anticipation of moments of crisis of command and direction when spontaneous consent has failed." (p. 12)

1.3.6 Gramsci's Theory of Hegemony in Said's *Orientalism*

Antonio Gramsci is another inspirer of Edward Said in his analysis of Orientalism. In fact, his theory of cultural hegemony is what enables Said to uncover the ideological and cultural side of European colonialism. Therefore, it is not a big surprise that Said introduces the concept from the very outset of his analysis as an important one. Relatedly, drawing on Gramsci's hegemony, Said affirms that it is through culture that European powers disseminate certain ways of thinking and seeing that make their conquest of Oriental lands appear legitimate and beneficial for the natives. This is how hegemony is established over Orientals who are manipulated into viewing colonialism as "a natural phenomenon". In this respect, Said finds in the discourse of Orientalism a perfect example of how hegemony works: "He sees the literary texts and the historical accounts of the West as valuable representations of the ways in which hegemony works." (Shelly, 2001, p. 34) The point to get hold of here is that these texts as cultural forms play a fundamental role in the construction of imperial views and perceptions which have an effect on how Oriental people look at themselves. That is, these texts become a mirror in which non-Europeans see their identity and culture. They are "the method colonized people use to assert their identity and the existence of their own history." (Said, 1994, p. xiii)

Therefore, culture can be said to be a much more efficient tool of control than the use of physical force and coercion. For Said, without manipulating the Orientals' culture, hegemony can not be achieved over the Orient. The colonizer may control the Orient politically and economically, yet this control will not be complete unless the Oriental culture itself is controlled. The Kenyan novelist Wa Thiong'o (1986) is of the same

opinion. For him, “economic and political control can never be complete or effective without mental control. To control a people’s culture is to control their tools of self-definition in relationship to others.” (p. 16)

Said asserts that Orientalism is no more than a cultural project whose aim is to achieve mental control over Orientals. For him, “to speak of Orientalism therefore is to speak mainly, although not exclusively, of a British and a French cultural enterprise,” which aims mainly to establish hegemony over Orientals by making the Colonialist worldview the dominant ideology in Oriental lands. (Said, 1979, p. 4) Relatedly, the relevance of Gramsci’s theory of hegemony to Said’s study of Orientalism can be attributed to the former’s reflections on the concept of consent. Following Gramsci, Said asserts that European colonialism relies much more on the consent of Orientals than on the use of direct force to subdue them. This is to mean that instead of imposing their political and economic policy by force, European powers induce in the minds of the colonized a set of ideological ideas and beliefs which function to manufacture their consent and approval.

Therefore, in a similar manner to Gramsci, who asserts that the ruling class manages to achieve social control in two different ways: domination and hegemony, Said (1979) affirms that the subjection of the Orient itself comes from both of them. In other words, European colonization of the Orient depends on both the use of physical force and coercion and the consent of the subjected people through Orientalism: “Cultural domination is maintained, as much as by Oriental consent as by direct and crude economic pressure.” (p. 124) In Said’s perspective, one way to achieve Oriental consent is through Orientalism, which he qualifies as “an influential academic tradition” (p. 203)

whose aim is to construct an appropriate public opinion in the colonized lands. Therefore, the stories and the views which the Orientalists tell about the Orient and its people aim, among other things, to make Orientals believe that it is in their interests to be colonized by the “civilized” West. No wonder colonialism is always talked about in Orientalist texts in such a manner as to manufacture the natives’ consent. Thus, it can be argued that Orientalism not only constrains how the Orientalist tends to view and talk about the Orient, but it also has a direct effect on the mind and psyche of the colonized. To argue this point, Said says: “like any set of durable³⁸ ideas, Orientalist notions influenced the people who were called Orientals as well as those called Occidental, European, or Western; in short, Orientalism is better grasped as a set of constraints upon and limitations of thought than it is simply as a positive doctrine.” (p. 42)

Just to be clear, Orientalism is, for Said, a cultural tool used by the West to control and manipulate the Orient by means of ideas and ideology. That is, Orientalism keeps hammering into the minds of Orientals that they are savage, uncivilized and in dire need of help until they start to see Western colonialism as a necessity for their salvation. Therefore, the colonizer does not need to resort to the use of force to maintain his authority because the colonized already accepts colonialism as a blessing. Because of this Orientalist indoctrination, the colonized can be said to take part in his own subjection and

³⁸ The epithet “durable” is used here by Said to refer to the long-lasting effect Orientalist ideas have on Orientals. Therefore, it can be argued that nothing is more dangerous than this “set of durable ideas” when internalized by the natives. This is why the colonizer keeps inculcating such Orientalist ideas as “the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures” (Said, 1979, p. 7) in the minds of the colonized people until they believe and adopt them. Fanon (1986) makes the point clearly when he says: “In the colonial context, the colonizer does not stop his work of breaking in [d’êtreintement] the colonized until the latter admits loudly and clearly the supremacy of white values.” (p. 43)

control. It is may be in this light that Said (1979) affirms that “the modern Orient [...] participates in its own Orientalizing.” (p. 325)

Following Gramsci, Said affirms that it is Orientalism rather than military or economic power that promotes Western hegemony over the Orient. It is through Orientalism that a kind of pacification with the colonized is established. The point being made here is that Orientalism functions to convince Orientals that it is for their own good to be colonized by the West. Therefore, it enables the colonizer to avoid Orientals’ resistance: “The scientist, the scholar, the missionary, the trader, or the soldier was in, or thought about, the Orient because he could be there, or could think about it, with very little resistance on the Orient’s part.” (Said, 1979, p. 7) According to Said, the European colonizer does not conquer the Orient the way, for example, the Spaniards did with the New World. Unlike the Spaniards, who were interested only in stealing the New World’s natural resources by means of force, Europeans invade the Orient in the name of “civilizing” the “backward” Orientals:

What distinguishes earlier empires, like the Roman or the Spanish or the Arabs, from the Modern [colonial] empires, of which the British and French were the great ones in the nineteenth century, is the fact that latter ones are systematic enterprises, constantly reinvested. They are not simply arriving in a country, looting it and then leaving when the loot is exhausted. And modern empire requires, as Conrad said, an idea of service, an idea of sacrifice, an idea of redemption. Out of this you get these great, massively reinforced notions of, for example, in the case of France, the “mission civilisatrice.” That we’re not there to benefit ourselves, we are there for the sake of the natives. (Said, 1994, p. 66)

Differently put, Europeans claim that they are in the Orient for a noble cause, to spread civilization and progress among the natives. This seemingly philanthropic mission, which is often called the “White Man’s Burden”, is just a beautiful façade behind which the hideous face of European colonialism hides. In Said’s opinion (1979), the White Man’s “civilizing mission” is just an excuse to invade the Orient: “To have said, as Curzon once did, that ‘the East is a University in which the scholar never takes his degree’ was another way of saying that the East required one’s presence there more or less forever.” (p. 215)

Therefore, the progress which Europeans promise to bring to the Orient is no more than a big lie. It is just a romantic discourse which has nothing to do with the sour reality of the “civilizing mission.” Said makes it clear that what the Occident is concerned with in the Orient is just the latter’s fortunes. Europeans’ economic interests are the driving force behind their presence in the Orient, or as Said (1979) puts it, “what mattered was not Asia so much as Asia’s use to modern Europe.” (p. 115) Therefore, it can be said that what happens in the “civilizing mission” is contradictory with what was promised: The “liberality [promised] was no more than a form of oppression and mentalistic prejudice.” (p. 254)

On the other hand, Said (1979) explains how Western hegemony is established on the Orient by drawing on Gramsci’s distinction between civil society and political society. “The former [which] is made up of voluntary (or at least rational and non coercive) affiliations like schools, families, and unions,” (pp. 6-7) is the site where Orientalist culture – the main tool for inducing Oriental consent – is located. In Said’s own words, “Culture [...] is to be found operating within civil society, where the influence of ideas, of institutions, and of other persons works not through domination but by what Gramsci

calls consent.” This is to mean that since hegemony is a culturally-motivated phenomenon, Western political society which consists of “state institutions (the army, the police, the central bureaucracy) whose role in the polity is direct domination” is not significant. (p. 7) In other words, in his theorization of Western hegemony over the Orient, Said argues that the West replaces the use of its coercive institutions with the use of certain ideological and persuasive means (“the civilizing mission” and “the White Man’s Burden”) for the sake of winning the consent of Orientals.

If European colonialism, as Said believes, involves indoctrinating the natives with those ways of seeing that help establish their consent, then liberation from it does not simply mean giving land back to its dispossessed owners. A real independence requires a change in the dominant ways of viewing the world. To argue this point, John McLeod asserts that “freedom from colonialism comes not just from the signing of declarations of independence and the lowering and raising of flags. There must also be a change in the minds, a challenge to the dominant ways of seeing.” (McLeod, 2000, p. 22)

1.4 Conclusion

To sum-up, this chapter is meant to give a thorough understanding of Said’s seminal text. Therefore, it explores in detail the basic concepts on which Said builds up his analysis of Orientalism. More particularly, the chapter explains Foucault’s concepts of discourse and power-knowledge and Gramsci’s theorization of cultural hegemony. Then, it shows how the author of *Orientalism* employs these concepts. The conclusion that can be drawn from the chapter is that Said rejects the West’s view of Orientalism as a purely academic discipline. It is, on the contrary, a political doctrine that distorts the actual reality of the Orient and Orientals to serve the West’s political agenda. In other

words, tarred with bias and prejudice, the Orientalist knowledge of the Orient is meant to rationalize and justify the West's domination of the Orient.

CHAPTER TWO:
THE SAIDISTS: RANA KABBANI, MARY LOUISE PRATT AND DAVID
SPURR

2.1 Introduction

Although Edward Said is not the first to launch a harsh attack on the West's construction of the Orient as an object of knowledge, the man gains an unrivalled reputation for his famous book *Orientalism*. The latter soon becomes one of the most-cited books in the humanities as a whole. This is to mean that the book's arguments are often viewed as strong and well-considered ideas. That's why they are passionately followed in many studies on Western knowledge of the Orient. One of the central ideas of the book which has won widespread support and advocacy is that Western knowledge of the Orient tends to perpetuate a negative and stereotypical image of the Orient and Orientals. This vilification of the region and its inhabitants is meant to keep them in fixed states of inferiority and primitiveness to uphold the superiority of the Europeans. For Said, it is this imperial dichotomy that supposedly endows the Europeans with the right to rule over the inferior race.

The chapter proposes to examine the writings of three of the most prominent figures who have chosen to follow Said in his assault on Orientalism. These figures agree with Said that Orientalism has yielded a systematic misrepresentation of the Orient to justify its conquest. For example, Rana Kabbani claims in her *Imperial Fictions* (1986) that the views which the nineteenth and twentieth centuries travel writers conveyed of the Orient are all biased and hostile. Therefore, these views, she argues, are closely linked to the West's domination of the East. In the same line of argument, Mary Louise Pratt

demonstrates in a seminal text *Imperial Eyes* (1992) that Western travel writings contributed to imperialism by constructing a world for the Europeans to colonize and dominate. In addition to Kabbani and Pratt, David Spurr himself seems to confirm Said's thesis about the implication of Orientalism in the West's imperial project. He writes *the Rhetoric of Empire* (1993) to reveal what he calls the rhetorical features which colonial discourse uses in its portrayal of the East to justify its domination and conquest.

2.2 Rana Kabbani and *Imperial Fictions*

The Syrian writer Rana Kabbani is best known for her 1986 published work *Imperial Fictions: Europe's Myths of Orient*. Concerned mainly with Victorian literature, Travel writings and paintings, Kabbani's research openly confirms Edward Said's critical stand against the West's construction of the Orient.³⁹ Relatedly, Kidwai (2015) considers *Imperial Fictions* as an extension of Said's research. For him, like Said's *Orientalism*, Kabbani's work itself accuses Western writers of presenting a distorted image of the Orient and Orientals. (p. ii) In the same line of argument, Al-Hajri (2003) argues that although Kabbani states neither the problem nor the questions of her research, one can easily realize from the introduction that she is, like Said's text, concerned with the critique of prejudices of Western travellers and their misconceptions of the Orient. (p. 22) According to Kabbani (1994), "the bulk of European travel narrative about the East was

³⁹ Indeed, the woman's willingness to support the author of *Orientalism* is made direct and explicit from the very outset. Thus, early in the preface of her book, Kabbani (1994) literally restates Said's argument that "in attempting to document the Orient (the Other, the opposite, the enemy, the foil), the Occident came to document itself." (p. 10) More than that, she openly admits in her Notes that she draws a lot of inspiration in her definition of Orientalism from Said's understanding of the concept: "I am indebted to professor Said's definition of Orientalism as a method of cataloguing the Orient that was inextricably linked to the imperialistic world-view." (p. 141)

so strongly coloured by bias and supposition.” (p. 139) It is for this reason that she assumes the task to resist this kind of scholarship and point out its colonial nature.⁴⁰

However, before we set out to explore the main focus of her *Imperial Fictions*, it is useful to note that Kabbani does not have in mind to make of her book a thorough historical survey of all travel books on the East but an academic examination of particular ones: “I have been selective rather than exhaustive in my choice of texts.” As regards the reason why she focuses her attention on Galland, Lane, Burton, Doughty and Lawrence, she claims that her choice was driven by her belief that “these particular writers were more influential than others in forming the West’s attitude to the East in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.” (Kabbani, 1994, p. 12)

Based on her analysis of the ways in which these authors represent the East, Kabbani makes two important claims. First, the views which the nineteenth and twentieth centuries travel writers constructed on the East are all biased and hostile. This proves the existence of a predetermined discourse that defines how the East must be viewed and represented.⁴¹ Secondly, this discourse is put in the service of the imperialist project. In other words, in favor of Said’s study, Kabbani maintains that there is a predetermined discourse on the Orient and that Western writers, unavoidably subservient

⁴⁰ Kabbani (1994) believes that Western misrepresentations of the East are so persistent and damaging that a serious effort has to be made to review and reject them. Relatedly, her subversive book can be said to represent such effort as its main purpose is to deconstruct the Western taken for granted stereotypes and clichés about the East: “One of the reasons I wrote this book was to disprove the commonly-held and oppressive assumption that Western culture is superior to other cultures; that is somehow more humane, civilized and tolerant, less violent and less misogynistic.” (p. viii)

⁴¹ Although Kabbani seems here to echo Said in his analysis of Orientalism as a discourse in the Foucauldian sense, the two authors disagree on the origin of this discourse. Whereas Kabbani traces it back to the Middle Ages, Said affirms that it can also be viewed in Greco Latin Literature and Historiography. (Hosny, 2017, p. 83)

to that discourse, are deeply implicated in Western Imperialism. (Shabanirad & Marandi, 2015, p. 23)

Relatedly, Kabbani (1994) affirms that the views which the Christian West constructs on the Islamic East are, across history, influenced by the nature of their relationship. In the seventh century, for example, when the Arabs were powerful and their newly Islamicised army attacked Byzantium, “the East seemed more and more to be the enemy.” Because of this enmity, Kabbani argues, the Islamic East was provided with hostile images and attitudes and the prophet of Islam himself was ridiculed and vilified. In other words, during this historical phase, the West viewed the Islamic East as a “dangerous region” and the Muslims as a “monstrous race”. They were perceived as “black, dog-headed and ugly.” The prophet himself was seen as an “arch-seducer, who wore purple, coloured his lips, and delighted in scented things and coition.” In brief, he was viewed as a sensual man who evoked God only to “warrant his own sexual indulgences.” (pp. 14-15) This historical period was the beginning of a new stage for producing stereotyped images of the Orient so as to establish the West’s superiority as the norm in contrast to the Islamic and Arabic savagery and inferiority. (Hosny, 2017, p. 83)

Therefore, the same hostile views and stereotypes continued to circulate in the medieval West, constructing a false image of the East, or as Kabbani (1994) puts it, “the medieval picture of Islam was replete with errors that were willful, and contained within itself a high degree of mythomania.” (p. 17) On the other hand, Kabbani contends that Renaissance England itself inherited the stereotyped image of a dangerous East from the Middle Ages. Accordingly, the travel to Oriental lands or contact with Oriental people

was viewed as risky and dangerous because all those Western travelers who went to the East “confirmed that Easterners were fanatical, violent, and lusty souls.” (p. 19)

However, the West’s fear from the East changed into fascination when the Islamic threat, embodied in the Ottoman Empire, decreased. Therefore, after the translation of the collection of stories commonly referred to as the Arabian Nights in 1704 by the Frenchman Antoine Galland, the West became charmed by an imaginary Orient. As Kabbani (1994) argues, an Orient “that shimmered with possibilities, that promised a sexual space, a voyage away from the self, an escape from the dictates of the bourgeois morality of the metropolis.”⁴² (p. 67) According to Kabbani, the translation of the Arabian Nights had a big impact on the way in which the Orient was perceived. The Arabian Nights gave rise to what Kabbani calls, “a literary frisson” (p. 29) that affected European travel writers, mainly the Romantics and shaped their understanding of the Orient. The Romantics, as Kabbani (1986) notes, had a mythical vision of the Orient as a sublimated place, replete with riches and fortunes. (p. 30) The Poverty and misery which characterized the real Orient had no existence in their mythical views.⁴³ That’s why they are often accused of exaggerating to the maximum the images of the Orient. (Hosny, 2017, p. 84)

Kabbani’s concise overview about the historical development of the West’s construction of the Orient proves that when the imperialist project began in 1798 with

⁴² It is obvious that Kabbani, in this passage, supports Said’s idea that “the Orient was a place where one could look for sexual experience unobtainable in Europe.” (Said, 1979, p. 190)

⁴³ Unlike the Romantics who tend to ignore the poverty of the Orient, Elias Canetti is criticized for his tendency to highlight only the poverty and misery of the natives: “Morocco for Canetti provides endless images of poverty, disease, sorcery, superstition and sexuality. It is almost as if his eye were searching out the instances of differentness that he could present an audience with, in order to evoke shock, disgust, laughter or pity.” (Kabbani, 1994, p. 128)

Napoleon's invasion of Egypt, there had already been a kind of repertory of images, constituting a discourse about the Orient. In this respect, like Said, Kabbani manages to highlight the unity and consistency of the Europeans' views of the Orient. This unity is derived from the fact that European travel writers echoed each other in their description of Oriental countries and peoples. In other words, to prove the truthfulness of their misrepresentations of the Orient and its inhabitants, Europeans relied on each other's testimony. (Kabbani, 1994, p. 39) They accepted the myths, prejudices and stereotypes that their predecessors had formed about the Orient over centuries. They, in this sense, kept repeating the same biased and hostile views and attitudes, constructing what Kabbani (1994) calls "a communal image of the East." (p. 10) It is not surprising that the two themes- the lascivious sensuality of the Orient and its inherent violence- which were dominant in medieval thought have continued in the European narration of the Orient up to the present time.⁴⁴ (p. 6)

On the other hand, all in favor of Said's seminal text, Kabbani makes the claim that the discourse of Orientalism became in the nineteenth century the basis of the West's imperialistic view of the world. According to her, to provide a moral and intellectual justification for the West's oppressive intervention in Oriental lands, Western scholars and travel writers made of the Orientalist stereotypical views of the Orient the bedrock of their thought. No wonder Oriental people were viewed in travel texts as "slothful, preoccupied with sex, violent and incapable of self-government." These vilifying traits

⁴⁴ To demonstrate the self-referential character of Orientalist thinking, Kabbani (1994) also shows how Lane's book *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* became a classic which most English travelers to Egypt read. The book, as James Aldridge says, was "the most truthful and detailed account in English of how Egyptians lived and behaved." (As cited in Kabbani, 1994, p. 39) Any English writer representing Egypt had, therefore, to conform to and confirm Lane's portrayal of the country. In this sense, Lane's book can be said to have had more authority than the reality of Egypt itself. This is to mean that Orientalism as a discourse is what framed how the Orient had to be seen by the Orientalists.

were used to make the West's domination of the East justified and recommended. The colonizer ensured that his political domination and economic exploitation of the East appeared as an honorable act:

He did not come as an exploiter, but as an enlightener. He was not seeking mere profit, but was fulfilling his duty to his Maker and his Sovereign, whilst aiding those less fortunate to rise towards his lofty level. This was the White Man's Burden, that reputable colonial malaise, that sanctioned the subjugating of entire continents.⁴⁵ (Kabbani, 1994, p. 6)

To prove the full validity of her claims, Kabbani (1994) provides evidences from English literature of the Nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For example, although Edward William Lane made sure to appear truthful and objective in his description of Egypt and Egyptians, he could not help repeating the same Orientalist stereotypes which were traditionally used to characterize the Orient and Orientals: Lane "upheld many of the traditional Western epithets about the Easterner in his narrative. He considered the native to be indolent, superstitious, sensually over-indulgent and religiously fanatical." (p .39) Throughout his survey of Egypt, Lane insisted to convey a bleak picture of Egyptians as sexually perverted, stupid and violent people. (p. 41) Indeed, this vilification of Egypt was meant to justify its conquest. As Kabbani explains, Lane himself claimed that Egypt's enlightenment and improvement could be achieved only through its direct contact with the West:

We may hope for, and, indeed, reasonably expect, a very great improvement in the intellectual and moral state of this people, in consequence of the introduction

⁴⁵ It is in this light that Kabbani views Western travel writings as "part of the Orientalism that abetted empire." (p. 10)

of European sciences, by which Mohammad 'Alee, in some degree, made amends for his oppressive sway. (p. 42)

According to the author of *Imperial Fictions*, the influence which Orientalism exerted on the scholars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries manifests itself in Burton's writings as well. Relatedly, Kabbani (1994) notes that Burton shared with other travel writers the belief that non-European people were driven by "instinct, controlled by sexual passions, incapable of the refinement to which the white races had evolved." (p. 63) He portrayed the East as an illicit place and the Eastern woman as a chattel and sexual convenience. Therefore, Burton's East was a voluptuous space where the White European could find the sexual gratification unobtainable in the Victorian home. (p .8)

As Kabbani (1994) points out, Burton's work reproduced the same mythical picture of an erotic East. She finds it unexpected that "someone with the linguistic and intellectual capacities of Burton should, in the end, have helped only to further confirm the myth of the erotic East." Therefore, just the same as other travel writers, Burton "hardly saw anything at all of the details before them." (p. 66) Accordingly, Kabbani launches a harsh attack ⁴⁶on Burton for his double standards and hypocritical attitudes towards the East. She shows how the same Burton, who tried so hard to portray an erotic Orient with its women being sexually exploited, remained reticent about the status of Victorian women who went through the same ordeal in the metropolis: "while Burton was presenting his readers with accounts of sexual mutilation practiced abroad, his medical compatriots were performing sexual mutilation of a similar kind at home." (p.

⁴⁶ Wallen (2013) considers Kabbani's attack on Burton as driven by her strong desire to ruin his reputation in all areas of knowledge. Relatedly, he claims that "Kabbani seems to take real pleasure in denouncing Burton and even seems to hold him accountable for the high number of British clitoridictimies that took place during the Victorian age." (p. 111)

61) Therefore, these double standards prove that Burton did not have in mind to provide objective information about the East and its women as much as to pave the path for the so-called “civilizing mission”.

Kabbani (1994) keeps on detecting European aggressive and hostile views towards the East and its people, exhibiting this time Doughty’s extreme hatred towards the inhabitants of the Arabian Desert and their religion. For Doughty, Christianity was, “the only system of belief that was correct and could enlighten (as in Napoleon’s laicized version, the mission civilisatrice) those less fortunate.” (p. 105) Because of Doughty’s sense of Christian superiority, he abhorred the Islamic faith as he abhorred Muslims. No wonder he unleashed his extreme hostility towards Arabs, charging them with many vilifying stereotypes and clichés. The Arab Bedouins, he claims, were “religious fanatics, liars, thieves, [...] superstitious beings who live in filth while cloaked in holiness.” (p. 108) Kabbani criticizes Doughty for his ungratefulness towards the Bedouins who had been so generous to him: “even Bedouin generosity-the one positive trait that Europe allowed the Arabs- he claimed was capricious at best, even though he sponged off of it for over a year.” She describes Doughty’s portrayal of Arabs as being replete with passion, hostility, scorn, loathing and, at best, with grudging fascination. (p. 109)

In addition to Lane, Burton and Doughty, Kabbani attacks (1994) Lawrence for his shallow understanding of the Arabs. For her, like the majority of English travel writers, Lawrence conveyed a very bleak image of the natives. He insisted to portray them as irrational, backward and primitive people: “The Arab mind is strange and dark, full of depressions and exaltations, lacking in rule.” (As cited in Kabbani, 1994, p. 110) Lawrence considered himself to be mentally and physically superior to the Arabs. That’s

why he insisted to despise and vilify them in his writings. Therefore, as Kabbani (1994) makes the point, writings such as his, which contributed to the construction of an imperialist world-view, had no historical validity as documents. (p. 112)

These authors are identified as the most influential ones in the construction of the Occident's image of the Orient. Accordingly, after her study of their texts, Kabbani (1994) arrives at two important conclusory remarks: First, the West's representation of the East was most of the time tarred with bias and prejudice: "The East became codified and static in ways that were final; no deeper perception was permissible, nor indeed possible given the weighty heritage of prejudice." (p. 139) This is to imply that the nineteenth and twentieth centuries travel writers could not address the Orient objectively because the pre-existing repertory of Western images about the Orient constrained and in many ways determined how they had to see that part of the world: "it is as if the imagination of the traveller, in order to function, has to be sustained by a long tradition of Western scholarship, by other Western texts." (p. 10) Secondly, European travel texts were inextricably tied to Western hegemony over the Orient. For Kabbani, European scholars and writers travelled to Oriental countries only to gather and record the information that could make the task of the colonizers easy and efficient.⁴⁷

2.3 Mary Louise Pratt and *Imperial Eyes*

Another author who seems to fully agree with Edward Said on the link between Western travel writings and imperialism is Mary Louise Pratt. In this respect, like Kabbani's *Imperial Fictions*, Pratt's *Imperial Eyes* (2008 [1992]) itself confirms Said's

⁴⁷ This is to mean that Kabbani, the same as Said, believes that travel writing and the European imperialist project were closely interconnected. Her stand about this point can not be doubted as she explicitly and bluntly says: "to write a literature of travel can not but imply a colonial relationship. The claim is that one travels to learn, but really, one travels to exercise power over land, women, peoples." (Kabbani, 1994, p. 10)

analysis of Orientalism. However, unlike Kabbani, who makes clear her intellectual debt to the author of *Orientalism*, Pratt never bothers herself to mention the man in her book. Therefore, it is really a big surprise that Pratt does not express her debt to Edward Said because it is hard to imagine that her analysis of travel writings could have seen light without his *Orientalism*.

Relatedly, like Said's *Orientalism*, Pratt's *Imperial Eyes* aims to decolonize knowledge by showing how the writings of the European travelers on 'the rest of the world' asserted European hegemony. As Guinn (2012) makes the point, Pratt offers many examples to demonstrate how the Europeans' representation of other nations facilitated an imperial approach to the world. (p 17) For her, the ways in which the Europeans constructed 'other parts of the world' for European readerships aimed, among other things, to make the Europeans at home feel part of "a planetary project", creating, therefore, what she calls the "domestic subject" of empire. Therefore, the purpose of European travel writings was to make "imperial expansion meaningful and desirable to the citizenries of the imperial countries, even though the material benefits of empire accrued mainly to the few." (Pratt, 2008, p. 3)

Pratt makes of the mid-18th century the point of departure in her analysis of European travel writings. More specifically, she begins her study of travel writings in 1735 with the publication of the Swedish Carl Linne's *The System of Nature* and the emergence of the French Charles de La Condamine's expedition, which Pratt (2008) describes as "Europe's first major international scientific expedition." (p. 15) The significance of these two events is that they denote a radical change in how the Europeans looked at themselves and the world around them. The two incidents, as Pratt

makes the point, “would have a deep and lasting impact not just on travel and travel writing, but on the overall ways European citizenries made, and made sense of, their place on the planet” (p. 24)

Pratt’s *Imperial Eyes* emphasises the importance of Linne’s study as a turning point in the construction of European consciousness. Indeed, the possibility of systemizing nature which Linne’s study arrived at brought about a new sense of power which humans could have over the world.⁴⁸ (Sobek, 2010, p. 72) Similarly, the French-led “La Condamine expedition” itself was an attempt to map and document the territories to be colonized. (Martin, 2012, p. 67) Therefore, by the end of the eighteenth century, interior exploration had become the main tool of “expansionist energies and imaginings.” (Pratt, 2008, p. 23)

Pratt (2008) notes that the replacement of maritime exploration by interior exploration of lands gave rise to new forms of knowledge and expression. For example, the La Condamine expedition alone contributed to the production of a huge and varied corpus of travel-related writings:

Oral texts, written texts, lost texts, secret texts, texts appropriated, abridged, translated, anthologized, and plagiarized; letters, reports, survival tales, civic description, navigational narrative, monsters and marvels, medicinal treatises, academic polemics, old myths replayed and reversed. (p. 23)

Given this huge amount of texts produced by European travelers who accompanied La Condamine to the interior of South America, it is not surprising that Pratt describes the

⁴⁸ For example, by using the classifying and descriptive methods of natural history to generate a new understanding of both the production of knowledge and global relations, the Europeans were able to organize the world around themselves and for their own benefit. (Hinsdale, 2015, p. 239)

expedition as “one of Europe’s proudest and most conspicuous instruments of expansion [...] and a source of some of the most powerful ideational and ideological apparatuses through which European citizenries related themselves to other parts of the world.” For her, the apparently innocent scientific expedition was part of a project which gave rise to “new forms of European knowledge and self-knowledge, new models for European contact beyond its borders, new ways of encoding Europe’s imperial ambitions.” (p. 23) In brief, the scientific expedition was just a pretext for the Europeans to expand their power over other territories.

In the same line of argument, Pratt (2008) shows how *the System of Nature*, where “the Swedish naturalist laid out a classificatory system designed to categorize all plant forms on the planet, known or unknown to Europeans” (p. 15) led to an unprecedented change in travel and travel writing. The book was so influential that natural history became, in the second half of the eighteenth century, an integral part of any expedition no matter if it was scientific or not. As a demonstrative argument for the point being made, Pratt asserts that “Specimen gathering, the building up of collections, the naming of new species, the recognition of known ones, became standard themes in travel and travel books.” (p. 26)

Pratt (2008) unveils the link between the essence of the “Linnean system” of classifying which began to characterize travel writing and European imperial expansion: “The systematic surface mapping of the globe correlates with the expanding search for commercially exploitable resources, markets, and lands to colonize, just as navigational mapping is linked with the search for trade routes.” (p. 30) It is in this connection that Pratt considers travel books as intellectual attempts for the European powers to dominate

and possess the rest of the world. She illustrates the discursive impact of Linn's natural history as well as its direct link with European imperialism by comparing between the pre-Linnaean travel writing of Peter Kolb and the writings of three post-Linnaean writers: Anders Sparrman, William Paterson and John Barrow.

Pratt (2008) notes that because Peter Kolb's account of his travel to the Cape of Good Hope predates Linn's natural history, he conveys a sympathetic image of the Khoikhoi. In other words, before Linn managed to exert his pernicious impact, Kolb had painted Africans in a relatively positive light. More than that, he took a stand against the well-established negative stereotypes on the Khoikhoi. For example, he criticized his predecessors for their "Wantonness and Precipitation" in the denigrating traits they had made for the natives. (p. 42) Kolb described the Khoikhoi as a people with a culture which was not necessarily inferior to that of the Europeans:

With a humanism not found in later writers, Kolb affirms the Hottentots above all as cultural beings. He is acutely critical of European claims that they lack the capacity for religious belief [...] Kolb emphasizes the depth of the Khoikhoi's commitment to their own religion—in other words, he insists they be understood by Europeans in the same terms Europeans understand themselves. (pp. 42-43)

Pratt praises Kolb's account only to uncover the relationship between the development of natural history writing, the systematizing of nature, and imperial expansion. For her, Peter Kolb entered into dialogue with the indigenous people of the Cape because he lived before the natural history of Linnaeus.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Huigen (2009) does not agree with Pratt's view of Kolb. For him, "although Mary Louise Pratt, in *Imperial Eyes* (1992, pp. 41-49) praises Kolb as one who enters into dialogue with the indigenous population, she does this on the wrong grounds and uses only the first part of the incomplete English

In stark contrast to Peter Kolb, post-Linnaean scientific travelers ignored the natives of South Africa. What is noticeable in their accounts is the absence of the natives. According to Pratt, naturalist travel writers deliberately painted images of deserted landscapes to create the impression that these lands belonged to nobody and, therefore, ready for the taking. For example, after exploring Anders Sparrman's *Voyage to the Cape of Good Hope* and William Paterson's *Narrative of Four Voyages in the Land of the Hottentots and the Kaffirs*, Pratt notes that the two men focused mainly on landscape, flora and fauna and paid no attention to indigenous people. Pratt (2008) asks, "Where is everybody? The landscape is written as uninhabited, unpossessed, unhistoricized, unoccupied even by the travelers themselves."⁵⁰ (p. 50) Indeed, even when the natives are scarcely evoked in the tales of Sparrman and Paterson, they are turned into mere "bodies and appendages," having no individuated identities:

[The natives are] referred to simply as "a/the/my Hottentot (s)" (or not at all, as in the eternal "our baggage arrived the next day"), all are interchangeable; none is distinguished from another by a name or any other feature; and their presence, their *disponibilité*, and subaltern status, are now taken for granted. (p. 51)

translation of Kolb's work, which left her with the incorrect impression that Kolb took no interest in Cape nature." (p. 35)

⁵⁰ To put it bluntly, since only empty places can be occupied, the African landscape had to be made empty by eliminating its inhabitants. Therefore, this invisibility of the natives which characterizes the writings of the scientific travelers aimed particularly to pave the path for the Europeans to conquer the uninhabited lands. This is clearly illustrated in the fiction of the epoch with Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* ([1981] 1719). Indeed, even when there were clearly native inhabitants, the colonial European ignores them and considers himself the sole proprietor of the land. A good example of this is provided by Crusoe who took it for granted that the island on which he landed was his own, even after discovering indigenous people living there: "I might call myself king or emperor over the whole country which I had possession of: there were no rivals; I had no competitor, none to dispute sovereignty or command with me". (p. 165) The "spontaneous" naming of the captive he saved from his own people (the cannibals!) as "Friday" is another indication of how little account he made of the attitude or feeling of the natives.

According to Pratt (2008), the ignorance of the native people also characterizes John Barrow's account. His *Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa* itself consists mainly of landscape and nature description. It is a "kind of narrative that seems to do everything possible to minimize the human presence." (p. 58) Barrow's tendency to depict land without inhabitants aimed to make future invasion admissible.⁵¹ Therefore, although he claimed to innocently seek knowledge and that "he had "studiously avoided" political discussion in his account," Pratt uncovers the imperialist underpinnings of his text (p. 59). For example, she affirms that the "British spirit of improvement" seems to permeate his whole text. Therefore, Burrow and the other scientific travel writers aimed "to encode what they encounter as "unimproved" and, in keeping with the terms of the anti-conquest, as *disponible*, available for improvement."⁵² (p. 60)

On the other hand, Pratt (2008) explains that the naturalist writers focused mainly on the description of nature to keep away from the guilt of being complicit in the European invasion of these lands and to give the impression of being objective. (p. 57) That is, they hid behind the interpretation of nature in order not to appear agents of imperialism. Therefore, what, on the face of it, looks like an innocent description of nature was, in fact, an imperialist attempt to dominate other parts of the world. This attitude is what Pratt calls "anti-conquest", which she defines as "the strategies of representation whereby European bourgeois subjects seek to secure their innocence in the

⁵¹ Palestine is another good example of this colonial attitude since Zionists in 1948 kept propagating the famous lie that they recaptured their ancestors land, "a land without a people for a people without a land."

⁵²The Fact that African habitats were often produced as empty and unimproved could only project possible improvements to be brought about by the Europeans. To illustrate the point, Pratt provides the example of Burrow's description of a swamp in which he claims: "by one single drain, [it] might be converted into a very beautiful meadow." (As cited in Pratt, 2008, p. 60)

same moment as they assert European hegemony.” (p. 9) Therefore, imperialist writers adopt these strategies only to distance themselves from traditional colonial relationship. (Guinn, 2012, p. 16)

In addition to the previously mentioned travel writers, Pratt (2008) characterizes Mungo Park as another key agent of empire. She clusters his book *Travels in the Interior Districts of Africa* (1799) among sentimental travel writing which “explicitly anchors what is being expressed in the sensory experience, judgement, agency, or desires of the human subjects.” (p. 74) Sentimental writers, Pratt believes, both challenge and complement the emergent authority of scientific writers. They share certain traits which Pratt summarizes as follows: “Europeanness, maleness, and middle classness, of course, but also innocence and passivity” (p. 77)

In accordance with what she does with anti-conquest travel writing, Pratt (2008) establishes a direct link between sentimental writing and European imperialism.⁵³ For instance, her analysis of Park’s book drives her to conclude that the man’s “every day struggles, then, consists mainly of attempts to achieve reciprocity between himself and others.” Therefore, she suggests that “his account figures the commercial expansion in whose name he traveled and wrote” and that his “expansionist commercial aspirations idealizes themselves into a drama of reciprocity.” (p. 79) This is to mean that travel writing can never be an innocent act. The traveler, whether he is a scientist exploring nature or a sentimental writer using his observation of nature for poetic aspirations, is always implicated in the imperial project. The traveler is “the hegemonic European subject who scans landscapes and dreams of their transformation” (p. 102)

⁵³ According to Pratt, both “scientific and sentimental discourses came together in the expansionist project of the enlightenment to enable a new domestic subject for an imperial project that knows no bounds.” (Wallace, 2003, p. 11)

Additionally, Pratt (2008) examines John Gabriel Stedman's account in which he depicts his relationship with a slave girl called Joanna. For Pratt, such transracial relationship is an example of "a romantic transformation of a particular form of colonial sexual exploitation, whereby European men on assignment to the colonies bought local women from their families to serve as sexual and domestic partners for the duration of their stay." (p. 93) Therefore, Pratt reads Stedman's representation of his love relationship with Joanna as a colonial narrative in which European supremacy is guaranteed by affection because it is love rather than the use of force which is used here to guarantee the willful submission of the colonized. (p. 95)

Similarly, in her analysis of Humboldt's accounts of his explorations in the Americas from 1799 to 1804, Pratt (2008) charges the man with "imperial eyes". She notes that the thirty volumes which Humboldt wrote to cover his South American travels "laid down the lines for the ideological reinvention of South America" as primal nature, emptied of human history. (p. 109) Pratt reads Humboldt's accounts as promoting a wild nature that overwhelms human knowledge and understanding. (p. 118) What Humboldt's accounts share with scientific travel writing is the erasure of the human. They all "wrote America as a primal world of nature, an unclaimed and timeless space occupied by plants and creatures." (p. 123) Therefore, the same as scientific travel writers, Humboldt was complicit in European imperialism because his depiction of South America as a mere wilderness is just a call for European intervention. (p. 125) In this context, Millán-Zaibert (2005) accuses Pratt of misunderstanding the intellectual project of Humboldt and its place in the history of ideas. For her, "Humboldt was committed to providing a historical context for understanding nature and to discussing its impact on human beings." (p. 47)

On the other hand, another imperialist discourse of travel was produced in the nineteenth-century by what she calls “the capitalist vanguard,” who promoted trade between Britain and South America. The capitalist vanguard, according to Pratt, “were sent to ‘the new continent’ by companies of European investors as experts in search of exploitable resources, contacts and contracts with local elites.” (p. 143) Therefore, the purpose of their writings was to vilify the natives and make their conquest justifiable. To make the point, Pratt argues that “the vanguard’s task is to reinvent America as backward and neglected, to encode its non-capitalist landscapes and societies as manifestly in need of the rationalized exploitation the European bring.” (p. 149) The capitalist vanguard, as Almeida (2011) argues, broke away from Humboldt’s aestheticism to pragmatism and evaluated everything in terms of benefit for Britain. (p. 161)

Women themselves entered the “wholly male, heroic world” of travel writing. And by so doing, they implicated themselves in the imperial project. Pratt uses the word “the exploratrices sociales” to characterize the European women writers of the mid-1800s. (p. 152) In this respect, she explores the works of Flora Tristan and Maria Callcott Graham, whom she characterizes as pioneers in the “bourgeois women’s travel writing”. The two writers, Pratt suggests, also contributed to the reinvention of America (mainly South America).⁵⁴ (p. 152)

In the same line of argument, Pratt (2008) positions Mary Kingsley’s travels and travel writing within the historical context of imperialism. For Pratt, although Kingsley’s rhetoric attempts to “separate mastery from domination, knowledge from control,” (p.

⁵⁴ Méndez Rodenas (1998) rejects Pratt’s claim that Graham’s work is compatible with the “imperial eyes” model. For her, “instead of a Self/Other dichotomy, Maria Graham’s South American journals exhibit, rather, a reciprocal gaze, a mutual recognition and identity.” (p. 175)

211) it can not be distanced from the imperialist project. Therefore, when Pratt portrays Kingsley's experience in Africa, she uses the same traditional stereotypical images: "Africa is her mother, and down those shimmering, dark and slimy pathways, Kingsley is getting herself reborn." (p. 212) Therefore, despite the difference of her rhetoric and its manifest distance from the voice of male imperial authority, Pratt accuses her of serving imperialism. In other words, it is true that she creates her own meaning-making apparatus, still she is "a monarchic female voice that asserts its own kind of mastery even as it denies domination and parodies power." (p. 209)

Pratt's analysis also includes a discussion of what she calls the "monarch of all I survey"⁵⁵ narratives. To illustrate this type of travel writing, she explores Burton's *the Lake Regions of Central Africa*. Relatedly, Burton's style, his choice of words and everything he uses in his description of the Tanganyika Lake, Pratt (2008) argues, reflect his imperial impulses. For example, as if he described a painting, he claims that the Lake lacks "the neatness and finish of art" (p. 198), thus, in need of Western intervention to make it more beautiful. Therefore, Pratt views Burton's portrayal of the Lake as "an esthetic project [...or] a strategy the west has often used for defining others as available for and in need of its benign and beautifying intervention." (p. 201)

Towards the end of her analysis, Pratt (2008) studies modern travel accounts and emphasizes what she calls "the White Man's lament", illustrating her point with concrete examples. For example, she refers to Alberto Moravia's West African travel narrative entitled *Which Tribe Do You Belong To?* (1972) And Paul Theroux's popular account of a

⁵⁵ The phrase "monarch of all I survey" stems from a 1782 poem by William Cowper. The poem was written from Andrew Selkirk's imagined perspective. For many years Selkirk had been an outcast, living on an island over 400 miles off the Chilean coast. He published his account of his adventures in 1713. Although Selkirk became the leader of a colony, Cowper's phrase "monarch of all I survey" reflected what was recognized as a direct link between power and visualization. (Rothenberg, 2007, p. 100)

rail journey through Latin America *The Old Patagonian Express* (1978). She criticizes the two writers for what she claims is their “impulse [...] to condemn what they see, trivialize it, and dissociate themselves utterly from it.” The images the two writers convey are, Pratt’s goes on, “constructed around ugliness, grotesquery, and decay, rural landscapes for Theroux and Moravia consist of scarcity of any meaning at all.” (p. 213) They, therefore, represent a discourse of power and domination which ideologically shapes the West’s consciousness of the places and people it strives to dominate in the late twentieth century. (p. 215) To sum-up, in support of Said’s thesis, Pratt’s ground-breaking research demonstrates how Western travel narratives contributed to imperialism by constructing a world for the Europeans to colonize and dominate.

2.4 David Spurr and *the Rhetoric of Empire*

In addition to Ranna Kabbani and Mary Louise Pratt, David Spurr is himself in total agreement with Edward Said on the tight connection between Western Knowledge of the Orient and the West’s desire to dominate and exercise power over it. Therefore, as Said’s *Orientalism*, Spurr’s *the Rhetoric of Empire* (1993) is frequently recognized by the research community as a seminal work. Besides, its author, as Holland and Huggan (2000) make the point, is often clustered among the major critics who expertly analyse the patriarchal and imperial undertones of travel writing. (p. 4) For them, although the book is full of historical examples, it is still relevant today. (p. 47)

Spurr’s *the Rhetoric of Empire* is concerned with studying colonial discourse from the colonial era up to the present day. It is “devoted to re-examining the history, politics psychology and language of colonization.” (Spurr, 1993, p. 1) More specifically, the book explores the ways in which the rhetorical features of that discourse work, and to that

end, focuses on three genres of non-fiction writing which the text's subtitle mentions clearly: journalism, travel writing and Imperial administration. Spurr (1993) argues that these types of writings don't depict the reality of the colonized neutrally because "journalism and other forms of non-fiction [...] depend on the use of myth, symbol, metaphor, and other metaphorical procedures." (p. 2) No wonder then that the non-Western world is often trivialized and vilified as inferior to the West. Therefore, Like Edward Said, David Spurr does not hesitate to accuse Western travellers, journalists and officials of being implicated in the West's colonial project. For him, despite the withdrawal of colonial troops from the formerly colonized countries, one can not talk about real independence and freedom. A "clean break" with the colonial legacy is not yet attained. Therefore, as Spurr makes the point, "the relations of colonizer to colonized have neither remained the same nor have they disappeared." (pp. 6-7)

One of Spurr's main concerns in *The Rhetoric of Empire* is to provide a thorough analysis of the discursive tropes which characterize the West's portrayal of the colonized world. These rhetorical tropes, which Spurr (1993) identifies as "ways of writing about non-Western peoples" and as "a kind of repertoire for colonial discourse, a range of tropes, conceptual categories, and logical operations available for purposes of representations," (p. 3) are so central to the imperial project that they constitute the basis of colonial discourse. Therefore, whether the author is French, British, or American, he can not escape the use of these tropes. The latter, in Spurr's opinion, "remain constant in their application to the colonial situation regardless of the particular ideology which the writer espouses" (p. 39)

Spurr (1993) bases his study of the rhetorical features characterizing colonial discourse on two precise questions: “how does the Western writer construct a coherent representation out of the strange and (to the writer) often incomprehensible realities confronted in the non-Western world? What are the cultural, ideological or literary presuppositions upon which such construct is based? (p. 3) Spurr attempts to find answers by identifying twelve rhetorical modes of writing by which Western journalists, travel writers, and government officials represent the reality of the non-Western world. Spurr explores each trope in an independent chapter, illustrating his arguments with telling examples from the works of such well-known writers as Charles Darwin, Thomas Edward Lawrence, and the Washington Post and National Geographic journalists.

2.4.1 Surveillance

The first rhetorical trope which Spurr characterizes as the first step in constructing the reality of the other is surveillance. It is used to refer to the point at which the colonized other is observed by the colonizer. (Thomas, 2016, p. 67) Although this visual observation is identified by as an important tool of journalism, journalists are often unconnected to the object of observation because they often depend on technological, economic and historical conditions which facilitate the reporting process. As Spurr (1993) explains, “these conditions give the reporter a privileged point of view over what is surveyed, yet the nature of this privilege and the distance that it imposes between the seer and the seen rarely enters into the explicit content of journalistic writing.” (p. 15) This privileged gaze is what enables the Western writer and journalist to acquire authority over the cultural other.

Although Western writers and journalists claim that they observe the reality of the natives objectively, Spurr (1993) belies such a claim, affirming that their observation of the colonised reveals their desire to establish knowledge and power over them. Therefore, like Said, Spurr insists that the act of observing can never be innocent or disinterested. And to illustrate this argument with a telling example, Spurr argues that when an American reporter is taken up in a helicopter of the American army to report about the American Vietnam War, he naturally looks at the battlefield from an American perspective. (p. 15) This partial position which the reporter adopts in favor of the American army proves that “the gaze is never innocent or pure, never free of mediation.”⁵⁶ (p. 27)

2.4.2 Appropriation

Spurr (1993) considers this trope as a strategy through which the non-Western world is described as requesting the West’s intervention. Relatedly, Spurr explores different texts in which Western writers attempt to find moral justifications for the West’s colonization of other countries.⁵⁷ For example, these texts often depict British and French colonial rulers as “custodians of the tropics” acting in the name of humanity as a whole to provide the natural resources hidden in the lands of backward people. Colonialism, in this sense, becomes a gesture of human solidarity because it “unites the intellectual and moral qualities of Europe with the material wealth of the tropics.” (p. 29)

⁵⁶ This is to mean that the Western eye, instead of describing the visible as it is, interferes to order and arrange what is seen. This is perhaps the reason why Spurr (1993) characterizes the act of observation as “an originating gesture of colonising itself, making possible the exploration and mapping of territory which serves as the preliminary to colonial order.” (p. 16)

⁵⁷ Here Spurr seems to reiterate Edward Said’s arguments by stating that colonialism is not imposed on the colonised by means of force and coercion. That is, like Said, he believes that Western writers often try to exhibit their invasion of other lands as a duty to help the natives get rid of their backwardness.

As Spurr (1993) makes the point, the rhetoric of appropriation persists even after the demise of colonialism. Therefore, although the traditional forms of domination are rejected, the signs of sympathy and identification with the West are still found among non-Western peoples. (p 34) For example, Western media is so obsessed with the popularity of Western consumer goods in non-Western countries: “Early explorers won the natives over with a display of the phonograph or the fork. More recently it has been Dior fashion and the hamburger.” ⁵⁸ (p. 35) On the other hand, in support of Said’s argument, Spurr contends that the “other” is for the West the standard model by which the latter defines itself: “the West seeks its own identity in Third World attempts at imitating it; it finds its own image, idealized, in the imperfect copies fabricated by other cultures.” (p. 36)

2.4.3 Aestheticization

One of the most prevalent ways in which Western knowledge about colonized countries is presented to the Western reader is through aestheticization. This imperial trope, which targets what Spurr (1993) calls “sensory stimulation,” aims to make reading about the non-Western world pleasant and enjoyable. (p. 45) For Spurr, this aesthetic value is so manifest in the picturesque description of the Orient by travel accounts and Western media. To illustrate the point with a telling example, he mentions the guidelines required by the editor of National Geographic from 1899 to 1954 for articles to be

⁵⁸ Western writers and journalists appropriate by describing the other as being fond of Western products and Western ideals. In this way, they seek “to minimize conflict and cultural difference by celebrating the unifying power of Western commercial and cultural institutions.” (Spurr, 1993, p. 35)

published in the magazine. Among these guidelines is the abundant use of beautiful illustrations and the elimination of any material of polemic nature.⁵⁹ (p. 51)

By relegating the Third World to the status of an object to be appreciated for its beauty and passion, this aestheticization functions as a form of colonization in itself: “This cultivation of an aesthetic ideal opens up a space for domination in the realm of concrete practice.” For example, when a non-Western country is “removed by interpretation from the actual consequences of political and economic power, [Westerners] can more readily go about their business.” (Spurr, 1993, p. 57) Indeed, Spurr (1993) speaks about aestheticization in journalism as distantiation, transformation, privilege, displacement, consumption, and alienation:

These terms imply a certain possession of social reality which holds it at arm’s length and makes it into the object of beauty, horror, pleasure, and pity. When this act of possession becomes a mode of representation by which a powerful culture takes possession of a less powerful one, it can be understood quite literally as a colonization. In this sense, aestheticization does not so much falsify as it takes hold of and commodifies reality, securing it for the expansion of the observer’s sensibility. (p. 59)

2.4.4 Classification

Here Spurr (1993) discusses the creation by the colonizer of a classificatory system in which peoples and cultures are placed in a hierarchical relationship to each

⁵⁹ These illustrative photos which Western writers tend to use extravagantly provide evidence for the primitivity and exoticness of the other and its culture. Therefore, they are used just to maintain the other in an inferior position to justify impending conquest.

other. This rhetorical mode starts with the construction of “a single standard of economic and political organization to which all nations must aspire.” (p. 62)

The standard is employed to rank and order the rest of the world. Accordingly, colonized people are always judged according to their relative failure or success in meeting this standard. That is, they are applauded for their emulation of the cultural ideals of the colonizer and demeaned when they deviate from them.⁶⁰ On the other hand, Spurr argues that although every discourse has its own classification system, it is not fixed and stable but changes over time: “while this regulatory function of classification is always present, the nature of classification itself changes with the evolution of discourse.” (p. 63)

This system of classification and arrangement is indispensable to the ideology of colonization. It serves to demonstrate the justice of the colonial enterprise in the sense that it asserts the supremacy of the colonizer over the colonized. It is perhaps in this light that Spurr (1993) insists that the classificatory system established by the colonizer is used to justify his foreign expansionist policy:

What motivates the classification of Third World peoples is the need to define a coherent stance that ultimately will determine the nature of Western policies toward the Third World: investments or disinvestments, increased credit or higher interest rates, military intervention or diplomatic negotiation, aggressive aid or benign neglect. (p. 71)

2.4.5 Debasement

Spurr identifies debasement as a fundamental trait of colonial discourse. This rhetorical mode is about the production of negative images to defile and vilify a certain

⁶⁰ This judgement can not be objective because the colonizer does not judge the colonized for who they are but according to how closely they approximate his standard of measure.

race. (Thomas, 2016, p. 68) As Spurr (1993) points out, the strategy of debasement is used to charge the colonized with such debasing traits as “dishonesty, suspicion, superstition, lack of self-discipline [...] individual filth, indolence, and sexual promiscuity.” (p. 76) The purpose behind this debasement is to create a clear-cut division between the colonizer and the colonized: “In Western writing, the debasement of the Other often suggests a prohibition designed to protect the boundaries of Western cultural value against forces of this destructive desire.”⁶¹ (p. 79) Therefore, to affirm the superiority of the West, the colonizer uses the device of debasement to reduce the colonized people to beings of inferior status.⁶²

2.4.6 Negation

Negation means “the effective dismissal of a race and its culture by way of deliberate omission or subtle undermining.” (Thomas, 2016, p. 69) It is used in colonial discourse to represent the other “as absence, emptiness, nothingness, or death.” (Spurr, 1993, p. 92) To illustrate the point, Spurr (1993) offers a strong example from Richard Harding Davis’ report of the Belgian Congo in 1907:

To tell what the place is like, you must tell what it lacks. One must write of the Congo always in the negative. It is as though you asked “what sort of house is this

⁶¹ This division is what the author of *Orientalism* calls “the binary opposition” of Orientalism which Western writers often take into consideration when they talk about the non-Western world.

⁶² The paradox of colonial discourse is that the colonized people are demeaned for their non-Western otherness, yet ridiculed for their attempts to mimic the forms of the West: “A colonized people is held in contempt for their lack of civility, loved for their willingness to acquire it, and ridiculed when they have required too much.” (Spurr, 1993, p. 86) One can think here of a significant example offered by Paul Bowles, who despises the North African for imitating the European way of life: “Traditional customs, clothing and behaviour must be replaced by something unequivocally European. In this he is fanatical. It does not occur to him that what he is rejecting is authentic and valid, and that what he is taking on is meaningless imitation.” (As cited in Bevan, 2014, p. 23)

one Jones built?” and were answered “well, it hasn’t any roof, and it hasn’t any cellar, and it has no windows, floors, or chimneys. It is that kind of house. (p. 96)

This is to mean that Western accounts of Africa tend to show the place as “absence” and “nothingness” in order to create a void which only the West’s light and civilization can fill. Therefore, the assumed absence viewed in colonial discourse can only create in the “civilized” West an unbridled desire to rush in and fill the void left by Africa’s essential nothingness. Therefore, “negation acts as a kind of provisional erasure, clearing a space for the expansion of the colonial imagination and for the pursuit of desire.” (pp. 92-93)

2.4.7 Affirmation

Affirmation is another discursive feature that gives colonialism its popular legitimacy. As Marlow makes the point in *Heart of Darkness*, “the conquest of the earth, [...] is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much.” (Conrad, 1990, p. 8) Therefore, the colonial powers always feel a need to justify their presence in the colonies. This need for self-affirmation, Spurr (1993) argues, “is essential to all [Western] language as a symbolic activity which validates the presence, that is, the symbolic power, of a speaking or writing subject.” (p. 109) The presence of the colonizer is justified by idealizing his imperial project. In his study of the rhetorical mode of affirmation, Spurr remarks the “element in colonial discourse which continually returns to an idealization of the colonialist enterprise against the setting of emptiness and disorder by which it has defined the other.” (p. 109) Therefore, if the trope of debasement serves to vilify the colonised as primitive and backward, affirmation is used to emphasise the superiority of the coloniser:

“It calls attention to itself as a declaration, thus ennobling its rhetorical posture. It makes the obligatory distinction between civilized and barbarian.”⁶³ (p. 111)

2.4.8 Idealization

Idealization is “a rhetorical position in which the writer takes an ethical position in regard to his or her own culture.” (p. 125) However, it is used by European and American writers in a largely symbolic manner to serve their own political purposes. (Thomas, 2016, p. 69) For example, in his illustration of this trope, Spurr (1993) mentions Montaigne’s reference to the cannibals of Brazil who were shown to live in an “Edenic” state of simplicity and purity. (p. 126) Spurr notes that Montaigne’s idealization of Brazilian cannibals as “noble savages” who represent the virtues of goodness, courage and honesty is politically motivated. For him, “primitivism is symbolically the precise reverse of American capitalism and therefore constitutes an object to be admired in the abstract – the dream of its own opposite that lives at the very heart of the capitalist imagination”⁶⁴ (p. 128)

2.4.9 Insubstantialization

Insubstantialization is a colonialist textual strategy which Western explorers and writers use to emphasise the unreal, unbelievable, exotic and dream-like aspects of the

⁶³ To give the colonial enterprise an aura of philanthropic activity, the White man is often shown as a saviour who comes to help the backward people improve their destiny. Therefore, the rhetorical mode of affirmation is used in colonial discourse only to highlight the White man’s noble spirit. (Spurr, 1993, p. 115)

⁶⁴ Montaigne’s view of these cannibals is linked to the way in which he wants to see his own society. Therefore, “these Brazilian Indians became simply a tool for Montaigne’s satirical expose of sixteenth century France. They are constructs for political propaganda, for righting the wrongs of Europe through comparison with its perceived antithesis.” (Thomas, 2016, p. 69) In his book *Morocco* (originally published as *Au Maroc*), Loti (2002 [1890]) himself offers an excellent example that can illustrate this colonial trope: “Oh, sombre Moghreb, do thou remain, for many a long year yet, immured, impenetrable to things that are new; turn thy back on Europe and immobilise thyself in things of the past. Sleep on, sleep on, and continue thy old dream, so that there may be at least one last country where men lift up their hearts in prayer.” (p. 327)

non-Western world. According to Spurr (1993), the strange and unfamiliar aspects of the places travelled turn the experience of the non-Western world into an inner journey or spiritual quest for the Western travel writer. Therefore, when Spurr studies this trope, he depicts “an entire tradition of Western writing which makes the experience of the non-Western world into an inner journey, and in so doing renders that world as insubstantial, as the backdrop of baseless fabric against which is played the drama of the writer’s self.” (p. 142) The exotic dimension of the non-Western world is projected internally as an unreal experience and a kind of mental disorientation or instability of the travel writers’ own thoughts. According to Spurr, the destabilizing of the subject is required in this quest for a precarious inner Orient “as its counterpart in travel writing devoted to stories of disguised identity and hallucination. Such writing often involves a surrender of the self to the powers of the Other in what is represented as a dangerous transgression of boundaries.” (p. 144)

2.4.10 Naturalization

The trope of naturalization is itself identified as an important feature of colonial discourse: “the concept of nature and its relation to ‘less developed’ peoples is so deeply imbedded in our language that it transcends ideology and is [...] pervasive in the system of representations.” (Spurr, 1993, p. 157) Relatedly, the Europeans’ emphasis on the natives’ natural way of life is meant to maintain them in states of primitiveness and inferiority, and as a consequence, to consolidate their self-appointed “superior” identity. This is to imply that the trope of naturalization presumes that natural laws determine the natural superiority of the White Man over primitive peoples because the former is ‘civilised’ and the latter lives in a state of nature, the opposite of civilisation. (Thomas,

2016, p.70) This inferior state in which primitive people are kept is important as it is used to justify the West's impending domination of the non-Western world. It is in this light that Spurr (1993) explains how the concept of nature is used in colonial discourse to justify occupation and conquest:

On one hand, nature is opposed to culture and civilization: primitive peoples live in a state of nature. On the other, nature, or "natural law," is also that which grants domination over the earth to more advanced peoples; the land shall belong by natural right to that power which understands its value and is willing to turn it to account. Colonial discourse thus naturalizes the process of domination: it finds a natural justification for the conquest of nature and of primitive peoples, those "children of nature." (p. 156)

2.4.11 Eroticization

Another key feature of colonial discourse is the eroticization of the non-Western world. Spurr (1993) defines this trope as a representational strategy used by the West to construct the "rest of the world" through "a set of rhetorical instances—metaphors, seductive fantasies, expressions of sexual anxiety—in which the traditions of colonialist and phallogocentric discourses coincide" (p. 170) In this respect, Spurr notes in his study of colonial writings that the colonized world is often associated with those qualities that are normally used to characterize the female body. Colonial discourse, as he argues, "represents the colonized world as the feminine and [...] assigns to subject nations those qualities conventionally assigned to the female body."⁶⁵ (p. 170) This eroticized portrayal

⁶⁵ Spurr's analysis of eroticization can be said to confirm Said's idea of the "feminine Orient". Like Said, Spurr (1993) argues that the depiction of the native landscape and people in a highly eroticized manner is itself a means to naturalize the colonial process: "The erotically charged language of these metaphors

of the land extends to its inhabitants. The native woman, for example, is distinguished by her unbridled desire and sexuality. She is “a classic figure of sexual adventure.” (p. 177)

2.4.12 Resistance

Unlike Edward Said, David Spurr does not eliminate the possibility of resistance against colonial writing. Therefore, although Western writers can hardly break free from the rhetorical tropes⁶⁶ which characterize colonial discourse, Spurr (1993) affirms that “there are nonetheless ways of writing that resist the imposition of value inherent in any colonizing discourse.” (p. 189) In the field of journalism for example, Spurr argues that resistance to colonial discourse may take place in the following cases: first, when the language of the colonizer, which is often ideologically and politically motivated, is questioned from the perspective of the colonized. To illustrate the point, Spurr shows how the familiar word “terrorism” is reappropriated and used against the institutions from which it emanates: “the familiar word is displaced simultaneously onto so many different contexts that it loses its authority as the name for a specific phenomenon and is instead revealed as an instrument of rhetorical and political strategy.” (p. 190) Besides, since what one observes in the colonized world relies on the circumstances which give one the chance to be in a position of an observer, resistance is likely to happen when the conditions of observation are put into question. The observer’s positionality often reflects his “imprisonment within the perceptual framework of colonial rule.” (p. 191) Therefore, criticizing the conditions of observation problematizes the colonizer’s views of the colonized. Moreover, as Said points out, “there is never interpretation, understanding, and

marks the entrance of the colonizer, with his penetrating and controlling power, as a natural union with the subject nation.” (p. 172)

⁶⁶ For Spurr (1993), because these tropes are what give their work validity and meaning, writers can not help using them in their representations of the colonized.

then knowledge where there is no interest.” (As cited/paraphrased in Spurr, 1993, p. 192) Therefore, Resistance also takes place when writers and journalists examine their own invested interests in their views about the non-Western world. This examination not only deepens the meaning of reportage, but also undermines the conventions of colonial writing. (p. 192) The fourth possibility of resistance resides in the inclusion of the voice of the colonized. For Spurr, the colonialist worldview of the colonized is challenged when the latter is given a voice to express his views and testimonies.

2.5 Conclusion

Ranna Kabbani, Mary Louise Pratt and David Spurr can all be clustered among the staunch advocates of Edward Said. Therefore, they are, like Said, well-known for their trenchant critique of Orientalism. The latter, they argue in support of Said’s thesis, is not a purely academic discipline as it was traditionally thought and believed. It is rather a cultural tool which the West uses to exercise power and domination over the rest of the world. This is obvious from the ideologically charged views which they manage to disclose in their studies of travel writings (and journalism in the case of David Spurr.) Therefore, if any conclusion can be drawn from the above analysis, it is that Said’s *Orientalism*, despite the Plethora of criticism it has received, remains a foundational text that provides the theoretical basis for the academic field of postcolonialism.

CHAPTER THREE:

CRITICAL RESPONSES TO EDWARD SAID'S CRITICISM OF ORIENTALISM

3.1 Introduction

Orientalism, needless to say, had previously been a respectable academic discipline for many years. As Mackenzie (1995) points out in his book *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts*, “the word [Orientalism] had originally a wholly sympathetic ring: the study of the languages, literature, religions, thought, art and social life of the East in order to make them available to the West.” However, since the publication of Said’s seminal text *Orientalism* in 1978, the term began to acquire a strong negative connotation. In other words, since Said’s severely critical text came into being, there was a tremendous change in the way in which the word Orientalism had formerly been looked at. That is, Orientalism became a pejorative term which refers to the West’s desire to dominate other parts of the world. In Mackenzie’s own words, owing to Said’s thesis, “it [Orientalism] lost its status as a sympathetic concept, a product of scholarly admiration for diverse and exotic cultures, and became the literary means of creating a stereotypical and mythic East through which European rule could be more readily asserted.” (p. xii)

This destructive effect of Said’s text on the discourse of Orientalism gave rise to a heated debate among scholars and specialists. Whilst it is true that many scholars expressed their appreciation and approval of Said’s *Orientalism* and, thus, acclaimed the book as a masterpiece, it is equally true that many others chose to defend Western scholarship against Said’s assault, dismissing his book as being unscholarly and flawed.

To put it differently, with the same enthusiasm with which the book was received by Said's supporters, critics from different quarters were quick to attack Said. In this respect, it is important to emphasize that the number of Said's opponents have grown so much because it has nearly become a fashion to criticize the man and expose the gaps and failures contained in his book. To make the point, Aschcroft and Ahluwalia (2001) advance the following argument:

To historians he [Said] is unhistorical; to social scientists he conflates theories; to scholars he is unscholarly; to literary theorists he is unreflective and indiscriminate; to Foucauldians he misuses Foucault; to professional Marxists he is anti-revolutionary; to professional conservatives he is a terrorist. (p. 68)

Therefore, it must be made clear that the critique of Orientalism mounted by Edward Said gave rise to a storm of criticisms from a great number of scholars. This section aims to explore some of these wide-ranging criticisms to get an idea on the range of critical responses which Said's *Orientalism* provoked.

3.2 Bernard Lewis and “The Question of Orientalism”

Bernard Lewis is one of the Orientalists whose works are severely criticized by Said. That's why he assumes the task to defend Western scholarship against Said's attack. Accordingly, he writes “The Question of Orientalism”, a severely critical article, in which Said's text appears to be absurd and unscholarly. For Lewis, although Said's thesis is full of flaws and errors, they are deliberate and calculated. That is, Said makes them only to serve the purpose of his thesis, which is to underestimate the academic value of Orientalism. In this respect, it should be noted that Lewis begins his attack on Edward Said by criticizing his use of the word “Orientalist”. The latter, Lewis contends, had been

rejected and abolished in 1973 at the Twenty-ninth International Congress of Orientalists. The implication is that since the word had been abolished five years before the publication of *Orientalism*, Said's criticism of the word is meaningless and absurd. Differently put, Said's attack on the word "Orientalist" is out of place because "the word had already lost its value and had been in fact abandoned by those who previously bore it." (Lewis, 1982, p. 4)

On the other hand, Lewis (1982) portrays Said's knowledge of Arabic and Islam as being shallow and inaccurate. For him, unlike Said whose "knowledge of Arabic and Islam shows surprising gaps," a critic of Orientalism must, at least, be acquainted with its subject matter. Relatedly, to illustrate Said's ignorance of Arabic, Lewis insists that although Mr. Said quotes only one Arabic phrase in his whole text, it is "misspelled and mistranslated." (p. 11) In the same line of argument, Lewis claims that many of the Arabic words which appear on Said's thesis are mistakenly used. For example, the Arabic word 'tawhid', whose real meaning is monotheism, is distorted and wrongly used as meaning "God's transcendental unity." (p. 13)

Besides, throughout Lewis' article, Said is taken to task for his choice of words. In Lewis' opinion (1982), many of the words which are used in *Orientalism* are loaded and inappropriate. For instance, such words as "wrench", "ransack", "appropriate", "accumulate", and even "rape" which Said uses to characterize the ongoing increase of Orientalist knowledge are out of place and irrelevant because they presume that "scholarship and science are commodities which exist in finite quantities; the West has grabbed an unfair share of these as well as other resources, leaving the East not only impoverished but also unscholarly and unscientific." Such a claim, Lewis asserts, not

only provides evidence to argue that Said totally ignores what Western scholars do and what their scholarship is about, but it also “expresses a contempt for modern Arab scholarly achievement worse than anything that he attributes to his demonic Orientalists.” (p. 10)

Just to be clear, according to Bernard Lewis (1982), no matter how scholarly and scientific Western knowledge of the Orient is, it is doomed to be vilified and underestimated in Said’s book. The man seems to be determined to undermine Orientalism even if it means to make a number of gross errors. For example, to vilify Western scholarship, Said does not hesitate to distort the facts about the history of Orientalism and the main countries in which it flourishes. Therefore, to prove the hypothesis that imperial power and Western scholarship on the Orient are two sides of the same coin, Said finds it necessary to consider the late eighteenth century as the starting point of Orientalism, although the latter was already established in the seventh century. Besides, Lewis goes on, although Orientalism had its main centers in Germany and neighboring countries, Said insists to locate its main centers in Britain and France. What’s more, he reduces the whole Orient to just the Middle East and the latter to just part of the Arab World. (p. 9)

Additionally, Lewis (1982) insists that since Said’s thesis presumes that Western scholars are necessarily imperialists, he abstains from quoting writers who are not. In this respect, Lewis draws the attention to the absence of many prominent scholars from Said’s thesis. For him, even among the British and French, the main focus of *Orientalism*, Said does not refer to many important figures because their works contradict his thesis. For example, despite their important contributions, the author of *Orientalism* does not allow

himself to quote Claude Cahen, E. Levi-Provinçal, Henri Corbin, Marius Canard, Charles Pellat, William and George Marçais, William Wright to name but a few. Lewis believes that even when Said does quote certain writers, he selects only the parts of their works that suit his thesis. Therefore, to borrow Lewis' own words, "his common practice indeed is to omit their major contributions to scholarship and instead fasten on minor or occasional writings." (p. 11)

Lewis' criticism of Said does not stop at this point. He, on the contrary, accuses him of defaming prominent scholars. To illustrate the point, he gives the example of the French writer Silvestre de Sacy, whom Said (1979) depicts as someone who "ransacked the Oriental archives... what texts he isolated, he then brought back; he doctored them..." (As cited in Lewis, 1982, p. 11) This is to imply that Sacy, in Said's opinion, is not allowed to study Oriental documents. Therefore, his access to these documents is viewed by Said as plunder. Lewis (1982) considers this as an "outrageous libel on a great scholar [...] without a shred of truth." (p. 12)

Another reckless accusation against the Orientalists which Lewis (1982) claims to detect in Said's text is that they never properly studied the Oriental's economic activities. For Said, until Maxime Rodinson's important study *Islam and Capitalism*, the Orientalists' economic ideas were always limited to discussing the Oriental's incapacity for trade and economic rationality. This exhibits the extent to which Said is unacquainted with "the work of such earlier Orientalists as Adam Mez, J.H. Kramers, W. Bjorkman, 'V. Barthold, Thomas Arnold, and many others." (p. 12) In Lewis' opinion, all these Orientalists, whom Said ignores, examined the economic activities of the Orient properly.

Said's neglect of Arab scholarship itself does not escape Lewis' harsh attack. In other words, Lewis (1982) finds Said's claim that "there is no major journal of Arab studies published in the Arab world" false and untrue. For Lewis, "Mr. Said is apparently unaware of the enormous output of journals, monographs, editions, and other studies being published by universities, academies, learned societies, and other scholarly bodies in many different Arab countries." These studies, Lewis remarks, are replete with self-criticism. That is, Arab scholars themselves highlight the failings and weaknesses of the Arab World. Therefore, they make "many of the observations for which Mr. Said attacks the Orientalists." (p. 14)

Finally, as if what Lewis (1982) calls the flaws and errors which he manages to detect in *Orientalism* does not satisfy him enough, he moves on to direct his attack on the character of its author. Therefore, while discussing the refusal and rejection of the word 'Orientalist', Lewis makes the point that the term was "thrown on the garbage heap of history. But garbage places are not safe places." (p. 5) If Lewis' words bear any meaning at all, it is that Said is someone who picks through garbage. To devalue the person of Said even more, Lewis insists to compare him with Anouar Abdel-Malek. Relatedly, despite the fact that the latter's article "Orientalism in crisis" is itself concerned with attacking the Orientalists and their writings, Lewis maintains that, unlike Said's book which exceeds "the limits of scholarly debates," "Dr. Abdel-Malek's article is written with obvious emotion, and is the expression of passionately held convictions." (p. 7)

3.3 Sadik Jalal Al-'Azm and "Orientalism and Orientalism in Reverse"

Among the early discussions of Said's seminal text to come from the Arab World was the prominent Syrian philosopher Sadik Jalal Al-'Azm's significant 1981 essay titled

“Orientalism and Orientalism in Reverse”. Relatedly, while recognizing the merit of Said’s *Orientalism* and its ability to deflate “the self-righteous claims of Cultural-Academic Orientalism to such traits as scholarly independence, scientific detachment, political objectivity etc,” Al-‘Azm sets out to uncover the limits and contradictions in Said’s study. According to him, one of the main contributions which Said provides in his analysis is the fact that he reveals the “deep-rooted belief [...] that a fundamental ontological difference exists between the essential natures of the Orient and the Occident, to the decisive advantage of the latter.” (Al- ‘Azm, 2000, p. 218) That is, Said, in Al- ‘Azm’s opinion, succeeds in demonstrating how Orientalism always portrays Western societies as essentially and inherently superior to other parts of the world.

However, this admiration of Said’s thesis, which Al-‘Azm (2000) makes explicit from the very outset of his essay, soon fades away when he concedes that “the stylist and polemicist in Edward Said very often runs away with the systematic thinker,” which leads to inconsistencies and contradictions in his analysis. (p. 218) In this respect, Al-‘Azm challenges Said’s argument that institutional Orientalism is the product of academic Orientalism which had existed since the time of Homer. He ironically mocks Said’s reasoning because it implies that if academic Orientalism had conveyed a positive image of the Orient, the European powers would have treated that part of the world more humanely, or as Al-‘Azm puts it: “Presumably, had the long tradition of Cultural-Academic Orientalism fashioned a less peculiar, more sympathetic and truthful epistemological framework, then the Powers would have acted on the Orient more charitably and viewed it in a more favourable light!” (p. 221)

Furthermore, Al-'Azm (2000) notes that Said is caught in the same trap he denounces: essentialism. The point being made here is that Said tends to essentialize the West in the same way in which the Orientalists have essentialized the East. For example, Al-'Azm observes that the very monolithic and static view of culture and the very essentializing dichotomy between East and West which characterize the Orientalists' views of the Orient are central to Said's analysis of Orientalism. Besides, Said, as Al-'Azm makes the point, traces the origins of Orientalism all the way back to Homer, Aeschylus, Euripides and Dante. This is to mean that Orientalism is not a modern phenomenon, but the outcome of a very ancient European bent of mind to vilify other cultures and people in favor of the West. For al-'Azm, "the author [Said] seems to be saying that the 'European mind', from Homer to Karl Marx and A.H.R. Gibb, is inherently bent on distorting all human realities other than its own and for the sake of its own aggrandisement." This way of construing the origins of Orientalism, Al-'Azm goes on, "simply lends strength to the essentialistic categories of 'Orient' and 'Occident', representing the ineradicable distinction between East and West, which Said's book is ostensibly set on demolishing." (p. 219)

Additionally, Al-'Azm (2000) does not agree with Said that Orientalism always distorts the reality of the Orient and Orientals. To put it differently, in stark contrast to Said's view, Al-'Azm is of the opinion that some images which Orientalism provides for the Orient correspond perfectly to reality. Therefore, as a response to Said's claim that Orientalism always misrepresents the Orient as a place in thrall to irrational belief and superstition, Al-'Azm asserts that such portrayal reflects reality as it is without distortion. For him, "the conception of the unseen is much more immediate and real to the Oriental

than to the Western peoples.” (p.224) To illustrate the point being made, Al-‘Azm provides the example of religion which means a lot to the life of Moroccan peasants in a way which present day American farmers can not understand. Besides, he shows the extent to which the belief in the laws of nature is more deeply ingrained in the minds of the students of Moscow University than it is in the minds of the students of al-Azhar University or any other university in the Muslim world. (p.224)

Another area of weakness which Al-‘Azm detects in Said’s book is the latter’s negative appraisal of Karl Marx. Al-‘Azm (2000) criticizes Said’s portrayal of Marx as “no exception to all the Europeans who dealt with the East in terms of Orientalism’s basic category of the inequality between East and West.” (p. 226) Indeed, Al-‘Azm finds Said’s accusation of Marx on the basis of his belief in the superiority of the West over the East absurd. For al-‘Azm, nineteenth-century Europe was superior to Asia and much of the rest of the world in terms of productive capacities, social organization, historical ascendancy, military might, and scientific and technological development. Therefore, as Al-‘Azm makes the point, “there is nothing specific to either Asia or the Orient in Marx’s broad theoretical interpretations of the past, present and future [...] Marx, like anyone else, knew of the superiority of modern Europe over the Orient. But to accuse a radically historicist thinker such as Marx of turning this contingent fact into a necessary reality for all time is simply absurd.” (pp. 227-228)

Al-‘Azm (2000) sums-up his critical analysis of *Orientalism* by accusing its author of promoting what he calls ‘an Orientalism in reverse,’ by which non-Western scholars and thinkers construct ahistorical, essentializing and biased images of Western Otherness. Al-‘Azm puts forward the view that this ‘Orientalism in reverse,’ which

became widespread among Arab nationalists and “Islamantics”, attempts to prove the “ontological superiority of the Oriental mind (the ‘Arab mind’ in this case) over the Occidental one.” (p. 232) To illustrate the point through concrete examples, Al-‘Azm explores the views of the Syrian poet and critic Adonis and of certain Islamantics. He concludes that their views of the Middle East are as essentialist as those of western Orientalists. In his own words, “I submit that this Islamantic view of Islam is in essence, and in the light of its logical consequences, no different from the metaphysical preachings of Ontological Orientalism.” (pp. 235-236) The implication of this argument is that Said’s research itself should be looked at as an example of what Al-‘Azm calls ‘an Orientalism in reverse’.

3.4 Aijaz Ahmad and *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literature*

Another critic whose critical assessment of Said’s *Orientalism* should be addressed seriously is the Indian Marxist scholar Aijaz Ahmad. The latter, it can be argued, seems to be torn between political solidarity and difference of opinion with Edward Said. In other words, although Aijaz (1992) expresses his admiration for Said’s honorable position on the Palestinian cause, he makes his intellectual disagreement with him clear and explicit: “I [Aijaz Ahmad] disagree with him [Said] so fundamentally on issues both of theory and history that our respective understandings of the world as it is now, and as it has been at many points over the past two thousand years or so – are simply irreconcilable”. (p. 159) Therefore, apart from Said’s books on Palestine, mainly his essay “Zionism from the Stand-point of its Victims”, which appeal a lot to Aijaz, Said’s account of Western scholarship is clearly underestimated by the Indian Marxist. For example, in his pungent attack on Said, Aijaz does not hesitate to characterize his

Orientalism as a defective book which provides no real valuable contribution to knowledge. Consider the following passage which reflects the extent to which Aijaz makes Said's contribution seem unimportant: "When the dust of current literary debates settles, Said's most enduring contribution will be seen as residing neither in *Orientalism*, which is a deeply flawed book, nor in the literary essays that have followed in its wake, but in his work on the Palestine issue." (pp. 160-161)

In fact, the grounds for which Aijaz assails Said are too many to discuss here in great detail. Therefore, this section highlights only what we believe to be the basic elements in Aijaz's analysis. To begin with, Said's conceptual borrowings from different sources lead to the manifestation of ambiguities and inconsistencies in his methodology. For instance, the author of *Orientalism* builds up his analysis of Western scholarship on two irreconcilable frameworks. In other words, he not only draws on what Aijaz calls 'Auerbachian High Humanism', which insists to locate the present ideas in their origins, but he also insists to deal with Western scholarship as a discourse in the Foucauldian sense. Therefore, although Foucault refuses to trace ideas back to their origin, Said, drawing on Eric Auerbach's critical masterpiece *Mimesis*, insists to trace Orientalism all the way back to Ancient Greece. Aijaz (1992) uncovers this theoretical problem in Said's thesis in the following passage:

The Foucault of *Discipline and Punish* [...] never spoke of a full-fledged discourse before the sixteenth-century because what he then called 'discourse' presumes, as co-extensive corollary, a rationalism of the post-medieval kind, alongside the increasing elaborations of modern state forms, modern institutional grids, objectified economic productions, modern forms of rationalized planning.

Said's idea that the ideology of the modern imperialist Eurocentrism is already inscribed in the ritual theatre of Greek tragedy [...] is not only ahistorical in the ordinary sense but also specifically anti-Foucauldian in a methodological sense. (p. 166)

This combination between Auerbach and Foucault leads to many contradictions in Said's analysis of Orientalism. For example, he sometimes suggests an Aurbachean view of Orientalism, tracing it all the way back to Ancient Greece. But he also views Orientalism as the "ideological corollary of modern colonialism" some other times. It is not surprising, therefore, that the reader of Said's thesis can not decide whether it is Orientalism which gave rise to colonialism, or the other way round. To make the point, Aijaz argues: "One does not really know whether 'Orientalist Discourse' begins in the post-Enlightenment period or at the dawn of European civilization, whether in the period of the Battle of Plassey or in the days of the Battle of Troy." (p. 181)

In addition to this methodological inconsistency, Said is made guilty of the very essentialism for which he criticizes Western writers and scholars. That is, in the same way that Said accuses the Orientalists of creating an essentialist image of the Other, he himself contributes to an essentialist understanding of Orientalist scholarship:

Said quite justifiably accuses the 'Orientalist' of essentializing the Orient, but his own essentializing of 'the West' is equally remarkable. In the process; Said of course gives us that same 'Europe' - unified, self-identical, transhistorical, textual- which is always rehearsed for us in the sort of literary criticism which traces its own pedigree from Aristotle to T.S. Eliot. (Aijaz, 1992, p. 183)

Therefore, although Said accuses the Orientalists of promoting an essentialist view of Orientals as universally backward and inferior, he himself falls victim to the same essentialism when he argues that all Orientalists are necessarily racists, imperialists and incapable of producing true knowledge on the Orient. For Aijaz (1992), Said was pioneer in promoting such an essentialist view of Orientalism:

No writer with any sense of intellectual responsibility had ever accepted- that Europeans were *ontologically* incapable of producing any true knowledge about non-Europe. But Said was emphatic on this point, and he mobilized all sorts of eclectic procedures to establish it. (pp. 188-189)

Indeed, the allegations which Aijaz (1992) makes against Edward Said's reading of western scholarship on the Orient do not stop at this point. On the contrary, the man continues his attack on the author of *Orientalism*, accusing him this time of creating a version of Orientalism that goes only in one specified direction: from the Occident to the Orient. That is, Said seems to speak of Western representations of the Orient without taking into consideration how these representations have been received by the colonized. Therefore, Said stands guilty of ignoring an entire culture of resistance against the cultural hegemony of empire. As Aijaz argues, Said never bothers himself to think about how "the history of Western textualities about the non-West [...] might have been received, accepted, modified, challenged, overthrown or reproduced by the intelligentsias of the colonized countries." Apart from Said's voice, Aijaz continues, "the only voices we encounter in the book are precisely those of the very Western canonicity which, Said complains, has always silenced the Orient." (p. 172)

Said's anti-Marxist stance itself has been the subject of Aijaz Ahmad's harsh attack. Relatedly, his book includes a whole chapter entitled "Marx on India: a Clarification", which Aijaz (1992) writes to belie Said's charges against Marx. In this context, Aijaz finds Said's claims that Marx's early articles on India are Orientalist out of place. For him, Marx's views on India are misconceived by Said because the latter removes just some passages from their contexts and clusters them among the Orientalist archive. According to Aijaz, if Marx had supported colonialism, as Said would have us believe, he would have encouraged capitalism as well. Marx did not make a moral judgment on colonialism; he simply explored the conditions of possibility for a revolution in Hindustan. According to Marx, one condition for the Indians to achieve revolution is their political emancipation from colonial tutelage. That is, the Hindus, as Marx makes the point, will not reap the fruits sown by the British Bourgeoisie unless they are strong enough to get rid of the British yoke. (p. 236)

3.5 James Clifford and *The Predicament of Culture*

In addition to the previously mentioned critics, James Clifford devotes in his interesting book, *The Predicament of Culture*, an entire chapter entitled "On Orientalism" to the discussion of Said's masterpiece. At the beginning, Clifford (1988) admits that Said's thesis can be viewed as an attempt to understand how "European knowledge about the rest of the planet [has] been shaped by a Western will to power," as "part of the general writing back against the West", and finally as "merely the personal protest of a Palestinian deprived of his homeland." For Clifford, thanks to Said's *Orientalism*, Orientalism is no longer seen as an "old-fashioned scholarly discipline", but "a

synecdoche for a much more complex and ramified totality” which Said treats as a unified and consistent discourse. (p. 257)

However, despite the fact that Clifford (1988) acknowledges the significance of Said’s thesis, he finds many of its arguments flawed and ambivalent. For example, Clifford contends that Said’s use of the term “Orient” seems to fluctuate between two incompatible interpretations of the word: the real and authentic Orient which Orientalism distorts and misrepresents and the textual invention (the idea) of the Orient which is no more than a pure figment of Western imagination. The point here is that Said wants to have it both ways by ignoring the existence of a real place in the world called the Orient and attacking the Orientalists ferociously for distorting it. Clifford describes this ambivalence which informs Said’s use of the word “Orient” in the following words:

Frequently he [Said] suggests that a text or tradition distorts, dominates, or ignores some real or authentic feature of the Orient. Elsewhere, however, he denies the existence of any "real Orient," and in this he is more rigorously faithful to Foucault and the other radical critics of representation whom he cites. [...] Said’s concept of a “discourse” [...] vacillates between, on the one hand, the status of an ideological distortion of lives and cultures that are never concretised and, on the other hand, the condition of a persistent structure of signifiers that, like some extreme example of experimental writing, refers solely and endlessly to itself. (p. 260)

Therefore, it can be argued that Clifford believes that the Saidian treatment of the Orient is ambivalent and confusing as the reader is not sure whether Said is talking about the

Orient as a simple textual construct or as a genuine entity which has existence in the real world.

On the other hand, Clifford (1988) criticizes Said for giving little weight to “the sympathetic, non-reductive Orientalist tradition.” (p. 261) He points out that the Author of *Orientalism* has left out of his research the important contributions of the Italian, Spanish, Russian and especially German orientalisms. For Clifford, just because the orientalisms of these countries contradict Said’s thesis, the man chooses to rule them out. To illustrate the point being made, Clifford offers the telling example of the “German Orientalism [which] is too disinterested and thus atypical of a genealogy that defines the discourse as essentially colonialist.” In brief, this selectivity which characterizes Said’s study of Orientalism is viewed by James Clifford as “a fatal flaw.” (p. 267)

Additionally, despite the fact that Clifford (1988) acknowledges that Said’s groundbreaking study can be regarded as “a pioneering attempt to use Foucault systematically in an extended cultural analysis,” (p. 264) he notes that Said’s use of Foucault’s methods is inconsistent and misguided. This theoretical inconsistency is due to Said’s liberal humanist views which don’t harmonize with Foucault’s discourse analysis as Foucault is a radical critic of humanism. In other words, unlike Foucault, who believes in the death of the subject, Said, humanist as he is, is willing to grant the Subject independence and agency. Therefore, if Foucault insists to view the individual as a helpless prisoner of discourse, Said, on the contrary, is of the opinion that the human subject is self-controlling and self conscious. (p. 269) Therefore, although he clusters Said among the first to exploit Foucault’s theoretical insights, Clifford views Said’s

humanist stand to be in stark contrast with Foucault and his methods because the French philosopher is a vehement detractor of humanism.

According to Clifford's analysis (1988), in addition to Said's misplaced appropriation of Foucault, his whole "oppositional critique of Orientalism" can be criticized for the same sin which he criticizes in the Orientalists: essentialism. (p. 259) That is, in his reading of Orientalism, Said often resorts to the same essentializing modes he attacks. To put it in Clifford's own words, Said's text, "sometimes appears to mimic the [same] essentializing discourse it attacks." (p. 262) Therefore, although Said (1979) affirms towards the end of his research that "the answer to Orientalism is not Occidentalism" (p. 328), Clifford (1988) notes the opposite in Said's study. In other words, despite that fact that Said makes his refusal of Occidentalism explicit, Clifford affirms that his "discourse analysis does not itself escape the all inclusive 'Occidentalism'". (p. 271) In Clifford's point of view, this discourse analysis, which Said employs to form his view of Western scholarship, is not fair to individual scholars because it "is concerned merely with statements as related to other statements in a field." Therefore, the fact that Said wants to treat all Western texts on the Orient as a "discursive formation" while, at the same time, taking into consideration what Clifford calls the "individual intentionality and subjectivity" (p. 270) of authors, makes his model of analysis problematic. The point here is that Foucault's concept of "discursive formation" goes against Said's tendency to deal with the texts of individual authors.

3.6 David Kopf and "Hermeneutics versus History"

David Kopf, a professor of history at the University of Minnesota and also one of Said's severest critics, in his review article "Hermeneutics versus History", which was

presented as a talk in a symposium on the work of Edward Said published in *The Journal of Asian Studies* (May, 1980), criticizes Said harshly for some of the arguments he advances in his *Orientalism*. Kopf begins his analysis of Said's *Orientalism* by refusing to acknowledge the academic value of the book. For him, just the same as such works as Jawaharlal Nehru's *The Discovery of India* (1946), Nirad Chaudhuri's *Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* (1951) and Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1953), Said's *Orientalism* is far from a scholarly study. These books, Kopf (1980) argues, "were not intended as scholarship, but rather to express a passionate rage at having been raped and humiliated by imperialist armies, white bigots, and male chauvinists." (p. 496)

Kopf (1980) questions Said's whole thesis and expresses his refusal of his vehement attack on the scholarly products of Orientalism:

Unfortunately, Said is not really talking about Orientalism as it existed in concrete historical reality: as an ideology, a movement, and a set of social institutions. For him it is an idea, a construct, almost always sinister, with its own 'history and a tradition of thought, imagery, and vocabulary'. It is a discourse à la Michel Foucault. (p. 496)

This totally negative view which Said has of Orientalism is what weakens his arguments and makes them less convincing. In Kopf's opinion, Orientalism is not always negative and aggressive to the Orient. It is rather rich and diversified because it varies with time and place. Therefore, Said's analysis can not be objective because it ignores the positive elements which the discourse of Orientalism contains: "Though it does probe deeply into the consciousness of the imperialist mentality, *Orientalism* lacks historical precision, comprehensiveness, and subtlety." (p. 496)

Additionally, Kopf (1980) argues that the way in which Said studies Orientalism leads to a distortion of historical reality. To put it more explicitly, the fact that Said tries to explore a long period of Orientalist thought in such a brief book as *Orientalism* is not sound because “telescoping historical periods with hasty description is always misleading.” It is perhaps in this light that Kopf takes Said to task for “dropping names, dates and anecdotes” and for using a method which is “profoundly structural and synchronic” and, therefore, “diametrically opposed to history.” (p. 499)

Indeed, Said’s Foucauldian use of Orientalism as a consistent and unified set of ideas universally taken for granted in the West itself does not please Kopf. That’s why he (1980) attacks Said for his use of the term “Orientalism” to “represent a sewer category for all the intellectual rubbish Westerners have exercised in the global marketplace of ideas” (p. 498). And to prove the shortcoming of such a view, Kopf highlights the positive role played by the British Orientalists in India. These Orientalists were “a definite group of acculturated civil, military, and judicial officials (and some missionaries) created by [Warren] Hastings in the 1770s as part of a new administrative and cultural policy.” (p. 500) For Kopf, thanks to these Orientalists, a new academic Orientalism saw light in Calcutta in 1784 with the establishment of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. (p. 499) This British academic Orientalism played an essential role in the Bengal Renaissance because, as Kopf contends, it “helped Indians to find an indigenous identity in the modern world”. (p. 501)

It must be noted here that because the British Orientalists in India were not academics, their influence on the Bengal Renaissance was not only academic or intellectual; it was also practical. As Kopf (1980) argues, they “were men of social action,

working to modernize Hindu culture from within.” (p. 502) Kopf blames Said for refusing to admit the scholarly work of these Orientalists. He finds Said’s aggressive view towards the Orientalists difficult to grasp since Indian scholars and politicians, such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Rammohun Roy and many of the “renaissant Indian intelligentsia”, themselves found no embarrassment in using their work to underpin their reconstruction of Indian culture. (p. 497)

Additionally, Kopf (1980) criticizes Said for his inability to tell the difference between the Bengal Orientalists and the Westernizers known as the “Anglicists” such as Thomas B. Macaulay. Unlike the Orientalists, the “Anglicists”, in the 1830s, promoted an alternative cultural policy in India which denigrated Oriental languages in favor of English, and vilified Asian religions and cultures. Kopf insists that “it is curious [...] that Said ignores this group of proto-imperialists who were anti-Orientalist. It is their ideology and not that of the Orientalists that Said reviews in his work.” (p. 503) In other words, the aggressive views of India which Said examines in his book are advocated by the “Anglicists” and not the Orientalists whose views of India are mild and sympathetic. And to illustrate the point that the negative views of India which Said exposes in his critique of Orientalism are promoted by the “Anglicists” and not by the Orientalists, Kopf provides the telling example of James Mill, whose book *the History of British India* (1817) “had an enormous influence in shaping precisely the images of the Orient Said writes about”. Although Mill was hostile and aggressive in his description of India, Kopf asserts that he was “anti-Orientalist and anti-Oriental.” According to Kopf, the Orientalists in India, whom Said attacks, themselves questioned Mill’s qualifications to write a history of India because, as Kopf argues, “Mill had never been to India, knew no

Indian languages, and had relied on secondary sources to support his sweeping generalizations.” Therefore, “if Said wishes to know where the low esteem of Orientals indeed originated,” he should look to Mill’s writings and not that of the Orientalists. (p. 503)

The Anglicists gradually managed to control cultural policy in India. Therefore, as Kopf (1980) maintains, “in 1835, Governor-General Bentinck's support of Macaulay's Minute on Education signalled the end of official patronage for Orientalism.” In Macaulay’s Minute, the Indian vernaculars are viewed as “poor and rude.” For Macaulay, “a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia.” Therefore, despite the apparent hostility of Mill and Macaulay towards India, Kopf notes that Said does not mention the first and refers to the second only once but not in “the historical context of the Anglicist-Orientalist controversy.” (p. 504)

In a word, unlike his negative view of the Anglicists, Kopf praises the Orientalists and their impact on Indian modernity. For him, the Orientalists “contributed to the formation of a new Indian middle class and assisted in the professionalization of the Bengali intelligentsia.” They built schools, systematized languages, they brought printing and publishing to India. The proliferation of books, journals and newspapers, and other media of communication are also the products of the Orientalists’ efforts. These are just some of the achievements which Kopf refers to in his defense of the Orientalists against Said’s attack. (Kopf, 1980, p. 503)

Besides, Kopf (1980) argues that the Orientalists were against the westernization of India. And as an illustration to the point being made, he mentions H.H. Wilson and describes him as “one of the greatest Orientalists” who promotes the cultivation of

“native dialects to embody European learning and science.” (p. 505) In the same line of argument, Kopf also quotes W. H. Macnaughten as opposing the westernization of India on the basis that “if we wish to enlighten the great mass of the people in India we must use as our instruments the Languages of India.” (p. 504) Kopf believes that Said has misunderstood the nature and function of Orientalism in South Asia because he never explored issues like those examined above. He argues that “Orientalism was the polar opposite of Eurocentric imperialism as viewed by the Asians themselves [...] If Orientalism was merely the equivalent of imperialism”, Kopf wonders, “then how do we account for the increasingly nostalgic view of Orientalists nurtured by later generations of Hindu intelligentsia?” (p. 505)

3.7 Robert Young and *White Mythologies*

In his *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West*, Young (2004) makes a number of valid criticisms against Said’s text. Relatedly, in a chapter entitled “Disorienting Orientalism”, Young highlights what he calls the “problems of methodology” inherent in Said’s study. One of these problems which is commonly criticized is Said’s failure to provide us with alternatives to Orientalism. According to Robert Young, an often-heard protest lodged against Said is that his *Orientalism* proposes no alternative to the discourse it sets out to critique. Said sees no need to provide an alternative because he believes that the Orient is just a discursive construction with no existence in the real world. Therefore, to provide an alternative to the phenomenon of Orientalism would be to acknowledge the existence of a real Orient: “The general, essentialist paradigms which constitute knowledge of ‘the Orient’ also constitute ‘the Orient’ as an object in the first place – to provide an alternative to Orientalism would be

to accept the existence of the very thing in dispute.” However, Young goes on, “the entirely correct refusal to offer an alternative to Orientalism does not solve the problem of how Said separates himself from the coercive structures of knowledge that he is describing. What methods can he use to analyse his object that escapes the terms of his own critique?” Said keeps referring to the Orient but does not accept its real presence beyond its textual construction. In this sense, he is himself caught in the same trap, repeating the same image of the Orient he condemns: “Said’s account will be no truer to Orientalism than Orientalism is to the actual Orient, assuming that there could ever be such a thing.” (p. 167)

Said’s argument that the Orient has no real existence except as a construction of the Orientalist discourse leads Robert Young to question his reasoning on the link between Orientalism and European imperialism. In this respect, Said claims that Orientalism is just a representation which in no way corresponds to the real Orient, but on the other hand, he insists that the knowledge produced by the Orientalists is an instrument of power and domination which the West used to bring the non-Western world under control. According to Young (2004), Said can not have his cake and eat it, too. That is, once he decides that Orientalism is just a Western fabrication which has no apparent similarity with the reality of the Orient, then the Orientalist knowledge must be worthless. Therefore, the arguments that Orientalism bears no relation to the territory of the Orient and that its knowledge was put in the service of colonial conquest are inconsistent and contradictory. In Young’s opinion, if Orientalism was practical and effective because it enabled the Occident to subdue the Orient, then its knowledge must have necessarily been true and accurate: “How then can Said argue that the ‘Orient’ is just a

representation, if he also wants to claim that ‘Orientalism’ provided the necessary knowledge for actual colonial conquest?” (p. 169) This is to imply that Young finds Said contradicting himself in his argument that the imaginary construction of the Orient could be used to shape and exercise power over it. According to Young, Said is unable to solve the discrepancy characterizing his study. To put it in his own words, Said does not “solve the original theoretical problem of how a representation that it is claimed bears no relation to its putative object could nevertheless be put in the service of the control and domination of that object.” (p. 170)

On the other hand, if the Orient is just a Western invention as Said claims, how can he indict Orientalism for bias and misrepresentation? Differently put, if there is no real Orient to be talked about and represented, how can Said charge the Orientalists with producing a misrepresentation of an Orient which does not exist? Indeed, the question of representations and their connection to the reality of the Orient remains problematic in Said’s analysis. In this respect, to uncover the theoretical discrepancy of Said’s inconsistent oscillation between a fake and real Orient, Young (2004) asks the following question: “if Said denies that there is any actual Orient which could provide a true account of the Orient represented by Orientalism, how can he claim in any sense that the representation is false?” (p. 170)

Said, based on Young’s analysis, attempts to sidestep this question by claiming that the discourse of Orientalism does not distort the Orient, but rather that it distorts ‘the human’. Said argues that Orientalism tries to exclude “humanistic values”, and that “Orientalist reality is both anti-human and persistent.” Therefore, it can be argued that Said’s fundamental thesis is to uncover the antihumanist nature of Orientalism. However,

Said's difficulty stems from the fact that the idea of the human which he opposes to the Western representation of the Orient itself stems from the Western humanist tradition. To put it differently, Said's humanist values are deeply involved in the history of the culture that he seeks to attack. Therefore, "that anti-humanist Orientalism was the product of a humanist culture suggests a complexity that Said seems unwilling to address." For Young (2004), Said's view of Orientalism itself appears close to an Orientalist work. Therefore, he asks: "how does any form of knowledge –including *Orientalism* – escape the terms of *Orientalism*'s critique?" (p. 171)

In Young's opinion (2004), as soon as Said decides to draw inspiration from Foucault's insightful ideas to launch his scathing critique against Orientalism, his stubborn adherence to humanism becomes problematic. Whereas Foucault marginalizes the author and decenters him from discourse, Said's humanistic critique insists on the author's central position. Therefore, through "his retrieval of the category of the human, and his endorsement of the validity of individual experience as affording a theoretical and political base, Said rejects Foucault's downgrading of the role of individual agency." (p. 173) Young criticizes Said for giving a view of Foucault's concept of discourse which can not be Foucauldian at all. For him, although Said admits the impact of Foucault on his work, the man dodges the main aspect of his theorization of discourse: the death of the author. It is on this particular point that Said chooses to deviate from Foucault's philosophy by insisting on the willful agency of the author. Therefore, although Said preserves the notion of system and historical determination in his critique of Orientalism, he insists to hold the Orientalists accountable for their role in constructing a style of thought which facilitates the imperialist project. For Said, the author can not take a

critical stance against the discourse of Orientalism unless he is a willful and active agent.

As Robert Young makes the point,

Said's revision of Foucault simply takes us back to the problem with which we had begun. So, in the most traditional, indeed theological, manner, Said wants to hang on to the individual as agent and instigator while retaining a certain notion of system and historical determination. He must do the latter in order to argue for the existence of such a thing as 'Orientalism' at all, but on the other hand he must retain a notion of individual agency in order to retain the possibility of his own ability to criticize and change it. It seems that, once again, he must have it both ways. (p. 174)

Therefore, although many aspects of Foucault's concept of discourse are reinvested by Edward Said in his thesis, the role of the author remains one of the major points of difference between Foucault and Said.

3.8 John Mackenzie and *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts*

The British historian John Mackenzie also offers a thoughtful critique of Said's analysis of Western scholarship on the Orient. Relatedly, in stark contrast to Said and his thesis, Mackenzie (1995) affirms that the development of Orientalism and the arts had nothing to do with European imperialism. Therefore, he rejects Said's interpretation of Orientalism as a discourse of power used by a colonizing West to essentialize the East and Easterners as a monolithic other. Contrastingly, Mackenzie, who suggests a less politicized interpretation of Orientalism, insists on the "complexity of Western approaches to the East" (p. xviii) Therefore, Orientalism, as Mackenzie understands it, is neither monolithic nor essentialist, but rather rich and complex. To prove his argument,

Mackenzie provides telling examples, showing how Orientalism creatively contributes to “the pictorial and plastic arts, architecture, design, music and the theatre between the late eighteenth and twentieth centuries.” (p. xi)

Mackenzie (1995) argues that Said’s *Orientalism* exerted a profound intellectual influence on how Orientalism is looked at and understood. Originally, the word Orientalism had a positive connotation. It was used to refer to “the study of the languages, literature, religions, thought, arts, and social life of the East in order to make them available to the West.” However, with the release of Said’s book in 1978, that meaning changed radically. Because of Said’s *Orientalism*, Orientalism, to put it in Mackenzie’s own words, “lost its status as a sympathetic concept, a product of scholarly admiration for diverse and exotic cultures, and became the literary means of creating a stereotypical and mythic East through which European rule could be more readily asserted.” (p. xii) In brief, Orientalism, due to the influence of Said’s thesis, has become “one of the most ideologically charged words in modern scholarship” (p. 4)

However, despite his acknowledgement of Said’s outstanding work and its profound influence on a huge number of scholars concerned with the study of Orientalism, Mackenzie (1995) concedes that the book stimulated so much controversy. Therefore, “if Said’s intellectual influence on a number of related disciplines in the humanities and social sciences has been considerable, his work has also been seen as both highly polemical and distinctly schizophrenic.” (p. 5) For Mackenzie, Said’s schizophrenia stems from the contradictions inherent in certain of his arguments. For example, he accuses the West of Orientalizing the East and its people, but he himself stands guilty of “Occidentalizing the West by ‘essentializing’ [...] the characteristics of

European powers no less than they ‘essentialized’ the East.” To demonstrate Said’s tendency to describe the West by means of essences and stereotypes, Mackenzie contends that such terms as ‘Jew’ and ‘Zionist’ which Said often uses are themselves essentialist and over-burdened terms. It is not surprising that “some of the most powerful critiques of Said have come from scholars of Jewish heritage.” (p. 5)

Another area of challenge which Mackenzie (1995) points out in Said’s analysis of Orientalism is the simplistic binary model which he imposes on a highly rich record of cross-cultural interactions between the West and the rest of the world. Relatedly, Mackenzie criticizes Said’s argument that the binary opposition constitutes a pre-established assumption which the Orientalists use to assert the West’s superiority. For him, “the approach to the eastern Other can only be fully understood through a recognition of the complexity of the range of Others which constituted at once both threat and potential liberation.” (p. 209) Besides, in many cases, the Orientalists invoke the Orient for the sake of criticizing Western self-identity. Said never thinks that the portrayal of the Orient can become the means of “a counter-western discourse”. Unlike Said, Mackenzie believes that Western representations of the Orient have “the capacity to become the tool of cultural revolution, a legitimizing source of resistance to those who challenge Western conventions, introspection and complacency” (p. 10) Needless to say, many Orientalists employ the binary reasoning to promote imperial hegemony, but many others also use it to criticize and oppose European imperialism. As Mackenzie makes the point,

A fascination with Orientalism was as likely to be oppositional as consensual in relation to established power structures, a promoter of a ferment in ideas as in

artistic innovation. It is difficult to discover in any of the arts at whatever period sets of clearly delineated binary oppositions, sharp distinctions between the moral Self and the depraved Other. Rather has the whole experience been one of instabilities and fusions, attraction and repulsion, an awareness of characteristics to be peremptorily rejected as well as devoutly embraced. (p. 211)

As a historian, Mackenzie (1995) insists that Said is not familiar with the historiography of imperialism. Thus, his “historicism [...] is in itself essentially ahistorical.” (p. 11)

Mackenzie accuses Said of committing “that most fundamental of all historical sins, the reading back of contemporary attitudes and prejudices into historical periods.” He, therefore, creates a monolithic and binary view of the past. Mackenzie is of the opinion that history proves the falsity of Said’s rigid analysis. Because of the impact the Orient had on European art, architecture, design, music, and theatre, Mackenzie contends that “western arts in fact sought contamination at every turn, restlessly seeking renewal and reinvigoration through contacts with other traditions. And both Self and other were locked into processes of mutual modification.” (p. 209)

3.9 Robert Irwin and *For Lust of Knowing*

One of the latest appraisals of Said’s *Orientalism* is Robert Irwin’s 2006 *For Lust of Knowing*, published under the title *Dangerous Knowledge* in its U.S edition. Although he asserts that he is in total agreement with what Said has written about Palestine, Israel, Kipling’s *Kim*, or Glenn Gould’s piano playing, Irwin’s criticism of his *Orientalism* is pungent and acerbic. This is to mean that Irwin’s attack is not directed towards the person of Edward Said but towards his controversial text. Irwin (2006) himself makes the point clearly when he affirms: “I am really attacking the book rather than the man.” (p. 4)

However, Irwin does not hesitate to make his critique of Said's study direct and explicit. For example, he puts it bluntly that "*Orientalism* has the look of a book written in a hurry. It is repetitious and contains a lot of factual mistakes." (p. 282) More than that, he characterizes Said's thesis in the introduction as "a work of malignant charlatanry in which it is hard to distinguish honest mistakes from willful misrepresentations." (p. 4)

It should be made clear that the main objective behind Irwin's book is to defend Orientalism against Said's accusations. In Irwin's opinion, far from what Said claims in his study, Orientalism did not necessarily serve the imperialist agendas of the European powers. It was not "a political doctrine willed over the Orient." (Said, 1979, p. 204) That is, rather than what Said would have us believe, Irwin (2006) insists that Orientalism had nothing to do with Europe's domination of the Orient. For him, it could not be politically motivated because it "was founded upon academic drudgery and close attention to philological detail." Besides, the Orientalists "were often ruthless in denouncing each other's translations and editing decisions." Irwin also refuses Said's claim that Orientalism was the discourse which determined how the Orientalists viewed and represented the Orient. On the contrary, Orientalism was "mostly a story of individual scholars, often lonely and eccentric." That is to say, "there was no overarching and constraining discourse of Orientalism, there were many competing agendas and styles of thought." Therefore, the Orientalists were not all imperialist and racist in their views of the Orient because they consisted of diversified individuals: "dabblers, obsessives, evangelists, freethinkers, madmen, charlatans, pedants, romantics." (p. 7)

To plead against Said's accusation that Orientalism had existed since ancient times, Irwin (2006) argues that before the seventeenth century, Europe was not so

powerful as to produce a discourse to justify its potential invasion of the Arab-Muslim world. To illustrate the point, Irwin offers the examples of Mughal India, Safavid Persia, Mamluk Egypt and Syria and mainly Ottoman turkey. These examples prove that for centuries it was the Muslim world that had colonial ambitions in Christian lands and not the opposite. (p. 60) Besides, during the medieval period and the Renaissance European scholars were not interested in studying Islam although “a handful of churchmen composed libelous polemics or prophecies directed against Islam.” But, Irwin goes on, “the essential fact was that most Christians had no interest at all in the new religion.” (p. 21)

Irwin (2006) takes Said to task for overlooking German Orientalism. Relatedly, he does not share Said’s view that German scholars played less significant roles in Oriental studies. And to illustrate the importance of German Orientalism, Irwin provides the names of important figures such as “Hammer-Purgstall, Fleischer, Wellhausen, Nöldeke, and Becker.” For Irwin, “it is impossible to find British forerunners for these figures.” In other words, Irwin is of the opinion that even important British scholars such as Nicholson, Wright, Lyall and Cowan drew a lot on the works of the Germans. Therefore, far from what Said believes, “these works are not marginal, but central to Arabic studies in Britain.” Irwin goes on, asking: “Is it really possible that British scholars were mistaken in their belief that they needed to follow German scholars of Arabic and Islam?” (p. 257)

On the other hand, Irwin (2006) accuses Said of ignoring the origin of Orientalism: “Said can not make up his mind about when Orientalism began.” (p. 284) For Irwin, Said’s allegation that scholars from ancient Greece, such as Aeschylus, to the

late eighteenth century scholars, as Victor Hugo, Dante and Karl Marx, all took part in the promotion of the Orientalist discourse is not consistent with his other argument that Orientalism and imperialism were synonymous. As Irwin makes the point:

If Aeschylus, Dante and Postel are to be indicted for Orientalism, it follows that the necessary linkage between Orientalism and imperialism that Said posits elsewhere cannot be true. Until the late seventeenth century at least, Europe was threatened by Ottoman imperialism and it is hard to date Western economic dominance of the Middle East to earlier than the late eighteenth century. (p. 285)

Irwin (2006) also blames Said for grounding his study on two inconsistent concepts: Foucault's discourse and Gramsci's hegemony. Relatedly, Irwin notes that the Foucauldian Said presents Orientalism as an overwhelming discourse that determines how the Orientalists view and represent the Orient. In this sense, the Orientalists, if not innocent, are just victims of a discourse which they are unable to avoid. But on the other hand, the Gramscian Said attacks the Orientalists for having created a hegemonic discourse for the sake of controlling how the Orientals think and behave. Therefore, it can be argued that the Orientalists in Said's portrayal are both victims and villains. Irwin uncovers this contradiction in Said's study in the following words:

Having read Foucault and Gramsci, Said was unable to decide whether the discourse of Orientalism constrains Orientalists and makes them the victims of an archive from which they are powerless to escape, or whether, on the other hand, the Orientalists are the willing and conscious collaborators in the fabrication of a hegemonic discourse that they employ to subjugate others. (p. 290)

Said's vacillation between the two mutually incompatible concepts makes his argument inaccurate and less convincing. Indeed, Irwin also takes issue with Said's vacillation between two different interpretations of the Orient: the real Orient and the textual one. Said does not make up his mind on whether the Orient talked about by the Orientalists did exist or did not. For example, on many occasions, Said claims that the real Orient never existed, yet he accuses the Orientalists of misrepresenting it. Irwin argues that "if indeed the Orient did not exist, it should not be possible to misrepresent it." (p. 291)

Irwin (2006) castigates Said for the view he adopts of Orientals as always silent. Orientals, as the author of *Orientalism* exposes them, are unable to speak for themselves. In Said's opinion, Orientals are always deprived of their right to represent themselves. As Irwin puts it, "Said also argued that Orientalism denied Orientals the possibility of representing themselves." (p. 292) Irwin, who finds Said's view ridiculous and absurd, affirms that although some Orientals did raise their voice, Said chooses to overlook them just because they have uncovered the vices gnawing at their societies. To illustrate the point, Irwin offers the example of Fouad Ajami. "According to Said, Fouad Ajami is 'a disgrace...because what he says is so trivial and so ignorant. Ajami's crime was to have written in a downbeat way...about the betrayal of Arab hopes and ambitions in the second half of the twentieth century.'" (pp. 292-293) Irwin goes on, providing other examples of Arab writers who chose to speak for themselves, and yet were undervalued by Said.

Irwin (2006) charges Said with taking advantage of the Orientalist debate to promote hatred and animosity towards the West: "Said libelled generations of scholars who were for the most part good and honourable men and he was not prepared to

acknowledge that some of them at least might have written in good faith.” (p. 295)

Among these “good and honourable men” was Bernard Lewis, whom Said attacks vehemently in his study. Irwin shows Lewis as an exceptional scholar who represents everything good and true in an Orientalist scholar. For him, Said and his supporters deliberately ignored his large corpus of serious work and focused only on his writings in newspapers in a blatant attempt to portray him as a monstrous bigot. For Irwin, it is not enough in a scholarly debate “to pillory him only on the basis of later essays and pieces d’occasion.” (p. 260)

3.10 Conclusion

To sum-up, there is little doubt that thanks to his *Orientalism*, Edward Said was made as one of the best known scholars of the twentieth century, and established as a figure of tremendous influence in literary criticism and cultural studies. However, Said’s *Orientalism* can also be said to have constituted the most controversial text of its time. As the above discussion shows clearly, the book has provoked harsh criticisms from all sides. Indeed, one can keep on listing the flaws and contradictions which Said’s critics believe the man was trapped in. But generally speaking, the flaws which have been criticized the most can be summarized in the following points: to begin with generalizations and exclusions, Said has been harshly attacked for ignoring the complexity and richness of Orientalism, reducing it to one thread of thought. Therefore, although Said takes the Orientalists’ use of generalizations to task, he allows himself to generalize. And since generalizations require exclusions, Said, in his attempt to emphasize the homogeneity of Orientalism, finds himself obliged to exclude important figures from his study.

In addition to generalizations and exclusions, the inconsistency of Said's arguments is another much criticized aspect of his work. For example, all along his thesis, Said claims that the Orient is just a textual construct which has no existence in the real world, yet he attacks the Orientalists for distorting it. As Said's critics contend, either the Orient exists in the real world or the Orientalists can not distort it. For, as common sense dictates, no one can distort something which does not exist. Besides, very often Said alleges that the Orientalist knowledge was stereotypical and inaccurate. Yet, he claims, it was put in the service of European imperialism. For critics, in order to be useful for domination and invasion of Oriental lands and people, Orientalist knowledge had to be exact and accurate. Thus, Said has to decide either Orientalist knowledge was accurate or it could not be used to serve imperialism. Moreover, sometimes Said claims that the imperialist character of Orientalism goes back to ancient Greece, but other times he considers the late eighteenth century as the starting point of the discourse of power he names Orientalism. The latter, as Said keeps claiming throughout his study, is what determines how the Orientalists represent the Orient. That is, to be in the true, the Orientalists must be consistent with the discourse of Orientalism. However, although Said offers this image of the Orientalists as victims of an overwhelming discourse which they can not avoid, he blames them for the images they convey of the Orient. In brief, the flaws of Said's arguments are too numerous to list in great detail, but the ones explored above remain the most foregrounded by Said's opponents.

CHAPTER FOUR:

THE DISCOURSE OF EMPIRE: APPLYING SAID'S INSIGHTS TO READ THE THARAUDS' VIEWS OF MOROCCO AND MOROCCANS IN THREE SELECT WORKS

4.1 Introduction

As has been referred to in chapter one, one of Edward Said's main concerns in *Orientalism* is to demonstrate the intimate relationship between the Orientalist scholarship and the West's imperialist project. The author of *Orientalism* insists that the European powers do not impose themselves on the rest of the World only by means of direct force and coercion. On the contrary, their expansionist policies are often accompanied by the production of a scholarship that seeks to justify, rationalize and legitimize their domination of the non-Western world. Therefore, this scholarship "as it was produced and circulated in Europe was [just] an ideological accompaniment of colonial 'power'." (Loomba, 2005, p. 43) Part of this scholarship, it can be argued, is constituted by the travel accounts which endeavour to promote the imperial vision that Orientals are backward, thus, in dire need of Western help and civilization to justify their conquest and colonization.

Drawing on some basic concepts which Said develops in his analysis of Orientalism, the present chapter aims to study Jean and Jérôme Tharaud as two important agents of French imperialism in Morocco. More particularly, by uncovering the ways in which their texts on Rabat, Marrakech and Fez are engaged in promoting French domination of Morocco, the chapter considers the trilogy as part of the discourse of power which Said accuses of being biased and unscholarly. However, before we embark

on the discussion of the racist and imperialist views which the Tharaud brothers provide for the North African country and its people, it would be of great interest to highlight the political context underpinning their visit to Morocco. In this regard, it is the French Resident General Hubert Lyautey who invites the Tharauds to officially visit the colonized Morocco. Hence, as a consequence of this invitation, they make several trips to the Sherifian kingdom. The Moroccan researcher Lahjomri (1973) points out that due to Lyautey's official invitation, the Tharauds spend six months in Rabat, two years in the South and make several trips to Fez. During these trips, Lahjomri continues, they attempt to rally more votes for Lyautey's policy in Morocco by conveying an imperial vision of the country. (p, 191) This is to mean that the main purpose of their visit is to justify and rationalize the French imperial project in Morocco.

Bearing in mind the political context underpinning the Tharauds' visit to Morocco, it comes as no surprise that their views of the country and its inhabitants are manifestly biased and prejudiced. Otherwise speaking, since the Tharauds' views and observations are written upon Lyautey's demand, they naturally look at the country and its inhabitants from the man's imperial perspective. That's why all their texts on Morocco reflect their full commitment to justify and even consolidate Lyautey's expansionist policy. Therefore, it is true that their journeys in the Sherifian kingdom provide us with accounts of different aspects of the country, but it is equally true that these accounts are written to serve the interests of the French colonial administration. Accordingly, Lyautey's official invitation can be said to have made Jean and Jérôme Tharaud behave as propagandists or spokesmen for the French imperial project in North Africa. This reminds us of Edith Wharton, whose visit to Morocco had the same support from the French Resident. No

wonder her travelogue itself is a work of propaganda for Lyautey's imperialist project in Morocco.

Jean and Jérôme Tharaud's trips to Morocco are published in three travel accounts. *Rabat ou les heures marocaines* (1918), *Marrakech ou les seigneurs de l'Atlas* (1920) and *Fès ou les bourgeois de l'Islam* (1930). The chapter raises some important research questions about these texts. For example, to what extent these texts attempt to moralize the French imperial project in Morocco? Do they really maintain the country in an inferior position? Do they really enforce upon the inhabitants of the Sherifian kingdom the imperial idea that they are backward and in dire need of the French "civilizing mission"? If so, how? In seeking answers to these questions, the chapter uses Said's *Orientalism* (1978) as its major theoretical foundation. Indeed, the choice of Said's book is a fully informed decision because many of its key arguments are heavily relevant when applied to the Tharaud brothers' portrayal of Morocco and Moroccans.

4.2 The Tharauds' Ideologically Charged Views of Rabat

Rabat ou les heures marocaines is the Tharaud brothers' first text on Morocco. This book, which constitutes a kind of stroll in the streets of Rabat, gives an image of a very primitive city impatiently waiting for French redemption. However, despite their manifest tendency to vilify Morocco, Jean and Jérôme Tharaud sound unacquainted with the country at the time of writing their text on Rabat. (Potier, 2006, p. 95) This can be obvious from the manner in which they talk about the city. For example, when they see the storks that abound in Rabat, they readily admit their ignorance about their existence: "Je ne sais comment aucune image, aucun hasard de lecture ne m'avait préparé à les voir ici ces cigognes." (Tharaud & Tharaud, 1918, p. 1) [I do not know how no image, no

chance of reading had prepared me to see them here these storks.] What is worthy of note, however, is that this manifest ignorance of Morocco which the Tharauds exhibit at the time of writing their account on Rabat should not be taken to imply that their account is innocent or objective. On the contrary, the imperial tendencies of the book are extremely clear and highly explicit. In this regard, the Tharauds' inclination to convey a disparaging image of Morocco to provide a justification for its conquest is patently obvious throughout their account. For this reason, the Tharauds' *Rabat ou les heures marocaines* can be said to fall perfectly under Orientalism as defined and criticised by Edward Said. (Herzbrun, 1994, p. 33)

In fact, like any imperialist text, the Tharauds' first book on Morocco represents Rabat through a multitude of images that reflect the city's backwardness and inferiority. For example, to conform to the imperialist view of the Orient as always inferior to the Occident, Rabat is associated with the features of isolation and enclosure from the very outset of the account. According to the Tharauds' portrait, unlike the 'welcoming' cities of the West, Rabat is characterized as a closed entity, unready to welcome its visitors. This feature of foldedness associated with Morocco's capital is heavily stressed by the Tharauds' great emphasis on the city's huge doors and impregnable walls. Apparently unaccustomed to being in such an enclosed environment, the Tharauds (1918) can not hide their displeasure for the reticence which the city imposes on its inhabitants: "Mais de la vie enfermée dans ces remparts couleur de feu on ne voit, on n'entend rien." (p. 2) [But from the life enclosed in these fire-colored walls we see nothing, we hear nothing.] It is perhaps because of this feature of introversion which characterizes the city of Rabat that the authors express their incapacity to describe Morocco, or to borrow from Akhrhouz

(1996), this country where all accesses are closed in the manner in which the doors of Islam are always closed. (p. 73)

As a matter of fact, the capital's small adjacent cities are themselves described in just the same way. Relatedly, the Tharauds (1918) claim that Fédhala, Bouznika, Skirat and Témara all are holding the same characteristics of enclosure and isolation: "De ces vieilles petites cités, on n'aperçoit rien d'autre que le corset de leurs murs rouges." (p. 2) [Of these ancient small cities, one sees nothing but the corset of their red walls.] Indeed, the fortification walls and doors which abound in Rabat and its neighbouring cities are strongly emphasized in the Tharauds' portrait to create the impression that Morocco is not willing to let the outsiders discover its secrets. This is perhaps the reason why they suggest: "Ce n'est pas ici qu'il faut venir chercher les fantaisies gracieuses de l'imagination musulmane." (p. 3) [This is not the place where one should come to look for the graceful fantasies of the Muslim imagination.] Just to make it clear, this stereotyped view of Rabat as a folded on itself city is invoked here only to denote the natives' incapacity to design an appropriate architecture for their cities. Therefore, through this ideological disempowerment of the natives, the Tharauds raise the idea that a foreign intervention is badly needed.

It is important to note, however, that although the Tharauds insist to vilify Rabat as a reserved and folded on itself city, they allow themselves to penetrate its impervious walls to discover its interior secrets. As a result, they surprisingly come across one of the most beautiful sites of Morocco, the Kasbah of the Oudaya. This section of Rabat, the authors themselves admit, is what gives the city its beauty and charm. That's why upon visiting the fascinating place, the Tharaud brothers seem to be so awed with admiration

for the picturesque view that they surprisingly wonder: “Est-ce mon imagination ou mes yeux qui voient dans cet endroit un des beaux lieux du monde?” (p. 5)⁶⁷ [Is it my imagination or my eyes that see this place as one of the beautiful places of the world?]

What is worthy of note, however, is that although the Tharauds (1918) openly express their appreciation of the Kasbah of the Oudaya, their faithfulness to the imperialist vision of the Orient as always inferior to the Occident remains constant. Therefore, despite their manifest acknowledgement that the Kasbah of the Oudaya is beautiful, they claim that such a lovely place is not expected to be found in the city of Rabat: “Et vraiment c’est inattendu, après ces dures images de tomber tout à coup sur un charmant conte oriental.” (pp. 3-4) [And it is really unexpected, after these harsh images to suddenly fall upon such a charming Oriental tale.] If such statement has any meaning at all, it means that the Tharaud brothers are so stuck to the stereotypes they have of the Orient. Therefore, although they do not vilify the Kasbah because the place is really beautiful, they make of it an exception, unexpected in such an Oriental city as Rabat.⁶⁸ And because the exception always confirms the rule, the Tharauds want their readers to believe that apart from the Kasbah of the Oudaya, nothing is beautiful in Rabat. By this is meant that just because it is an Oriental city, Rabat is doomed to be vilified as “underhumanized, antidemocratic, backward, barbaric, and so forth.” (Said, 1979, p. 150)

⁶⁷ In addition to the Tharaud brothers, the Kasbah of the Oudaya has charmed many other writers such as Colette, Robert Brasillach, Claude Farrère, Mourice Le Glay, Henri Bosco, to name but a few. All these writers extol this beautiful site, or as Potier (2006) makes the point, all these writers become lyrical when they evoke the place. (p. 94)

⁶⁸ This proves that the Tharauds’ description of the Moroccan city aims to single out for emphasis only the sights and the scenes that affirm and confirm their preconceptions. Normally such beautiful place as the Kasbah of the Oudaya should be overlooked in the Tharauds’ account because its charm and beauty do not coincide with what Said (1979) calls “that collection of dreams, images, and vocabularies available to anyone who has tried to talk about what lies east of the divining line.” (p. 73) That’s why although the Kasbah of the Oudaya is not ignored in the Tharauds’ portrayal, it is characterized only as a striking exception.

The Tharaud brothers' vilifying view of Rabat as an enclosed entity is widely echoed in their description of the city's components. As such, the city's houses, for instance, are themselves shown to be bearing the same marks of foldedness, immobility and alienation that characterize the capital as a whole. This is perfectly obvious in the way in which they portray the architectural design of the house in which they live in Rabat:

La maison que j'habite, dans la ville indigène, n'a pas de fenêtre sur le dehors.
Son mur blanc tout uni ne présente à la rue qu'une lourde porte à clous, avec une ferrure en forme de main de Fathma, un heurtoir pour le cavalier, et, au-dessous, pour le piéton, un gros battant de cuivre. (Tharaud & Tharaud, 1918, p. 13)

[The house where I live, in the indigenous city, has no window to the outside. Its white wall all united presents only a heavy studded door to the street, with a Fathma hand-shaped ironwork, a knocker for the rider, and, below, for the pedestrian, a big copper clapper.]

Anyone who, thus, enters the Moroccan house has this feeling of being in a very suffocating and enclosed space, in a kind of tomb where there is no sign of life. Such vilifying portrayal proves the extent to which the native house lacks the "perfection" that characterizes its French counterpart. According to this logic, any possible improvement of the native housing design necessarily depends⁶⁹ on the intervention of the French.

Indeed, the Tharauds manage to Orientalize the native house not only by vilifying its architectural design, but also by highlighting its ancient character. Therefore, in

⁶⁹ The idea of dependence which the Tharaud brothers insist to highlight in their account is necessary in keeping Morocco and its people in a state of permanent need for the help of a more 'civilised and enlightened' race as the French.

conformity with the common stereotype of the Orient as always “static, frozen, fixed eternally,” (Said, 1979, p. 208) the Moroccan abode is portrayed as shabby and old-fashioned. According to the Tharauds (1918), the old-fashionedness of the native house reminds of the houses of ancient Rome.⁷⁰ (p. 13) Indeed, due to this ancient feature characterizing the native house, the Tharauds launch a harsh attack on the natives’ insensitivity to the progress made by the ‘civilized’ West: “Les siècles en se succédant n’ont pas apporté plus de changement dans son esprit que de nouveauté dans son habit.” (p. 205) [The successive centuries have brought no more change in his [the native] mind than novelty in his habit.] Just to be clear, this image of permanent fixity which the Tharauds insist to provide for Morocco is itself evoked to advance Lyautey’s imperialist agendas as it provides him with a convincing excuse to stay in the country until the progress missing is made. Wharton (1984 [1920]) evokes the same Orientalist stereotype to emphasize Morocco’s timelessness and lack of progress:

Every step of the way in North Africa corroborates the close observations of the early travellers, whether painters or narrators, and shows the unchanged character of the Oriental life that the Venetians pictured, and Leo Africanus and Windus and Charles Cochelet described. (pp. 71-72)

Wharton, as the quoted passage makes clear, comes with a preconceived image of Morocco as a timeless and backward country. Therefore, she attempts to depict the country in such a way as to fit to her prior vision.

⁷⁰ In her comment on the Tharauds’ tendency to highlight the ancient character of Morocco, Herzbrun (1994) affirms that “Le voyage dans l’espace marocain est toujours chez les THARAUD un voyage dans le temps, un voyage vers le passé.” (p. 33) [the journey in the Moroccan space, for the Tharaud brothers, is always a journey back in time, a journey to the past.]

In fact, the reader of *Rabat ou les heures marocaines* has the feeling that there is a definite inclination on the part of the Tharauds to inferiorize the native house. Therefore, no matter how the latter looks like, it can not escape their prejudiced attitude. For example, although they describe a very spacious indigenous house on one occasion, they claim that it is not well-ventilated. Besides, although the house's components: the balcony, the portals, the vast rooms and the big patio make it look like a luxury palace, the Tharauds (1918) insist to describe it as a very simple house: "Mais c'est un palais! direz-vous. Non, c'est une très simple demeure, une modeste maison arabe, et les mots sont bien maladroits qui donnent à tout cela un faux air d'opulence." (p. 14) [But it's a palace! you may say. No, it's a very simple house, a modest Arab house, and the words are so awkward that they give all this a false air of opulence.] Therefore, it can be argued that this disparaging tone in which this house is portrayed despite its spaciousness and luxuriousness leaves no room for doubt about the Tharauds' firm intention to vilify the native house and, as a result, Rabat as a whole. Thus, the authors' full implication in the French imperial project is again confirmed here.

More worthy of note, however, is the fact that the Tharauds' vilification of the native house is accompanied by a glorification of its Western counterpart. Therefore, in line with their denigration of Rabat's architectural design, the indigenous house is itself described as closed off from the outside and develops around its interior, whereas the French house is seen as focused on the outside world. (p. 17) This stark contrast between the two houses testifies to what Said (1979) considers as "a willed imaginative and geographic division made between East and West, and lived through during many centuries." (p. 201) That is, the binary reasoning inherent in the Tharauds' imperialist

view promotes a mode of seeing in which the native house is viewed as different and foreign to its European counterpart.⁷¹

This difference is emphasized mainly to uphold the inferiority of the former as opposed to the superiority of the latter. This is obvious from the fact that the Tharauds' description always involves a positive view towards the European house and a negative view towards its Moroccan equivalent. For example, consider this passage where the Moroccan house is portrayed as a strange and horrible place, lacking in all the distinctive features characterizing the house in the 'civilized' West: "Cette blanche maison, sans feu, sans cheminée, sans fenêtres." (Tharaud & Tharaud, 1918, p. 18) [This white house, without fire, without chimney, without windows.] In brief, the most basic necessities of life in the West seem to be lacking here. No wonder the Tharauds (1918) often have strange and unpleasant feelings whenever they get into this exotic and mysterious house: "Dès qu'on a mis le pied dans cette cour, pour laquelle la maison a réservé toutes ces grâces, on a l'impression délicieuse de laisser la vie derrière soi, d'entrer dans un nouveau royaume de silence, d'oubli, de solitude et de fraîcheur." (p. 15) [As soon as we set foot in this courtyard, for which the house has reserved all these graces, we have the delightful impression of leaving life behind, to enter a new realm of silence, of oblivion, of loneliness and of freshness.]

On the other hand, designed in a way as to be disconnected from the external world, the Moroccan abode is shown to impose on its inhabitants the feelings of

⁷¹ It is in this light that Akhrouz (1996) asserts that the Tharauds' use of a comparative discourse that highlights Western norms and models underscores the disapproving and even denunciatory tone of the critical narrator of history in *Rabat ou les heures marocaines*. (p. 80)

loneliness, withdrawal and death. It is no more than a kind of graveyard which gives its indwellers the feelings of solitude and separation. According to the Tharaud brothers, its prisonlike design highlights not only the confinement and enclosure of the place, but also the exoticness and mystery of a whole culture. To put it differently, the culture represented by the native architecture reflects the precaution and reticence of the people who are unable to step outside their private lives to build more open and mutually respectful relationships with the external world.

As the Tharauds (1918) remark, the only outlet available in this tomblike house is its terrace, but remains reserved only for women: “Aucun homme [...] n’a le droit de paraître sur les terrasses.” [No man [...] has the right to appear on the terraces.] No wonder the terrace of the house is described as being the favourable place for the native woman. The latter often finds in the terrace of the house a relieving refuge that allows her not only to escape from the confinement imposed on her by her prisonlike house, but also to be liberated from the male gaze. For this reason, as soon as the sun begins to set, the Moroccan woman rushes towards the terraces to meet and engage in conversation with other women in order to forget the distress of everyday life. (p. 18)

Just to be clear, the negative images which the Tharauds convey of the native house are meant to vilify the city as a whole and emphasize its dire need for the caring attention of the White Man. Such a view, which can only reflect the political nature of the Tharauds’ account, becomes more and more evident when Rabat is described as a city without access to electricity. According to the Tharauds’ portrait, despite Rabat’s status as being the capital of the Sherifian kingdom, its houses are still lit up with candles at night: “Peu à peu, au fond des patio, quelques bougies s’allument. Une autre et puis une

autre. Chaque maison devient une grande lanterne, qui projette au-dessus d'elle le rayonnement de sa clarté." (Tharaud &Tharaud, 1918, p. 22) [Little by little, at the bottom of the patio, some candles light up. Another and then another. Each house becomes a large lantern, which projects above itself the radiation of its clarity.] The political implication of such portrayal is that France has a moral duty towards this primitive and backward city. That is, it has to intervene as soon as possible to put an end to its backwardness by bringing the missing progress and development.

Regarding Rabat's alleys and streets, the Tharauds provide a portrayal that confirms their vilifying view of the city as an enclosed entity. Accordingly, the capital is constructed as a labyrinth of lanes and narrow streets. These alleys, which look alike in terms of construction and narrowness, often lead the city's visitors astray. The Tharauds themselves inform us that they are frequently lost in this exotic city. They sometimes spend hours and hours looking for the right destination to their home: "Et lorsqu'on est dehors, impossible de la retrouver dans le dédale des ruelles blanches, des longs couloirs tortueux et compliqués entre de grands murs vides, fantomatiquement pareils, dont la monotonie n'est rompue que par les portes ferrées toujours closes." (Tharaud &Tharaud, 1918, p. 33) [And when one is outside, one can not find it [one's house] in the labyrinth of white lanes, of long tortuous and complicated corridors between large empty walls, ghostly similar, whose monotony is broken only by the iron doors always closed.] What is noteworthy in the authors' portrayal of Rabat is their insistence on the narrowness of its alleys and streets. This aspect of Rabat's architecture reflects the narrowness of mind characterizing the inhabitants, who remain immersed in their outdated customs and traditions.

In addition to the narrow streets, Rabat's architecture is also characterized by an abundance of dead-end streets. According to the Tharauds (1918), dead-end streets exist everywhere in Rabat. Due to these narrow and abundant dead-end streets, which reflect the confinement in which the natives live, the Tharauds find Rabat closed in on itself. On the other hand, the bothers observe that the narrowness characterizing the streets of the capital is consistent with its narrow culture: "On est entré dans une impasse, un de ces chemins sans issue que l'Orient affectionne avec son éternel désir de vivre replié sur lui-même et de multiplier son secret." (pp. 34-5) [We have entered into an impasse, one of those dead-end paths that the Orient likes with its eternal desire to live folded on itself and multiply its secret.] As a consequence, it can be said that the Tharauds' insistence on this feature of Rabat's architectural design is meant to confirm the exoticness of the city and the incomprehensible nature of its inhabitants, who live on the margin of human history. Therefore, just as their view of Rabat's houses, their description of the city's alleys and streets itself is characterized by a clear tone of domination.

To crown it all, although Rabat's alleys and streets are portrayed as very narrow, the authors observe that they are not frequented only by people. On the contrary, all types of domesticated animals are seen to walk around its streets. Donkeys, horses, mules, camels, sheep, cats and dogs, all are shown to share the streets of Rabat with its inhabitants. (Tharaud &Tharaud, 1918, p.113) This is to imply that Rabat, as seen in the Tharaud brothers' account, is a city where people and animals live together and coexist. Hence, unlike the 'modern and civilized' European, the Moroccan as described in *Rabat ou les heures marocaines* is doomed to correspond to an inferior and primitive state. Such a demeaning way of describing the Moroccan other, needless to say, is used to promote

the European self-proclaimed superiority. Therefore, the Tharauds' description of the city's alleys and streets itself can be said to reproduce the same imperialist vision that Morocco can be better off if subjected to a more enlightened and altruistic race.

On the other hand, upon their visit to the neighbourhood of Souks, the Tharauds observe different colors, different odors and different products made by the native workforce. However, despite the cultural beauty of the place, the Moroccan Souk, just as all other places in Rabat, is doomed to be vilified and underestimated in the Tharauds' account. Therefore, instead of highlighting the richness and diversity of the native products for example, the Tharaud brothers choose to focus on the dirt and weird smells that prevail in the Moroccan Souk:

La rue sent l'huile bouillante, la graisse de mouton, la menthe, les herbes violemment parfumées, toutes les odeurs composites qui sortent des fourneaux de terre, où des cuisiniers en plein vent fabriquent, pour les festins nocturnes, des soupes, des grillades et des pâtisseries.⁷² (Tharaud & Tharaud, 1918, p. 49)

[The street smells of the boiling oil, the sheep fat, mint, violently scented herbs, all the composite odors that come out of earthen furnaces, where cooks in the open air make soups and grills for nighttime feasts and pastries.]

Inside this overcrowded anarchical place, the authors' attention is grabbed by the word "Balek", which everyone repeats. This dialectal word is used in Morocco to mean "watch out!" Therefore, it is always used in the Moroccan Souks and other crowded places. This magical word is employed to warn people to make way for the beasts of burden or for the

⁷² In Wharton's book about Morocco, the Moroccan Souk is seen a dangerous and threatening place. The Western traveller can not enjoy the Moroccan Souk, mainly because of the kind of people it accommodates. Wharton describes these people as not only violent and fanatic, but also ready to fight. For more details on this point, see Wharton's *In Morocco* on pages 112-113.

men who carry goods on wheelbarrows. It is the key master which the natives use to avoid traffic obstacles. (p. 50)

In brief, this analysis uncovers the extent to which the Tharauds' account maintains Rabat in states of primitiveness, backwardness and inferiority. The purpose of this vilification is to inculcate in the readers' minds the idea that the city really requires the French 'civilizing mission', or as Akhrouz (1996) points out, the picture which the Tharauds convey of Morocco in *Rabat ou les heures marocaines* is that of "un pays dont l'existence, en dehors de toute dépendence, est presque illusoire." (p. 80) [a country whose existence, without any dependence, is almost illusory.] In other words, the Tharauds' vilifying portrayal of Morocco aims to justify the French conquest of Morocco, confirming, therefore, the imperialist idea that "a Western conquest of the Orient was not conquest after all, but liberty." (Said, 1979 p. 172)

4.3 The Tharauds' Ideologically Charged Views of the Moroccan Atlas and Marrakech

Marrakech ou les seigneurs de l'Atlas is the Tharaud brothers' second text on Morocco. The book, which the authors dedicate⁷³ to Lyautey, provides descriptive sketches about an expedition ordered by the French Resident. Relatedly, we are informed that an official procession made up of a dozen vehicles leaves Morocco's capital Rabat, heading towards the main strategic military posts in the Middle and High Atlas. Being part of the procession, Jean and Jérôme Tharaud are assigned the task of reporting about this expedition. Hence, as a consequence of this assignment, they write *Marrakech ou les*

⁷³ Indeed, the Tharauds' *Marrakech ou les seigneurs de l'Atlas* is dedicated only and specifically to General Lyautey "[en] hommage d'admiration, de gratitude et d'amitié." [in tribute of admiration, gratitude and friendship.] For further details, see the dedicating page.

seigneurs de l'Atlas. Naturally the book can not be objective or neutral because it is written under the demand of the French administration.

Indeed, the Tharauds' propensity to speak of Morocco in a manifestly imperial tone is again evident in *Marrakech ou les seigneurs de l'Atlas*. This imperial tone resides mainly in the dreary picture the book seeks to convey of the Sherifian kingdom. As Bakkali (1994) makes the point, the main purpose of the book remains to highlight the flaws rather than the riches of the Moroccan society. (p. 85) In this respect, it is important to note that the Tharauds' intention to vilify the country as inferior to the West manifests itself since the first pages of the book when Morocco is characterized as a hard country, austere, without grace, rich and that seems poor, populated and that seems empty. (Tharaud & Tharaud, 1920, p. 2) These vilifying images which the Tharauds insist to associate with Morocco here do not seem to move beyond the views which all imperialist writers provide to confirm what Said (1979) calls "the debased position of the Orient or Oriental as an object of study." (p. 96)

Relatedly, the views which the Tharauds convey of Morocco in the second account themselves seem to go in the same direction of the general ideology of empire. No wonder then that the country is constantly confined to inferior backward states. In other words, since the moment Lyautey's procession leaves Rabat until its arrival at the cedar forests of the Atlas, the scenes that the Tharauds allow us to see are generally negative and unfavourable. Deliberately, the Tharauds ignore the positive aspects of Morocco to uphold the inferiority of the country. For instance, when the procession crosses the large solitary plateau of El Hajeb, the Tharaud brothers (1920) discover a very

charming landscape which they themselves characterize as a landscape of such an exceptional magnificence that without a doubt nature has not made two alike. (p. 3)

However, despite the charming beauty of the landscape before the Tharauds' eyes, they choose to ignore it in their portrait. More than that, they begin to imagine the miserable state of that part of Morocco in the distant past: "Nulle trace de végétation ni de vie. Dans ce pays de pierrerie il semblait que pas un insecte ne pût trouver sa nourriture." (Tharaud & Tharaud, 1920, p. 4) [No trace of vegetation nor of life. It seemed that no insect could find its food in this country of stones.] Let us be clear, these vilifying images, which can only convey a biased view of Morocco, have nothing to do with the reality of the country. They are just the product of the Tharauds' fantasy and imagination.⁷⁴ This is to mean that Morocco, as appears in the Tharauds' account, is more a myth than a place in the real world. Therefore, their "Orient is not the Orient as it is, but the Orient as it has been Orientalized." (Said, 1979, p. 104)

Indeed, no matter whether the Tharauds resort to imagination or distortion in their portrayal, Morocco as an Oriental country is doomed to be spoken or written about in an abusively disparaging manner. Therefore, the more Lyautey's procession moves forward in the Moroccan Atlas, the more hostile and vilifying the Tharauds' views of Morocco become. Suffice it to mention the derogatory opinion they make about the Atlas countrysides, which the Tharauds (1920) describe as boring and monotonous: "On traverse une campagne que ni sa pauvreté ni sa richesse ne savent rendre attrayante." (p. 5) [We cross a countryside which neither its poverty nor its wealth can make attractive.]

⁷⁴ However, despite being imaginary and fanciful, these pictures which the authors paint of Morocco here themselves should be viewed as ideological constructs employed with the political aim of serving the French imperial project because as Said (1979) makes the point: "even imagination could prepare the way for what armies, administrations, and bureaucracies would later do on the ground, in the Orient." (p. 123)

As if nothing seemed to appeal to the Tharauds in the Moroccan Atlas, they continue to vilify its landscape as dull and boring. Therefore, when the procession arrives at a small fortress called “le bordj d’Ito”, the most advanced guard post which the French use to watch the mysterious cedar forest, the same images are used to vilify the landscape: “A moins d’être un vrai poète, rien de plus accablant qu’un tel paysage d’autre monde.” (p. 9) [Unless you are a true poet, nothing is more overwhelming than such a landscape from another world.] This continual vilification of the landscape can only prove the authors’ inability to liberate themselves from the shackles imposed by the Orientalist discourse. The latter, it can be argued, is what determines how they represent Morocco. Accordingly, because it is “too circumscribed by the official requirements of Orientalist learning,” (Said, 1979, p. 169) the Tharauds’ imperial account can not allow Morocco to be discovered for its true identity.

Surprisingly, although the book under question is faithful to the imperialist vision of the Orient which Orientalism is known to promote, the views it conveys of the cedar forest of the Atlas are generally positive and favourable: “Dès qu’on entre parmi ces arbres, qui dépassent en magnificence tous les arbres de nos bois, on a l’impression d’avoir soudain rapetissé.” (Tharaud & Tharaud, 1920, p. 10) [As soon as one enters among these trees, which exceed in magnificence all the trees of our woods, one has the impression to have suddenly become smaller.] What is even more surprising here is that the Oriental forest when compared with its Western counterpart is seen as superior: “Tandis que nos grandes futaies nous accablent de leur ombre et de leur mélancolie, ici au contraire la forêt, aérée et lumineuse.” (p. 11) [While our large forests overwhelm us with their shade and their melancholy, here on the contrary the forest is airy and

luminous.] Therefore, “if the essence of Orientalism is the ineradicable distinction between Western superiority and Oriental inferiority,” (Said, 1979, p. 42) then it is legitimate to ask: why does the Tharaud brothers’ portrayal here involve a sympathetic attitude towards the Moroccan forest and a hostile one towards the forests of the West although their account is written in support of French colonialism?

Whatever the answer to this question is, one should cluster the Tharauds’ positive view of the cedar forests among what Said (1979) calls “manifest Orientalism.” That is, despite their sympathetic view of the Oriental forest, “the unanimity, stability, and durability of latent Orientalism are more or less constant” in their account. (p. 206) This becomes clearer when the Tharauds launch their vitriolic attack on the native practices inside the cedar forest. Therefore, the latter is praised only to make these practices appear more savage and uncivilized:

C’est l’habitude des bûcherons de mettre le feu à leur pied. Il n’est pas rare qu’on brûle la moitié de ces arbres magnifiques, la plus puissante, la plus belle, afin d’avoir l’autre moitié. Fréquemment le cèdre résiste, le feu s’éteint, l’homme s’en va. L’arbre meurt, mais toujours debout, bravant les orages et le temps. (Tharaud & Tharaud, 1920, p. 12)

[The woodcutters are accustomed to set fire to their feet. It's not uncommon to burn half of these magnificent trees, the most powerful, the most beautiful, in order to have the other half. Frequently the cedar resists, the fire is extinguished, the man leaves. The tree dies, but still standing, braving the storms and the time.]

This passage clearly shows that the Tharauds’ previous view, which exalts the cedar forest of the Atlas, can not be innocent because it is meant to make their harsh attack on

the native woodcutters grounded and reasonable. It is perhaps in line with this imperial objective that they keep reminding the readers of the benefits of the forest for the natives: “C’est leur bois presque éternel qui protège de la mort tout ce qu’on peut admirer dans ces villes de brique, de plâtre et de terre séchée.” (P. 13) [It is their almost eternal wood which protects from death all that can be admired in these cities of brick, of plaster and of dried earth.] Therefore, the Tharauds’ valorization of the native forest is only a kind of manifest discourse used to justify the latent discourse which is to denounce the native practices inside the forests.⁷⁵

Just to make it clear, apart from the seemingly ideological valorization of the cedar forest, the tendency to vilify Morocco dominates the Tharauds’ whole account. Therefore, when Lyautey’s procession reaches the post of Timhadit, the same denigrating views are again employed. In this vein, the post is described as isolated and its infrastructure is seen as poor and worn-out. Besides, the road which leads to the post, we are told, is not tarred. Therefore, just “le mauvais temps rend la piste impraticable.” [the bad weather renders the track impracticable.] In brief, the whole area in which the post is located is seen as “dépourvu [e] de tous les aspects de la vie que nous aimons chez nous.” (Tharaud & Tharaud, 1920, p. 38) [devoid of all aspects of the life we love at home.] This insistence on the worn-out infrastructure which emphasizes the inferiority of the Moroccan Atlas is undoubtedly motivated by the Tharauds’ desire to uphold the power of the French Resident in the colony.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ For further details about this fundamental point, it can be said that the Tharauds adopt a sympathetic view towards the native forest to create the impression that despite its limitless benefits, the “ungrateful” native woodcutters do not hesitate to destroy the useful cedar forest by carelessly chopping its trees.

⁷⁶ The idea of the White Man’s Burden is prominent here. For the Tharauds, it is the backward state of Morocco that invites the French to carry out their ‘civilizing’ mission in the country. Putting it bluntly, the

In addition to its poor infrastructure, the Moroccan Atlas is also vilified as extremely dangerous and insecure. In this region of Morocco, we are informed, people fight with each other with no apparent reason: “Pour un rien les fusils partent. Tout est matière à dispute chez ces populations belliqueuses : une source, un bois, un pâturage, une femme, une bête volée, un fusil, une poignée de cartouches. On se bat indéfiniment de famille à famille et de tribu à tribu.”⁷⁷ (Tharaud & Tharaud, 1920, p. 25) [Over nothing rifles are used. All is a matter for dispute between these belligerent populations: a source, a wood, a pasture, a woman, a stolen animal, a rifle, a handful of cartridges. They fight indefinitely from family to family and from tribe to tribe.] Commenting on the way in which the Tharauds depict the inhabitants of the Atlas, Bakkali (1996) remarks that they are talked about as primitive and savage mountaineers, who not only deal with each other with jealousy and hatred, but also love war and anarchy. (p.85) These images of chaos and conflict associated with the Moroccan Atlas are meant to provide an excuse for the French to keep their troops in Morocco. Thus, their political turn is to moralize the expansionist policy of the so-called ‘civilized’ France. In other words, what the Tharauds (1920) want us to believe is that France does not invade Morocco to serve its political and economic interests, but to help “ce pays de violence où les passions s’opposent” to restore security and stability. (p. 51) [this country of violence where passions are at odds.]

Tharauds (1920) claim that the purpose behind the French presence in the Sherifian kingdom is “créer librement des routes, des chemins de fer, des ports, des villes, réveiller ce pays mort et l’animer comme par enchantement.” (p. 40) [to freely create roads, railways, ports, cities, wake up this dead country and animate it as if by magic.]

⁷⁷ In his article entitled “L’esthétique du baroque dans *Marrakech ou les seigneurs de l’Atlas*”, Bakkali (1994) makes the same remark, asserting that since the procession leaves Rabat, the Tharauds make us live in an atmosphere of guerrilla rather than war, with its natural consequences of insecurity, threat and violence which keep us constantly in suspense. (p. 85)

Another image which the authors provide for Morocco to justify its domination and conquest is that of an ancient and ruined Orient. For the Tharauds, Morocco is “le pays de l’écroulement, de l’inconsistant, du précaire, du vent qui emporte sans cesse les murs de boue en poussière.” (p. 165) [the country of the collapse, of the inconsistent, of the precarious, of the wind that constantly carries the mud walls in dust.] Needless to say, this image of ruin which the Tharauds convey of Morocco is itself an indicator of the primitive state and inferiority of the country. No wonder then it is repeatedly used in the Tharauds’ second account. Walls, buildings, palaces all are shown to be dilapidated and in complete ruins. Suffice it to mention at this point the houses in which the sedentary people of one of the Atlas plains live, which the authors describe as mud hovels destroyed by looters or devastated by time. (p. 63) Just to be clear, such a disparaging attitude towards the natives’ place of residence can be viewed as an implicit invitation issued by the Tharauds to the French to carry out their pretended mission to ‘modernize’ the ruined Morocco.

The Tharauds’ representation of Marrakech seems to go in the same direction. That is, the red city itself is reduced to the states of ruin and decadence. Accordingly, Marrakech is painted as “l’immense ville de boue séchée.” [the huge city of dried mud.] This kind of stereotyped representation itself denotes the city’s fragility and readiness to turn into ruin and destruction. No wonder then that its buildings are described as bearing the signs of ruin and devastation. The best example that can be used here to illustrate the point being made is that of the tomb of the Saadians, which the Tharauds (1920) portray as “une petite bâtisse ruineuse.” (p. 115) [a little ruinous building.] In this respect, all the components of the tomb are shown to be old and worn-out. When the authors move

closer to the abandoned building, they find out: “Aucune porte ne défend l'accès de ces pavillons ruineux. (pp. 116-7)⁷⁸ [No door defends the access of these ruinous pavilions.] This kind of ideological view itself implies the need for French presence to improve Morocco for its inhabitants.

Indeed, the Tharauds' whole account can be said to emphasize Morocco's dire need of a more enlightened nation by offering the country a “discursive identity that [makes] it unequal with the West.” (Said, 1979, p. 156) This explains the exaggeratedly contemptuous attack which the Tharauds launch against all aspects of the country. Indeed, no matter what the reality of the Sherifian kingdom is, it is doomed to be vilified and disparaged. For instance, despite the magnificence and beauty of the palace of Ba Ahmed, the Tharauds (1920) can't help speaking negatively about it due to the limitation imposed by the Orientalist discourse. Therefore, it is true that they find the palace so magnificent that they themselves admit their inability to describe it correctly: “Qu'il est donc malaisé de peindre avec justesse le charme de l'Orient!” (p. 77) [How difficult it is to paint accurately the charm of the Orient!] However, they claim that its architecture lacks the perfection that characterizes its Western counterpart: “Pas la moindre décoration, comme si les corridors de cette vaste demeure n'avaient pas été achevés. Évidemment l'esprit arabe n'éprouve pas, comme le nôtre, le besoin d'une perfection totale.” (p. 79) [Not the slightest decoration, as if the corridors of this vast house had not been completed. Obviously, the Arab mind does not feel, like ours, the need for total perfection.] What

⁷⁸ As if the image of ruin emphasized in the portrayal of the tomb of the Saadians were not enough to inferiorize the shrine, the Tharauds (1920) move on to describe its architecture in a vilifying way, claiming that some bricks are artlessly assembled and roughly brushed with a layer of lime which flakes. (p. 127)

one is supposed to deduce from the binary vision employed here is that the inferiorization of the native architecture serves to buttress the French superiority and strength.⁷⁹

On the other hand, as Herzbrun (1994) points out, the Tharauds never miss the chance to visit the Mallah in the cities in which they stay, and Marrakech is no exception. (p. 34) Relatedly, in accordance with their willingness to provide a dreary picture of Morocco as a whole, the Tharauds (1920) characterize the Jewish ghetto as a disgusting place: “C’est un des lieux les plus affreux du monde. Là s’entassent vingt mille Juifs, dans un espace infiniment trop étroit pour leur vie pullulante.” (p. 127) [It is one of the most horrible places of the world. There twenty thousand Jews are crammed together, in a space infinitely too narrow for their swarming life.] Relatedly, the authors express their great disgust at the strong unpleasant smells that hang over the Jewish neighbourhood. These foul smells, according to their portrait, emanate from the rubbish piled up everywhere:

En vain le regard cherche-t-il à se poser sur quelque chose de propre. Par une fatalité incroyable, les denrées elles-mêmes, un fruit, une orange, un citron, une bougie, du sucre, tous ces objets dont le nom seul éveille une idée de fraîcheur, prennent ici l’air sale et malade. (p. 128)

[In vain does the eye seek to rest upon something clean. By an incredible twist of fate, the commodities themselves, a fruit, an orange, a lemon, a candle, sugar, all these objects whose name alone conveys an idea of freshness, appear here dirty and sick.]

⁷⁹ It is in this light that Said (1979) affirms that “European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self.” (p. 3)

These wastes provide such stealth creatures as rats and mice with a suitable environment. No wonder then the diseases transmitted by them abound in the Jewish quarter.

Indeed, the Tharauds' hostility towards the Mallah becomes even more violent when they start to describe the Jewish school. Consider this long passage which shows the extent to which the Tharauds are determined to convey a debasing view of the Jewish neighbourhood:

Le plus affreux, c'est l'école, où, dans l'odeur inexprimable, des grappes d'enfants pressés les uns contre les autres comme des mouches sur un papier ou des têtards dans une mare, ânonnent les textes hébraïques, pleurent, crient, s'abandonnent sans vergogne à tous les besoins de la nature, autour de vieux maîtres dégoûtants, dont la figure hébétée garde un air d'enfance abrutie. Oh! l'horrible verger d'enfants qui semble arrosé d'urine et poussé sur le fumier! (Tharaud & Tharaud, 1920, p. 129)

[The most awful is the school, where, in the inexpressible smell, groups of children huddled against each other like flies on a paper or tadpoles in a pond, drone the Hebrew texts, cry, shout, shamelessly abandon themselves to all the needs of nature, around old disgusting masters, whose dazed faces keep an air of stupefied childhood. Oh! The horrible orchard of children which seems watered with urine and pushed on the manure!]

As may be obvious from the quote, the pictures offered here are not only hostile and aggressive, but also characterized by a clearly racist attitude against the Jews. In his comment on the Tharauds' views towards the Mallah in Marrakech, Bakkali (1996) seems to be making the same point, asserting that the Tharauds' anti-Jewish sentiment is

so evident in the chapter devoted to the ghetto of Marrakech. (p. 88) Therefore, that the Jews are singled out as the dirtiest among all the inhabitants of Morocco is a clear sign of racial prejudice against them. In his essay on Marrakech, Orwell (1939) conveys the same vilifying view of the Jewish ghetto:

When you go through the Jewish quarters you gather some idea of what the medieval ghettos were probably like [...] Many of the streets are a good deal less than six feet wide, the houses are completely windowless, and sore-eyed children cluster everywhere in unbelievable numbers, like clouds of flies. Down the centre of the street there is generally running a little river of urine. (p. 2)

The Jews' places of work are so dark and primitive that Orwell compares them to caves: "working in dark fly-infested booths that look like caves." (p. 2)

In addition to the ghetto of Marrakech, the Tharauds also offer their testimony on the Jemaa' el Fnâ square. The latter is described as a melting pot of cultural diversity. According to the Tharauds' portrait (1920), people from all races, from all corners of the country come to the place to trade, to receive medical or magical treatment, or simply to have fun. (p. 99) But what is noteworthy in the Tharauds' view of Jemaa' el Fnâ is the label they provide for the square: "La place folle." (p. 95) [The crazy place.] Benbella (2010) argues that the choice of the adjective 'crazy' here can be explained by the eccentricity of the activities taking place in the square. (p. 34) For her, coming from a different culture, the Tharauds find these activities bizarre and exotic. Beside its exoticness, Benbella also notes that Jemaa' el Fnâ takes the character of a holy place in the Tharauds' account. (p. 35) To put it more explicitly, all the unfamiliar activities

which the Tharauds note in Jemaa' el Fnâ are imbued with a sacred character, mainly through the invocation of Allah, the prophet and the holy marabouts:

Et ces danses, ces chants, ces musiques, ce bruit sourd de tambourin, ces contorsions et ces sorcelleries, tout ce plaisir primitif, dans ce qu'il a de plus égaré, de plus trouble, de plus voluptueux, s'accompagne inlassablement de gestes religieux, de mains tendues pour la prière, d'invocations à Allah et à tous les saints de l'islam, d'amen et d'amen encore mille fois répétés, de doigts qu'on porte à sa tête, puis à son front, puis à ses lèvres, de saluts et de baisers à l'infini mystérieux- en sorte que cette place folle entend, au long de la journée, plus de prière qu'une mosquée. (Tharaud & Tharaud, 1920, p. 109)

[And these dances, these songs, these musics, this thud of tambourine, these contortions and these witchcrafts, all this primitive pleasure, in what is most misplaced, most troubled, most voluptuous, is tirelessly accompanied by religious gestures, by hands extended for prayer, by invocations of Allah and all the saints of Islam, by amen and amen repeated a thousand times, by fingers that are carried to his head, then to his forehead, then to his lips, by greetings and by endlessly mysterious kisses - so that this crazy place hears, throughout the day, more prayer than a mosque.]

Needless to say, this kind of portrayal, in which Morocco appears as “a living tableau of queerness,” (Said, 1979, p. 103) can only contribute to the promotion of a common stereotype in which the Orient is viewed as an exotic and backward world.

In this context, the backwardness of Morocco is one of the fundamental pictures which the Tharauds want to paint in their account. According to them, the country does

not seem to benefit from the worldwide spread of development and civilization. Whereas the ‘civilized’ West develops and continues to make progress in all fields, Morocco is still lagging behind.⁸⁰ This fixist conception of Moroccan history can be clearly seen in the following passage:

Les siècles ont beau s’écouler, la réalité dans ce pays est demeurée toujours la même. Les événements et les spectacles s’y reforment immuablement pareils. Aujourd’hui répète l’image d’un autrefois très ancien. Voilà dix siècles que, sans y rien changer, ce Maroc poursuit sa vie quotidienne avec la monotonie de l’instinct, et se reste fidèle à lui-même en s’oubliant tous les jours. (Tharaud & Tharaud, 1920, p. 212)

[Although the centuries have passed, the reality in this country has always remained the same. The events and the shows are immutably alike. Today repeats the image of another very ancient time. For ten centuries, this Morocco has unchangeably continued its daily life with the monotony of instinct, and has remained faithful to itself by forgetting itself everyday.]

Such a passage can not reveal more than the Tharauds’ inclination to create an image of the timeless Orient. That is, unlike the West, Morocco appears in this portrayal as “something whose existence is not only displayed but has remained fixed in time and place for the West.” (Said, 1979, p. 108) Therefore, this kind of description creates an ahistorical image of Morocco as something placid and immobile, which goes against the fact of history.

⁸⁰ Bakkali (1994) makes the same point, asserting that the main objective of the Tharauds’ text on Marrakech is to compare and contrast the Western modernity and the Moroccan Middle Ages. (p. 96)

4.4 The Tharauds' Ideologically Charged Views of Fez

The readiness to serve the French imperialist project which the Tharaud brothers exhibit through their vilification of Rabat and Marrakech is further confirmed in their account on Fez. Therefore, just like their two previous texts, *Fès ou les bourgeois de l'Islam* itself paints a very grim picture of Morocco's spiritual capital. In other words, subjected to the scrutiny of the Tharaud brothers' imperial eyes, Fez is obviously denied the typical qualities that are commonly used to describe the 'civilised' West. This is, therefore, an evident indicator that the Tharauds' whole work on Morocco sticks blindly to the colonialist biases and assumptions inherent in the Orientalist discourse. This can explain the inferior position which the Tharaud brothers provide for the city of Fez in their account.

Just to be clear, Fez is never seen as equal to the West in the Tharauds' account. The latter is planned from beginning to end to maintain the city and its business world in states of primitiveness and inferiority. In this respect, the Tharaud brothers' deliberate intention to vilify Fez is made clear even before their arrival at the city. For instance, while on their way to Fez, the Tharauds (2012 [1930]) pretend to see nothing more than "dust," "beasts" and "people frightened" by their car which goes forward honking. (pp. 13-14) The words used here can only reveal the Tharauds' unbridled desire to disparage the city and represent it as primitive and backward. They, therefore, fit in perfectly with the aim of keeping the French imperial project in place. To put it more explicitly, by emphasizing the city's backwardness, the Tharauds are indirectly calling for the West's rushed intervention.

Surprisingly, although the Tharauds' description of the trip to Fez makes their intention to vilify the city clear and explicit, their first contact with Fez proves to be different than expected. Otherwise speaking, Jean and Jérôme Tharaud's first arrival at the city sounds so amazing that it gives rise to a positive description in which Fez is associated with images that suggest charm and beauty. In other words, what the Tharaud brothers' first contact with Fez allows them to see is only a long flow of whiteness. This charming view of Whiteness is beautified even more by the golden minarets of faience seen from afar and the abundant orchards which provide vital green spaces for the inhabitants. What fascinates the Tharaud brothers even more in this Oriental city is the purity of the air and the calm which seems to prevail everywhere: "Pas une fumée, pas un bruit." (Tharaud & Tharaud, 2012, p. 15) [No smoke, no noise.]

Unfortunately, but not unexpectedly, these early impressions of Fez which allow the readers of the Tharauds' account to see the city in a positive light quickly and entirely vanish in their subsequent portrayals. That is, as soon as the Tharauds (2012) affirm they become well acquainted with Fez, their favourable judgement of the city is retracted: "La longue descente immaculée ne m'apparaît plus toute blanche. Je vois les taches, les moisissures de cette ville humide." (p. 17)⁸¹ [The immaculate long descent no longer appears all white to me. I see the stains, the molds of this wet city.] What the Tharauds want us to believe here is that the good impression which Fez has left on them in the first contact is only the result of their profound lack of knowledge of the city. In this regard, Potier (2006) points out that the Tharauds themselves "admettent qu'après avoir connu Fez, ils ne la voyaient plus de la même nuance." (p. 51) [admit that, after having known

⁸¹ It should be noted here that the authors confirm this view on another occasion, claiming that what they see in Fez are only walls where the rain leaves on the lime long black marks. See page 20 for further details.

Fez, they no longer saw the city in the same way.] That is, as soon as their knowledge of the city becomes thorough and precise, thanks to their multiple visits, their views of the city are no longer the same. To make the point, the Tharauds (2012) write: “Il m’est à peu près impossible de retrouver dans son intégrité l’impression du premier moment.” (p. 17)⁸² [It is almost impossible for me to find in its integrity the impression of the first moment.]

Actually, immediately after their ideological declaration that their first felt impressions of Fez are false and far from accurate, Jean and Jérôme Tharaud unleash their racist hostility on the city, depicting it in the most vilifying way. As such, the previously described Fez as a white city is now viewed as a crowded place because of the hundred thousand people it accommodates. And to paint the crowdedness of the city in a more denigrating way, the Tharauds (2012) compare it to a beehive or nest. (p. 17) Therefore, although Potier (2006) affirms that the Tharauds’ second portrayal of Fez is much more documented because they start to know the Fassi habits and the details of architecture, (p. 51) their hostile and aggressive views of the city can not be “raw, unmediated, or simply objective.” (Said, 1979, p. 273) That is, their views must be loaded with ideology to uphold the French mainstream imperialist thought.

Relatedly, Fez, as seen in the Tharauds’ account, is divided into two major parts: The first part contains Fez Djédid and the New City, which, in the Tharauds’ opinion, has nothing new except the name, and the second part contains the Old Medina. As far as Fez Djédid is concerned, it hosts the Sultan's palace, a neighbourhood called Sidi Abdallah,

⁸² On the other hand, it can be argued that the Tharauds’ decision to open their portrayal of Fez with a positive view can not be accidental or arbitrary. It is, rather, a calculated plan meant to create the impression that they are intending to depict Fez as it really is without being partial or subjective. This way allows them to gain more credibility and trustworthiness for their subsequent hostile and aggressive views.

and finally the Mellah. Both Sidi Abdallah and the Mellah are depicted in a negative and offensive manner. Whereas the first is described as a sordid place that lodges the poor and prostitutes, the second is vilified as a disgusting place, too narrow in comparison with the number of Jews it accommodates. (Tharaud & Tharaud, 2012, p. 18)

However, the part of the city which the Tharauds describe extensively remains the Old Medina. But although this part of Fez is the most interesting, known for its different and diversified shops and souks as well as its historical monuments, such as the Quarawiyine mosque and the Moulay Idriss Sanctuary, the Tharauds (2012) insist to depict the place in a very contemptuous tone. For instance, although the abundant commercial shops are what make the Old Medina of Fez one of the most interesting places in the city, they are described in the Tharauds' account in a miserable way: "Une chambre minuscule, qu'il loue trente francs par mois, la porte ouverte sur la cour d'où arrive l'odeur du crottin, de la poussière et de la paille hachée" (p. 37) [A tiny room, which he rented for thirty francs per month, the door open on the courtyard from where comes the smell of dung, dust and chopped straw.] Such a scornful portrayal which leads to the inferiorization of the Old Medina shops can only attest to the authors' propensity to remain faithful to the mainstream imperialist thought.

Indeed, the authors' adherence to what Said (1979) calls the assumption that "the Orient if not patently inferior to, then in need of corrective study by the West," (p. 41) is also manifest in their portrayal of the historical monuments located in the Old Medina. For example, despite its status as the first founded university in the world, the Qaraouiyyine does not escape the Tharaud brothers' harsh attack. In other words, despite the international fame and recognition which the world's oldest university enjoys, the

Tharauds are determined to blacken its reputation. However, it should be noted here that the Tharauds' vilifying portrayal is not focused on the mosque itself, but on the teaching it provides. (Potier, 2006, p. 61) For them, the Qaraouiyine, or to use their own words, [the tomb of the mind] "le tombeau de l'esprit" does not live up to its name. It is true that the Tharauds (2012) express their admiration of the university's external appearance: "Elle est aussi belle qu'autrefois avec ses portes de bronze, son pavé blanc et noir, le ruisseau qui la traverse, sa fontaine aux ablutions si parfaitement élégante, sa nef aux trois cents piliers et aux lampes innombrables." [It is as beautiful as before with its bronze doors, its white and black pavement, the stream which crosses it, its so perfectly elegant fountain for ablutions, its nave with three hundred pillars and innumerable lamps.] But its fundamental role in spreading science and knowledge among people is denied: "Toutes les sciences que les savants de l'Andalousie mauresque inventaient ou ressuscitaient des ténèbres, et qu'on enseignait ici, sont les unes après les autres descendues au sépulcre." (p. 171) [All the sciences which the scholars of the Moorish Andalusia invented or revived from darkness, and which were taught here, one after the other faded away.] Therefore, as the quoted passage demonstrates, the Qaraouiyine is Orientalized as empty of any essence.

The Authors' Orientalist representation of the Old Medina is also manifest in the way in which its houses are depicted. Relatedly, the Tharauds note that the Old Medina houses have a special character: They look very simple and even miserable from the outside, but once you get inside you find yourself in a very captivating place. This external misery of the Fassi houses is what gives a better appreciation of their interior luxury. (Potier, 2006, p. 56) As a consequence, the Tharauds (2012) advise the Old

Medina visitors not to be deceived by the outer appearance of these houses because it does not reflect the real sumptuousness and elegance of the inside: “Sa maison n’offre jamais à la rue que son côté rugueux et sombre.” (p. 20) [His house [that of the Fassi] offers to the street only its rough and dark side.] For Jean and Jérôme Tharaud, the most miserable facades in the Old Medina houses most of the time lead to fairy palaces: “Dans les demeures les plus somptueuses, l’entrée du vestibule a toujours un air d’écurie.” (p. 22) [In the most sumptuous dwellings, the entrance to the vestibule always looks like a stable.]

Although the Tharauds sound so charmed by the luxury of the Fassi houses, Potier (2006) notes that they don’t describe a particular house. They rather discuss the general decor and the immense importance the Fassi gives to the house. (p. 64) Indeed, this exaggerated importance given to the house can be attributed to the Fassi culture itself. A culture in which home ownership is always given priority over everything else. In the city of Fez, the Tharauds (2012) note, people are ready to risk everything for the purchase of a beautiful house. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the first decision which the Fassi takes when he becomes rich is to comply with the following proverb: “La première chose qu’on doit posséder c’est une maison, et c’est aussi la dernière qu’on doit vendre, car la maison est le tombeau d’ici-bas.” (p. 20) [The first thing you must own is a house, and it is also the last thing you must sell, because the house is the tomb of this world.] This passage reflects the considerable importance which the locals give to their abodes. The Fassi people do not hesitate to recklessly squander all their wealth and fortune on the construction and decoration of their lavish homes. Therefore, no wonder the city’s

visitors are often filled with astonishment due to the sumptuousness and magnificence of the Fassi houses.

However, the fact that the Tharaud brothers (2012) keep insisting on the sumptuousness and lavishness of the Fassi houses should not be taken to imply that they break away with the mainstream imperialist discourse. On the contrary, the men's imperialist thought becomes quickly obvious when they characterize these houses as being filthy and unclean. For them, although the inhabitants of Fez can risk all their wealth for the sake of building and decorating their houses, they rarely care about their cleanliness: "Le Fassi, lui, reblanchit rarement, et laisse les toiles d'araignées pendre, en longs rideaux noirs, aux barreaux des étroites ouvertures qui trouent çà et là les murailles." (p. 22) [The Fassi rarely resurfaces, and lets the cobwebs hang, in long black curtains, at the bars of the narrow openings which pierce the walls here and there.]

Such affirmation reveals clearly the ideological underpinning of the Tharaud brothers' account on Fez, which is to blindly vilify the city. Luckily, their vilification of the Fassi houses can be used against them this time because it contains a self-contradictory premise. On the one hand, they affirm that nothing in the city of Fez can take priority over owning a beautiful and luxurious house, but on the other hand they claim that the Fassi people do not take care of the cleanliness of their houses. The two premises are logically inconsistent, if not contradictory. How is it possible that a people who view house ownership as the most important thing in their life leave their houses dirty and unclean? This self-contradiction which characterizes the Tharaud brothers' view not only uncovers their subjectivity and unconstrained willingness to vilify the Moroccan

city, but also reveals the extent to which they are committed to serve their country and its imperial interests in Morocco.

Therefore, it becomes clear that Jean and Jérôme Tharaud are irrevocably committed to inscribe their *Fès ou les bourgeois de l'Islam* in an imperial tradition whose main aim is to keep the French empire in place. That's why their views seem to go in the same direction, the one in which Fez is pinned down to the status of a backward and inferior city. Their description of the native architectural design can serve as an example to illustrate this point. Relatedly, the Tharauds (2012) claim that the native architectural design is characterized by a manifest lack of inventiveness and creativity: "À Fez, il n'y a qu'un âge et qu'un style: celui d'hier, d'aujourd'hui et de demain." (p. 21) [In Fez, there is only one age and one style: that of yesterday, today and tomorrow.] Therefore, despite the magnificent decorations which characterize the Fassi house, the Tharauds insist to vilify its architecture as monotonous and unaesthetic. For them, the Fassi architects keep building the same houses without worrying about novelty and improvement. No wonder, then, that this Oriental city knows no development in terms of the building design and architecture.

On the other hand, to conform to the imperial idea that "the world is made up of two unequal halves: Orient and Occident," (Said, 1979, p. 12) Jean and Jérôme Tharaud resort to a binary opposition in which the native architecture is viewed as inferior to its European counterpart. As Potier (2006) makes the point, "les Tharaud remarquent [...] que l'on bâtit à Fez les mêmes maisons depuis des siècles, sans se soucier de nouveauté architecturale comme en Europe." (p. 64) [the Tharaud brothers [...] note that the same houses have been built in Fez for centuries, without worrying about architectural novelty

as in Europe.] Being surrounded by this monotonous architecture which dominates the whole city, the Tharauds feel as if the time is stopped from passing: “On a fait ici le miracle de supprimer le temps.” [We have made here the miracle of removing the time.] That’s why they openly express their feelings of resentment and dissatisfaction towards the city’s lack of progress in the field of architecture: “Beaucoup de luxe, aucune invention. En architecture comme en tout, le Fassi suit la tradition.” (Tharaud & Tharaud, 2012, p. 21) [A lot of luxury, no invention. In architecture as in everything, the Fassi follows the tradition.]

Therefore, it is clear that the authors give the European architects a kind of supremacy over their Fassi counterparts. In other words, if the Fassi architects are shown to be untalented and impotent, then the Europeans must be gifted and creative in terms of architecture and house design. This type of describing the Other according to the Self is what the author of *Orientalism* calls binary opposition. According to Said, this binary reasoning of Orientalism is often made in favour of the West. Similarly, the polarity on which the Tharauds’ account establishes itself guarantees the superiority of the French over the inferiority of the natives. As such, the indigenous architecture is viewed as stagnant, ossified and incapable of development, thereby securing the French architecture in contrast as renewed and continuously developed and improved. This Orientalist logic which endows the Europeans with all the qualities lacking in the natives, it can be argued, is itself an important step towards the exercise of power. Therefore, the role of the Tharaud brothers in the establishment of the French empire can not be doubted.

4.5 The Tharauds' Ideologically Charged Views of the People

Obviously, the Tharauds manage to maliciously create a negative image of Morocco as a backward and primitive country. In so doing, they tacitly show the country's urgent need for the French 'philanthropic' intervention. Similarly, their views of the inhabitants are themselves shadowed by the same imperial mindset. Therefore, the men's determination to follow through with their unconditional support of the French presence in Morocco is manifestly firm and strong. This is obvious from the ideologically charged images which they insist to associate with the natives. The latter are stigmatized as exhibiting many vilifying defects: They are, among other things, lazy, sensual, treacherous, irrational, corrupted and corruptor.

Such a negative portrayal, or as Said (1979) says, "cultural stereotyping" (p. 26) is used mainly to vilify the people of Morocco and tarnish their image in front of the world. This reduction of the natives to beings of an inferior status, in its turn, serves to articulate the requirement of French presence in Morocco. Therefore, as Lahjomri (1973) makes the point, the purpose of the Tharauds' accounts is not to make Morocco and its people known to France, but to defend the French colonial ideology. (p. 191) As a consequence of all this, it can be argued that the Tharauds' trilogy is politically motivated, aiming to "construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin in order to justify conquest and establish systems of administration and instruction." (Bhabha, 1994, p. 70) Indeed, this insidious intent, it must be clear, is what provides the basis for the Tharauds' ideological portrayal of the natives. No wonder the latter are designated by a set of vilifying images which strongly demonstrate their difference from the 'civilised' world. These images can be summed-up as follows:

4.5.1 Lethargy and laziness

The first dreary picture which the Tharauds paint of the natives of Morocco is laziness. On many occasions, the Tharauds stigmatize the natives as lazy and lethargic people. In their account of Rabat for example, the Tharauds (1918) claim that the natives' favourite hobby remains to lie down near marabouts and surrender to sleep. (p. 242) This is to mean that these 'lazy' people waste most of their time in sleep and rest. More than that, when they have the chance to work, they do not seem to work enthusiastically as the 'civilized' race: "Les artisans et leur monde gracieux d'apprentis travaillent sans ardeur à leurs menus métiers très anciens." (p. 50) [The artisans and their graceful world of apprentices do their ancient odd jobs without fervor.]

This image of the lazy native, which the Tharauds provide for the inhabitants of Rabat, is again used to characterize the merchants of Fez. Indeed, the Tharauds (2012) bluntly describe these merchants as "des boutiquiers désœuvrés" [idle shopkeepers] and "des marchands oisifs." (p. 17) [idle merchants.] Like many Orientalists, the Tharauds are surprised at the sloth and idleness of these merchants, unwilling to work hard towards the improvement of their lives. Therefore, as Potier (2006) remarks, the idleness of these merchants chocks the visitors. The natives' commerce has nothing to do with what is known in Europe. (p. 75)

What proves the natives' indolence and laziness even more is their nasty habit of gossip. According to the Tharauds' portrait, instead of occupying themselves with their own affairs, the natives love wasting their time in gossip. Their favourite pastime is to invite each other for the sake of talking behind each other's back. Therefore, the frequent invitations among relatives and friends should not be understood as a sign of the natives'

generosity because the real purpose is to talk endlessly about other people's private affairs. As the Tharauds (2012) inform us, the natives themselves refer to the time of the invitation as the gossip hour. (p. 39) Relatedly, during their stroll in the Old Medina of Fez, the Tharauds are chocked by the widespread of the phenomenon among the idle merchants: "On les voit, ces marchands oisifs, se visiter les uns les autres, venir s'asseoir sur le bord des boutiques, se communiquer les nouvelles, en plaisanter entre eux."⁸³ (p. 40) [We see them, these idle merchants, visit each other, come and sit on the edge of the shops, exchange the news with each other, and joke about it among themselves.] This means that these merchants ignore the value of time. That's why they stupidly waste it in gossiping about each other.

Far from being innocent, the image of the lazy native which the Tharauds convey of the inhabitants of Morocco is itself a pretext for imperial conquest. Its ideological function has always been to justify the West's expansionist policy. In the introduction to his study on *the Myth of the Lazy Native*, Alatas (1977) makes the point clearly:

In its historical empirical manifestation the colonial ideology utilized the idea of the lazy native to justify compulsion and unjust practices in the mobilization of labour in the colonies. It portrayed a negative image of the natives and their society to justify and rationalize European conquest and domination of the area. (p. 2)

Similarly, the Tharauds' characterization of the Moroccan people in terms of idleness and laziness is itself synonymous with French domination of Morocco. That is, such portrayal

⁸³ In this context, the Tharauds (2012) inform us that they themselves often have the feeling of being the subject of their gossip: "Nos actes, nos personnes, rien n'échappe à leur esprit dénigrant." (p. 42) [Our acts, our persons, nothing escapes their denigrating mind.]

is used to emphasise the necessity to integrate the natives into the French system which can stir up their zeal and enthusiasm towards work.

4.5.2 Sensuality

According to Edward Said, the sensual side of the Orient is one of Orientalism's central themes.⁸⁴ The Orient, as he (1979) points out, "seems still to suggest not only fecundity but sexual promise (and threat), untiring sensuality, unlimited desire, deep generative energies." (p. 188) Similarly, the Tharauds' Morocco itself seems to take on the image of an Oriental country where people are fully immersed in the sensual pleasure of life. That is, the natives, as seen in the Tharauds' portrayal, are really the prototype of the sensual Orientals who are in constant search for pleasure. Therefore, in such description, the Tharauds sound unable to go beyond the fixed pre-established European construction of the Oriental as a lascivious and lustful being.

Relatedly, the Tharaud brothers (2012) provide a plethora of evidence to demonstrate the natives' sensual tendencies. For example, they disclose the extramarital sexual activities which abound in Morocco. According to their portrait, the natives often prefer to engage in sexual activities away from the financial pressures associated with marriage: "Plutôt que de se marier, beaucoup de gens préfèrent les concubines noires, que le Coran autorise. Pas de dot à payer; pas de cérémonies de noce qui entraînent à des dépenses folles [...] aucun embarras de famille."⁸⁵ (p. 25) [Rather than getting married,

⁸⁴ To illustrate the point that the trait of sensuality, which the Tharauds insist to ascribe to Moroccan people, is one of the major constitutive characteristics of the Orient, Lahjomri (1973) mentions the writings of Delacroix, Dumas, Loti and Chevrillon, where the theme appears as an enduring and persistent aspect of the Oriental myth. (p. 198)

⁸⁵ In this passage, the Tharaud brothers sound unable to distinguish concubinage from polygamy. Whereas the former refers to an interpersonal and sexual relationship in which the couple are not married, the latter is used to mean the practice of having more than one wife. The Koran allows polygamy and not concubinage as the Tharauds claim.

many people prefer black concubines authorized by the Koran. No dowry to pay; no wedding ceremonies that lead to lavish expenditures [...] no family embarrassment.]

In their blatant attempt to echo the biased conceptions of traditional Orientalism, the Tharauds (2012) claim that the natives of Morocco are allowed to have access to this life of obscenity and promiscuity which the Orient offers since their early teens: “Il faut y ajouter les négresses que les bourgeois aisés ont l’habitude de donner à l’enfant, dès que celui-ci devient pubère.” (p. 27) [To this must be added the negresses that the well-to-do bourgeois have the habit of giving to the child, as soon as he becomes pubescent.] In some cases, the native child does not even wait until his parents choose a negress for him; he himself chooses whom he likes in the house. Therefore, although the fathers’ own concubines are severely forbidden to the child, the Tharauds affirm: “Ce n’est pas une simple affaire pour les pères de famille de mettre le harem à l’abri de leur progénitures.” (p. 27) [It is not a simple matter for the fathers to protect the harem from their offspring.] The Oriental woman is seen in such portrayal as having no word on the matter. She is passive, promiscuous and easily accessible. This reminds us of Kuchuk Hanem, whom Flaubert describes as a machine.⁸⁶

The sensual tendencies of the natives become even more apparent when they are rich and money is no problem. Suffice it to mention the Berber leader Moha Ou Hammou le Zaïani, whom the Tharauds (1920) describe as very obsessed with teen girls: “On raconte que dans ses Kasbah de terre rouge, il mène une vie dissolue, et que ce septuagénaire n’admet dans son harem que des femmes de dix-sept à vingt ans.” (p. 49) [It is said that in his Kasbah of red earth, he leads a dissolute life, and that this septuagenarian admits in his harem only women from seventeen to twenty years.] In

⁸⁶ For further details on this point, see Said’s *Orientalism* on page 187.

other words, although described in his seventies, the Berber leader is seen as tyrannical and libertine, living as an Oriental monarch in the midst of a harem filled with very young women. (Bakkali, 1996, p. 86) Indeed, just like the Berber leader, the natives are all obsessed with women. That's why when marriage expenses are not an obstacle, the Tharauds (2012) affirm, they are not satisfied with just one woman: "Un homme fortuné de Fez n'a jamais moins de deux ou trois épouses légitimes." (p. 156) [A wealthy man from Fez has never less than two or three legitimate wives.] Therefore, the natives, as seen through the Tharauds' imperial eyes, are driven by so much lust and passion that one wife is not enough to satisfy their unbridled desires.

On the other hand, to protect herself against the widespread practice of polygamy, the Moroccan woman sometimes stipulates certain conditions before she gets married. One of these conditions is that her husband should not take a second wife. However, the Tharauds (2012) note that even this conditioned marriage can not restrain the husband's uncontrolled crave for polygamy. Therefore, when the wife insists to reject her husband's request for polygamy permission, he does not hesitate a second to divorce her because "le divorce est si facile en [ce] pays islamique." (p. 156) [divorce is so easy in [this] Islamic country.] However, although described as a victim of the male's sexual desires, the Moroccan woman herself is shown to lead the same sensual life. She shares the same tasks, the same pleasures of life and the same beliefs with her male counterpart.⁸⁷

On the other hand, the Tharauds (1918) claim that the religion of the natives is the origin of their sensuality. For them, Islam is such an 'exotic' religion that combines both spirituality and sensuality. That's why the 'lustful' natives can not give up their sexual dreams even during prayers. The prophet of Islam himself is accused of encouraging this

⁸⁷ For further details about this point see the Tharauds' *Fès ou les bourgeois de l'Islam* on page 25.

sensuality so widespread among Moroccans and Muslims in general: “Comment comprendre la phrase du prophète si claire et si mystérieuse: j’aime trois choses, les femmes, les parfums, la prière, mais surtout la prière.” (p. 54) [How to understand the sentence of the prophet so clear and so mysterious: I like three things, women, perfumes, prayer, but especially prayer.] Indeed, the way in which the prophet is targeted in the quoted passage leaves us with the impression that the Tharaud brothers are so determined to talk about him from an Orientalist standpoint. Therefore, the purpose of such portrayal is to confirm the prejudiced view that Mohammed is not only the disseminator of a false religion, but also “the epitome of lechery, debauchery, sodomy, and a whole battery of assorted treacheries.” (Said, 1979, p. 62)

4.5.3 Cruelty

The Tharauds provide another portrayal in which the natives of Morocco are conceptualized as ruthless and cruel people. One point especially worthy of note is that images such as these about the natives are so common in the writings of the first travellers. As Lahjomri (1973) explains, since the Romantic period, cruelty has been a favourite theme for French writers. (p. 212) This implies that the Tharauds construct their views of the Moroccan people as barbaric and cruel with respect to previous scholars, confirming, in this way, Said’s analysis of Orientalism as a self-referential system.⁸⁸ On the other hand, the Tharauds’ blatant attempt to bring about within the natives such negative traits as barbarity, savagery and cruelty is meant to construct them as the Other of the West. Therefore, instead of depicting them as human beings with the potential and

⁸⁸ In this respect, Lahjomri affirms that although the Tharauds (1973) remain faithful to the tradition of the eternal Orient, they sometimes grossly exaggerate in attributing the traits of brutality and cruelty to the natives of Morocco. (p. 212)

characteristics that characterize the white race, the Tharauds vilify them as ruthless and cruel to confirm the West' view of Arabs as an inferior race.

Relatedly, the Tharauds' view of Moroccans as brutal and savage people can be illustrated with the telling example of a barbaric execution of two suspicious persons. As we are informed, just because the latter are caught near the General's tent, they are savagely executed. The poor humbly beg the General Glaoui to forgive them, but the heartless General shows no mercy and orders their execution. As the Tharauds (1920) make the point, the manner in which the suspects are murdered attests to the natives' unparalleled brutality. However, as if the killing of the suspects was not enough to quench the burning thirst of the Glaoui's bloodthirsty servants, they brutally abuse their dead bodies: "Mais pendant longtemps encore, les coups de feu, les pierres et les injures s'acharnèrent sur leurs cadavres." (p. 268) [Even after their death, the gunshots, the stones and the insults raged on their corpses.] In this quoted passage, the natives are constructed as savage, barbaric and inhuman. Hence, as a consequence of this, they need to be introduced to the ethical and human values of the West.

The natives' brutality, heartlessness and cruelty become even more apparent when they deal with the weak and helpless animals. During their stay in Rabat for example, the Tharauds (1918) are shocked to observe the natives' cruel and inhuman treatment of the donkey. Although the helpless creature plays a central role in the natives' miserable lives, it is bound to live in cruel and merciless conditions. Put differently, although it is often used as a working animal that helps a lot with heavy works, the poor donkey is always abused and mistreated at the hands of the sadistic natives: "Âne charmant, toujours déçu, toujours frappé, toujours meurtri, et pourtant si résigné, si gracieux dans son martyre." (p.

118) [Charming donkey, always disappointed, always hit, always bruised, and yet so resigned, so gracious in its martyrdom.] As the passage demonstrates, in addition to the heavy loads which the poor donkeys are made to carry for long hours, they are beaten, mistreated and abused. Accordingly, the natives need to be educated to grow civilised. They need to learn the values of compassion and mercy towards animals from the ‘civilised’ West. Indeed, the latter itself is required to assume the duty of taming these ‘savage’ people.

What is worthy of note here is that the Tharauds (1918) deliberately use a compassionate tone to describe the mistreated animals: “Les pauvres, comme ils étaient pelés, teigneux, galeux, saignants! Vraiment le destin les accable.” (p. 117) [The poor, how peeled they were, chubby, mangy, bleeding! Really the fate overwhelms them.] In front of these barbarous and cruel scenes, the ‘compassionate’ brothers wish they owned a donkey in the ‘backward’ Morocco to make it enjoy the same kindness, mercy and compassion with which animals are treated in the ‘civilized’ West:

Un âne pour ne rien faire, un âne qui n’irait pas au marché, un âne qui ne tournerait pas la noria, un âne qui ne connaîtrait pas la lourdeur des couffins chargés de bois, de chaux, de légumes ou de moellons; un âne que j’abandonnerais à son caprice, à ses plaisirs, sultan la nuit d’une belle écurie, sultan le jour d’un beau pré vert; un âne enfin pour réparer en lui tout le malheur qui pèse sur les baudets d’Islam et pour qu’on puisse dire: « Il y a quelque part, au Maroc, un âne qui n’est pas malheureux... » (pp. 118-9)

[A donkey to do nothing, a donkey that would not go to the market, a donkey that would not turn the noria, a donkey that would not know the heaviness of baskets

loaded with wood, lime, vegetables or rubble stones; a donkey that I would leave to his whim, his pleasures, Sultan of a beautiful stable during the night, Sultan of a beautiful green meadow during the day; a donkey, finally, to repair in him all the misfortune weighing on the donkeys of Islam so that we can say: «There is somewhere in Morocco a donkey that is not unhappy...»]

The contrast which the Tharaud brothers make here between the pity and compassion which they feel towards the helpless animals and the brutality of the natives⁸⁹ is itself ideologically charged. Put differently, not only does the dichotomy in the passage confirm the superiority of the French in contrast to the inferiority of the natives, but it also legitimizes any act of domination on the part of the former upon the latter.⁹⁰

Again, the Tharauds claim that the savagery and cruelty which the poor donkey has to endure at the hands of the ‘savage’ natives, despite the valuable services it provides for them, are rooted in the Islamic faith. It is the prophet of Islam who propagates a negative view about this docile animal. According to the Tharauds, if the prophet had talked nicely about donkeys, their unfair destiny would have been different. Unluckily, “le prophète a dit que leur braiment est le bruit le plus laid de la nature. Et les malheureux braient sans cesse!” (Tharaud & Tharaud, 1918, p. 117) [the prophet said that their braying is the ugliest sound of nature. And the unfortunate bray non-stop!] It should be noted here that the Tharauds mistakenly take a verse from the Holy Koran to be a saying of the prophet. More than that, they misinterpret its meaning to justify their false

⁸⁹ Sometimes, the Tharauds exaggerate in their insistence on this trait, mainly when they claim that Rabat’s architecture itself gives a sense of a violent and threatened life. For more details on this point, See *Rabat ou les heures marocaines* on page 3.

⁹⁰ Orwell (1939) uses the same dichotomous approach when he compares the natives’ mistreatment of animals to the more humane British method: “The Moroccan donkey is hardly bigger than a St Bernard dog, it carries a load which in the British army would be considered too much for a fifteen-hands mule, and very often its pack-saddle is not taken off its back for weeks together.” (p. 5)

propaganda against the religion of Islam. Although both the Koran and the prophetic tradition manifestly prohibit cruelty towards animals and exhort people to show kindness and compassion towards them, the Tharauds select this only verse and use it out of its true meaning to distort Islam's view of animal welfare. They, in this way, make a contribution to building the West' hostile view of Islam as an exotic religion. This is to imply that the Islamic faith, unlike the "familiar" religion of Christianity, is made by the Tharauds to appear as a peculiar religion. In so doing, the Tharauds want "to make it clear to Muslims that Islam was just a misguided version of Christianity." (Said, 1979, p. 61)

4.5.4 Superstition

In addition to the previously mentioned images, the theme of superstition is itself central to the Tharauds' representation of the Moroccan people. That is, unlike the Europeans, who are always constructed as "rational, peaceful, liberal, logical, capable of holding real values, without natural suspicion," (Said, 1979 p. 49) the natives of Morocco are stigmatized as very ignorant and superstitious. They are described as a people holding a set of weird superstitions that do not make any sense. Among such superstitions is the belief in the power of magic to solve all kinds of problems. It is due to such superstitious belief that magic is used in everything. As the Tharauds (1918) inform us, it is used, among other things, to treat multiple diseases, mainly the intractable ones, to get rid of one's spouse, to seek fertility, or simply to bring back one's lover or husband. (p. 59)

It is, therefore, obvious that the Tharaud brothers remain faithful to the traditional imperialist vision of Orientals as superstitious beings. In this respect, Lahjomri (1973)

argues that the brothers don't hesitate to bluntly consider all the opponents of French colonialism in Morocco as sorcerers. (p. 216) The best example to illustrate the point is Cheikh Ma el Ainine, whom the Tharauds (1920) describe as "un nouveau Maître de l'heure, fils de sorcier, sorcier lui-même." (p. 204) [a new Master of the time, son of sorcerer, sorcerer himself.] On the other hand, the fact that the Tharauds characterize those who oppose the French expansionist policy in Morocco as sorcerers is all by itself enough to uncover the ideological underpinning of such a view. Therefore, it must be clear that the Tharauds' portrayal of the natives as a people who completely indulge in such ignorant and irrational practices is loaded with their strong desire to see them controlled by an enlightened nation. The enlightened nation meant here is undoubtedly the 'civilized' France. It is the most 'qualified' country to assume this 'noble' mission of bringing the 'backward' Moroccans out of the darkness and obscurantism in which they live.

Another indicator which the Tharauds provide to demonstrate the natives' irrational belief in superstition is their sanctification of the saints and marabouts. Although these saints are just helpless dead bodies, the 'irrational' natives still believe in their miraculous "baraka"⁹¹ and legendary powers.⁹² No wonder they revere and sacralise them as celestial intermediaries. Among these saints, the Tharauds (1918) mention Ben Achir, whom the natives believe can cure all kinds of diseases. For the Tharauds, instead of taking advantage of the progress which the 'civilized' West has achieved in the

⁹¹ A spiritual power which the natives believe the marabouts and saints possess.

⁹² Among the legendary powers which the irrational natives believe these saints have is their ability to cure all the different types of diseases that are known and unknown. In addition to that, the saints and marabouts are believed to have the power to help barren women to conceive.

medical field, the natives still unreasonably believe in the curative powers of this saint:

“Ce Ben Achir, qui vivait il y a quelque trois cents ans, est un des grands saints guérisseurs du Maroc, et son renom attire autour de sa kouba tout ce que la maladie peut jeter d’infortune sur un lieu réputé pour ses miracles.” (p. 90) [This Ben Achir, who lived some three hundred years ago, is one of the great holy healers of Morocco, and his fame attracts around his kouba all the misfortune that the disease can throw on such a place known for its miracles.] As the quoted passage demonstrates, although this Ben Achir is nothing but a powerless dead body, Moroccans irrationally believe he has countless legendary powers. That’s why when they are ill, they are ready to stay in his shrine for days, weeks, sometimes months, waiting for his healing powers to cure them.

However, the most revered of all is Moulay Idriss⁹³, whom the natives consider as the patron saint of Fez. In this exotic city, the Tharauds (2012) observe, Moulay Idriss is involved in almost everything. For example, the Fassi beggars beg in his name. The Old Medina merchants visit his tomb before opening their shops because they believe he can make their day more profitable. The renowned scholars of the Quaraouiyine themselves go to visit him for their belief in his ability to inspire their ideas. In brief, nothing is done or said in Fez without invoking Moulay Idriss. The saint is endowed with so many supernatural powers⁹⁴ that the natives believe: “Le chat lui-même n’attrape la souris que si Moulay Idriss le permet.” (p. 91) [The cat itself does not grab the mouse only if

⁹³ Moulay Idriss is the founding father, for whom the people of Morocco, mainly the inhabitants of Fez, show a lot of honor and reverence. That’s why his frequently visited sanctuary is considered as a holy and sacred place.

⁹⁴ Thanks to these supernatural powers which Moulay Idriss is believed to have, he is respected and revered, or as the Tharauds (2012) make the point, he is viewed as “le patron de la ville et du Maroc tout entier: dans l’imagination populaire, il est presque l’égal d’Allah.” (p. 89) [the patron of the city and of Morocco as a whole: in the popular imagination, he is almost the equal of Allah.]

Moulay Idriss allows it.] Potier (2006) considers the Tharauds' words here just as a kind of mockery against the natives' irrational sacrilisation of Moulay Idriss. (p. 70) Therefore, if such superstitious beliefs can prove anything, it is that Moroccans are so drowned in ignorance and darkness that the French 'philanthropic' intervention is urgently needed.

4.5.5 Ostentation

Although the image of ostentation can be identified in the Tharauds' portrayal as an important trait characterizing the natives of Morocco, it is, as Lahjomri (1973) notes, mentioned only in their account on Fez. (p. 206) Relatedly, the inhabitants of this city are designated as being very fond of exhibiting their wealth and richness. For this reason, the Tharauds (2012) don't hesitate to characterize them as showy and pretentious: "Le Fassi est ostentatoire: il aime étaler sa richesse." [The Fassi is ostentatious: he likes to display his wealth.] And because nothing can display wealth and fortune in the Fassi culture better than a beautiful house, the Fassi's main concern always remains to own the most luxurious house. More than that, when he already owns a beautiful house, he always wants to buy the house next door or the one facing his own. (p. 20) This is to imply that the Fassi always wants to appear richer than all his neighbours. To achieve this goal, he sometimes goes bankrupt, or as the Tharauds put it, "il va jusqu'au bout de ses ressources" (p. 21) [he goes to the end of his resources.] What one is supposed to deduce from such portrayal is that the native is not only boastful, but also irrational and illogical. This irrationality of the native is emphasised here to assert the pretended good sense and reason of the European. The latter, as Said (1979) makes the point, is always described as a "close reasoner" and "a natural logician." (p. 38)

As the Tharauds observe, the boastfulness of the native manifests itself even more obviously in the organization of parties and celebrations, particularly weddings.

(Lahjomri, 1973, p. 206) On these occasions, the Moroccan always tries his best to impress other people more than needed. That is, when it comes to wedding ceremonies, the native often organizes terribly extravagant wedding parties in which he draws himself into much greater expenses than he can afford. In this part of the Orient, if one does not have a massive wedding, one soon becomes the subject of much local gossip. For this reason, the bride's and groom's families put so much ostentation to make a majestic wedding party. As the Tharauds (2012) make the point, as long as the high expenditure is often interpreted as a sign of richness, the two families don't care about the wedding expenses. Hence, as a consequence of all this, "il est courant de voir des gens de condition médiocre se ruiner pour un mariage. Les pauvres y laissent leurs derniers sous, s'endettent même pour plusieurs années." (p. 127) [it is common to see people of poor condition ruin themselves for a marriage. In such a ceremony, the poor leave their last penny, even go into debt for several years.]

Worthy of note here is the fact that Lahjomri (1973) does not reject the Tharauds' portrayal of the Moroccan as ostentatious, but he however asserts that ostentation is not necessarily a typically Moroccan trait as the Tharauds want us to believe. For him, to achieve their rhetorical debasement of the Moroccan other, the Tharauds tend to exaggerate too much in attributing this trait of character to the native. (p. 207) This exaggeration becomes even more manifest when they attribute the religious habits of the natives to their tendency towards showiness and ostentation. According to the Tharauds (2012), the native does not worship God for God's sake, but for the sake of impressing

others and appearing more religious than them: “Il n’a plus qu’un souci: donner la plus haute idée possible de son bon esprit religieux, ne pas sembler moins bon musulman que son voisin.” (p. 44)⁹⁵ [He has only one concern: to give the highest possible idea of his good religious spirit, not to look less good Muslim than his neighbour.] Again, this vilifying portrayal shows how shallow and superficial the natives can be as they care more about appearance than substance.

Relatedly, the Tharauds highlight this propensity of the natives to care more about the outward appearance than what really matters many times in their portrayal. For example, we are told, the natives often judge each other according to the religious rituals they practice. Therefore, no matter how sinful and immoral you are, you will always be respected if you show religious commitment: “Malhonnête, cupide, luxurieux, à la connaissance de tous, si vous êtes dévot, vous serez toujours entouré de la considération des voisins et de la ville tout entière.” [Dishonest, greedy, luxurious, to the knowledge of all, if you are devout, you will always be surrounded by the consideration of the neighbours and the entire city.] This is to mean that wearing the mantle of religion alone is enough to earn respect and consideration in Morocco. More than that, people can go so far as to justify your sinful deeds if you wear the mantle of Islam. For instance, if you are an apparently religious person, they often consider your illegally amassed wealth of a divine origin: “On n’est aucunement gêné de mêler Dieu à ses actions les plus basses, à ses plus mauvais trafics. Le public lui-même l’associe à votre réussite, et cela quels que

⁹⁵ The Tharauds (2012) express the same dissatisfaction of the natives’ religious ostentation on another occasion, claiming that “la grande prétention de ce bourgeois fassi est d’être meilleur Musulman que tous les autres Marocains – que dis-je ? que tous les autres gens de l’Islam.” (p. 81) [the great pretension of this Fassi bourgeois is to be a better Muslim than all other Moroccans – what do I say? than all other people of Islam.]

soient les moyens qui vous ont fait réussir. «Dieu lui a donné » dit-on d'un homme riche." (p. 83) [One is not at all embarrassed to mix God with one's lowest actions, with one's worst traffics. The public itself associates Him with your success, no matter the means that made you succeed. « God gave him » it is said of a rich man.] This inability to look beyond surface appearances is a reliable indicator that the natives are really shallow and superficial.

On the other hand, in accordance with their manifest hostility towards Islam, the Tharauds continue to attribute the negative traits they associate with the Moroccan people to the Islamic Faith. This time they impute the so-called superficiality of the natives to their religion. For them, it is the religion of Islam that has not developed a real religious feeling among the natives. No wonder their understanding of religion is reduced to the practice of certain rituals. As the Tharauds make the point, although the natives spend the whole day practicing religious rites, they ignore the real essence of religion: "On se noie dans ses ablutions, on s'endort sur sa prière, on se disperse du matin au soir en tant de politesse envers Allah et son prophète, qu'on oublie l'essentiel: l'amour, l'enthousiasme du coeur." (p. 82)⁹⁶ [One drowns in one's ablutions, one falls asleep on one's prayer, one disperses from the morning to the evening in so much politeness towards Allah and his prophet that one forgets the essential: love, the heart's enthusiasm] Therefore, it can be argued that the Tharauds are determined to create a distorted view about Islam to make it appear as a bizarre, strange and unusual religion.

⁹⁶ Indeed, although the Tharauds disapprove of this religious shallowness, they find it natural to be widespread among the natives because it accords very well with what they (2012) call that "Oriental intelligence" characterised by superficiality and anti-intellectualism. (p. 82)

4.5.6 Corruption

As perhaps goes without saying, corruption can be clustered among the most common rhetorical clichés in the discourse of Orientalism. The natives are often devalued as very corrupt people to justify their domination and conquest. The same imperial rhetoric is used by the Tharauds to vilify the people of Morocco and consequently legitimise the French imperial enterprise. Therefore, according to their portrait, corruption is very widespread in Morocco and touches all areas of public life. In this regard, the Tharauds (1920) claim that the phenomenon takes on even more alarming proportions when the natives are put in a position of power. The best example to illustrate the point is the viziers who behave as if Morocco were their own: They nominate whoever they want as caïds, degrade and upgrade people according to their whims and fancies. More than that, all Morocco's resources are made available for them. They, thus, distribute these resources among their friends, enrich their families and keep a lot for themselves. (p. 203) This characterization of the viziers in terms of corruption, needless to say, can only suggest the natives' incapability to rule themselves, hence their need of a more civilized nation to rule them. In other words, the Tharauds' insistence to associate the native viziers with corruption and misrule is meant to provide what Said (1994) calls "an ideological rationale for reducing; then reconstituting the native as someone to be ruled and managed." (p. 132)

Indeed, just like their rulers, the people of Morocco as a whole are dismissed as dishonest and corrupt. Relatedly, belonging to a civilisation that is based on 'ethics and real values,' the Tharauds (2012) are surprised that the people themselves extol and glorify corruption. For the authors, far from being an antisocial practice in Morocco,

corruption is viewed as a normal thing about which no one feels a pang of guilt: “Jamais la concussion n’a déconsidéré personne.” [Never did the bribe discredit anyone.] On the contrary, an official who, for some reasons, does not make a fortune is often viewed as a fool. That’s why the natives often feel proud of acquiring money through illegal means: “De respectables et très dignes bourgeois, pour se donner de l’importance, se vantent couramment d’avoir reçu des pots-de-vin plus considérables encore que ceux qu’ils ont touchés dans la réalité.” (p. 42) [Some respectable and worthy bourgeois, in order to gain importance, commonly boast of having received more bribes than what they have actually received.] This is to mean that corruption is carried in the natives’ genes that nothing other than the French ‘civilizing’ mission can help to eradicate it among them.

What proves the need for the intervention of the ‘civilised’ France to help reduce the spread of corruption in Morocco even more is that no one from the natives is ready to react against this antisocial scourge. More than that, the Tharauds (2012) claim that any reaction against the phenomenon is faced with the people’s refusal and rejection: “A fez, on ne nous pardonne pas d’être venu jeter le trouble dans un vieil ordre de choses ou plutôt un vieux désordre, dont on tirait tant d’avantage.” (p. 43) [In Fez, one is not forgiven for having come to disturb an old order of things, or rather an old disorder, from which so much advantage was derived.] Even the officials of the judicial system, who are supposed to correct the injustices of the society, are portrayed as treacherous and corrupt: “Un cadî qui ne soit pas malhonnête, cela ne s’est encore jamais vu.” (p. 186) [A cadî who is not dishonest, this has never been seen before.]

It is true that no one can deny the existence of corruption in Morocco as everywhere in the world, but the manner in which the phenomenon is described in the

Tharauds' account is not only inaccurate but also far from innocent. In other words, the way in which corruption in Morocco is represented in the Tharauds' texts is only meant to provide a kind of ideological accompaniment to the French presence in Morocco. This is obvious from the authors' exaggerated view of the phenomenon. The Tharauds claim that corruption is so engrained in the native culture that people view it as the key to the solution of every problem in Morocco. It is "un moyen commode qui aplanit tout au Maroc." (p. 167) [a convenient means to smooth the way for everything in Morocco.] Lahjomri (1973) himself does not seem to agree with the Tharauds' excessive interpretation of corruption in Morocco. He takes them to task for their attempt to look at the phenomenon as an innate reflex as much as a natural and universally accepted practice, which is not the case. (p. 209)

4.5.7 Betrayal and treachery

Another view which the Tharauds articulate about the natives to serve Lyautey's policy in Morocco is that they are really treacherous and amoral. In this respect, the Tharauds claim that if a deal is made with the natives, they often do not fulfil the obligations of the contract. The best example which the authors (2012) provide to illustrate such a view is the merchants of Fez. These 'treacherous' merchants have a tendency to never live up to their promises. Therefore, although they always insist to take an advance payment when you undertake a trade with them, they never deliver the merchandise to you on the mutually agreed upon date. This lack of accuracy and commitment often constitutes a bitter disappointment to the 'honest,' 'reliable' and 'trustworthy' European who deals with them: "Mais une déception continuelle pour le malheureux Européen qui s'est mis dans la tête de travailler avec ces gens." (p. 53) [But a

continual disappointment for the unfortunate European who has decided to work with these people.] It is to be noted here that the natives' treachery is brought into contrast with the self-attributed honesty of the Europeans. Doing so enables the Tharauds to propound the idea that the people of Morocco are really in need of the Europeans to teach them the values of honesty and loyalty. In this way, the Tharauds manage to provide an excuse for the latter to keep the former under control.

In addition to being treacherous, the natives are also construed as a population of betrayers and traitors. In this respect, betrayal is viewed as a typically Moroccan trait. This proves the extent to which the Tharauds remain faithful to the imperialist view of Orientals as degenerate people. According to their portrait, every Moroccan can be expected to betray, including the family members. In case of dispute for example, the Tharauds (1920) affirm, the family members themselves liquidate their quarrel by betrayal or murder. (p. 29) This is perhaps the reason why Moha Ou Hammou le Zaïani does not have confidence in his family. The Berber leader, we are informed, is aware that "ses fils, ses neveux se haïssent de ces haines irréductibles qui, pour se satisfaire, n'hésitent pas à trahir les intérêts de la tribu." (p. 50) [his sons, his nephews hate each other so much that they, for the sake of their personal interests, do not hesitate to betray the interests of the tribe.]

To single out betrayal as a typically Moroccan trait, the Tharauds also shed light on extramarital relationships. According to their portrait, betrayal in marriage is a common phenomenon in Morocco. The Moroccan husband is untrustworthy as he often cheats on his wife. Similarly, when the latter discovers her husband's traitorous actions, she often takes revenge on him by doing the same. Therefore, although it is often heard in

this Islamic country that the woman should go out only twice in her life: the wedding day and the day of the funeral, she often cheats on her husband when she finds him lusting after another woman. To make the point, the Tharauds (2012) write: “À Fez, un mari est encore plus souvent trompé. Une femme inactive, et dédaignée par un époux tout occupé par une autre, devient aisément amoureuse de ce que le hasard lui présente.” (pp. 158-159) [In Fez, a husband is still more often betrayed. An inactive woman, disdained by a husband who is all busy with another woman, becomes easily in love with what the chance presents to her.] In brief, this conservative imperialist vision of Orientals as degenerate people, known for their treachery and treason, itself is traditionally used to uphold the idea that they always need the West’s care and protection. Accordingly, Moroccans are themselves in need of the French to help them get rid of their degenerate manners.

4.5.8 Begging

Another picture given by the Tharauds about the natives as a rationalization to justify their conquest is begging. The majority of the Moroccan society is shown to make a living on mendicity and begging. According to the Tharauds’ portrait, the phenomenon of begging gnaws at all the cities they visit in Morocco. In Marrakech for example, the Tharauds (1920) remark: “Dans cette ville les mendiants pullulent.” (p. 104) [In this city beggars abound.] The same phenomenon, but in a more exacerbated form, is seen in Rabat. According to the Tharauds (1918), beggars are everywhere in Morocco’s capital. The mosques, religious shrines, tourist places, street corners, all are shown to be full of beggars. In a word, Morocco’s capital is described as overcrowded with beggars and mendicants. Suffice it to mention at this point Sidi Ben Achir. The number of beggars in

this shrine alone is estimated at one hundred: “À leur foule se mêle le peuple des mendiants, - une centaine peut- être, hommes et femmes, jeunes et vieux, déjetés ou bien portants, - qui ont établi là leur séjours.” (pp. 93-94) [To their crowd mingle the beggar people, - a hundred maybe, men and women, young and old, warped or well, - who have established their stay there.] These needy people spend their whole days asking for charity in the name of the saints and marabouts. What surprise the Tharauds even more is that everything is begged in this exotic city: food, candles, clothes, money, nearly everything.

During Ramadan, these poor people, unlike the rest of the natives, do not feel the agony of fasting because, as the Tharauds (1918) claim, they are used to hunger and thirst: “Seuls les mendiants, accroupis sur le trottoir et habitués par profession à un jeûne éternel, semblent ne point souffrir de la soif et de la faim.” (p. 50) [Only the beggars, squatting on the sidewalk and accustomed by profession to an eternal fast, do not seem to suffer from thirst and hunger.] Indeed, this passage reflects the extent to which the Tharauds are blinded with the ideology of empire. In other words, hinting at the idea that a significant proportion of the natives do not even find the food to eat is, by all means, an ideologically charged claim. Therefore, what is implicit here is that since Morocco does not have enough resources to take care of its needy people, it must be the object of France’s ‘charitable’ attention.

However, regardless of their manifest imperialist intention to tarnish the natives’ reputation, the picture which the Tharauds draw of begging in Morocco should not be considered as totally wrong. Begging, it must be acknowledged, was, and still is today, rampant in our society. Therefore, as a consequence of this, to deny the existence of such

phenomenon would be to turn a blind eye to an obvious truth. However, although the spread of begging in Morocco can not be denied, the Tharauds seem to offer an exaggerated view of the phenomenon. For example, just their account on Morocco's capital alone can give the impression that half of the inhabitants of Morocco are constituted of mendicants and beggars. This deliberately exaggerated view is not only false, but ideological as well. That is, by emphasizing Moroccans' poverty and destitution, the brothers seek to establish the consent of both the French at home and the indigenous in the colonised Morocco.

4.5.9 Politeness

Among all these vilifying images, the only positive trait which the Tharaud brothers (2012) allow the natives is politeness: “Depuis des siècles et des siècles, cette politesse n’a pas changé.” [For centuries and centuries, this politeness has not changed.] The brothers emphasize this great virtue by shedding light on the dutiful relationships which the natives sustain to their parents. As the Tharauds remark, when the natives meet their fathers in the street for example, they often greet them with affection and respect: “Un enfant [...] quand il aperçoit son père, doit accourir pour lui baiser la main, et souvent des deux côtés.” (p. 47) [A child [...] when he sees his father, must run to kiss his hand, and often on both sides.] According to the Tharauds' portrait, the Moroccan son never rebels or shows disobedience towards his father. On the contrary, as soon as the father opens his mouth to say something, the son must pay the closest attention, bend over to listen to him and executes his father's order without saying a word.

The natives' politeness also appears in their good manners towards their elders. The latter, as the brothers observe, are given the same status enjoyed by parents in

Morocco. That is, the Moroccan young generations often serve their elders devotedly and treat them with courtesy and respect. The brothers are so delighted to have discovered this virtue that they wonder: “Combien faudra-t-il de temps [aux] civilisations d’occident pour créer à leur usage un si universel raffinement des mœurs ?” (p. 48) [How long will it take for the Western civilizations to create for their use such a universal refinement of morals?] It is to be noted here that although the Tharauds speak positively about the natives in this portrayal, they never cease their ideological support for the French imperial project. As such, this trait of politeness is viewed somewhere else only as a mask behind which the natives hide their real nature, which the Tharauds reveal as follows: “Un trait qui montre curieusement ce qui se cache de grossièreté, voire de brutalité, sous tant de politesse.” (p. 40) [A trait which curiously shows the rudeness, even the brutality which hides within so much politeness.]

4.6 The French Resident and his “Remarkable Achievements” in Morocco

As previously referred to, one of the key arguments in Said’s analysis of Orientalism is that the subjection of the Orient relies much more on the consent of Orientals than the use of physical force and coercion. According to him, to achieve hegemony over the rest of the world, the European powers often spread a set of ideological ideas and beliefs which manipulate the indigenous people into viewing colonialism in a positive light. The idea behind Lyautey’s official invitation of the Tharauds to visit Morocco goes in this direction. That is, they are called upon to produce a literature of propaganda on behalf of the French residence. (Lyazidi, 2013, p. 24) This can explain why their texts on Morocco are replete with a set of ideologically charged

views that aim to make the natives believe in the benefits of the French presence in their country.

Accordingly, although the French expansionist policy is entirely driven by an ethos of greed and profit, the Tharauds insist to present it under the false guise of “civilizing” the natives. Never do they bother to reveal the truth about the real motive for the French invasion of the North African country, which is, needless to say, to dispossess the Moroccan people of their lands and properties. In other words, to create an environment that supports the French in the colony, this exploitative side of French colonialism is completely ignored in the Tharauds’ texts. In the same vein, the excesses, atrocities and massacres which the “civilized” French commit against the “backward” Moroccans themselves go unnoticed in their accounts. This deliberate ignorance is undoubtedly guided by the authors’ insatiable desire to whitewash the bitter reality of French colonialism to make it appear more beneficial for the natives than for the French.

More than that, all along their accounts, the Tharauds keep claiming that French colonialism is justified by the reality of Morocco itself. According to their portrait, the Sherifian kingdom is a very backward country, completely immersed in misery, poverty, corruption and all kinds of other social ills. This critical situation really requires an urgent intervention from an external power. Therefore, if France did not intervene to provide the support and help needed, another Western country should take its place. Moroccans, as the Tharaud brothers claim, ought to be happy that the French assume this responsibility. They are more humane and more merciful than any other colonial nation.

Suffice to mention at this point the French Resident General Lyautey, whom the Tharauds (1918) describe as having all the qualities it takes to help the natives get out of

their ignorance and backwardness. He is truly a beacon of intelligence, tenderness and generosity. Thanks to his wise policy, the natives of Morocco do not go through the brutalities that are habitually inflicted upon the colonised. For example, he shows a great respect for the locals and their customs. This allows him to avoid the violent massacres which usually accompany the establishment of colonial rule. The Tharauds openly express their admiration for what they call Lyautey's "volonté de respecter dans ce Maroc qu'il aime, les formes séculaires de sa vie, ses traditions, ses coutumes."⁹⁷ (p. 141) [will to respect in this Morocco, which he loves, the secular forms of its life, its traditions, its customs.]

As probably is well-known, Lyautey's manipulative strategy to win the natives' consent does not always succeed in stemming their resistance to French rule. Therefore, he often resorts to direct force and coercion. However, the Tharauds insist to whitewash the destructions and brutalities which the man and his troops commit against the people of Morocco. Children, women and elders, as history books testify, are mercilessly slaughtered at the hands of Lyautey's troops. However, the Tharauds (1918) depict him as a man of peace: "Mais au Maroc, la claire raison du général Lyautey [...] s'emploie à nous épargner le spectacle de destructions imbéciles." (pp. 262-263) [But in Morocco, the clear reason of General Lyautey [...] is used to spare us the useless spectacle of destruction.] Such portrayal can only prove the ideological character of the Tharauds' texts. Lyautey, after all, is the French Resident in Morocco. Therefore, his role can not be

⁹⁷ In fact, this is just a kind of manipulation which Lyautey depends on to win the consent of the natives. It enables him and his soldiers to avoid their resistance. In this way, he can decrease the number of military deaths and avoid material destructions. Therefore, it can be argued that respecting the natives' customs and traditions, which Lyautey insists on, is not an end in itself as the brothers want us to believe. It is, rather, a means of ensuring a kind of pacification with the colonised. This is what the author of *Orientalism*, drawing on Gramsci, calls "hegemony."

to spread the values of peace as the Tharauds would have us believe, but to look after the political, economic and military interests of his country. As history bears witness to this fact, when these interests are jeopardized, Lyautey, whom the Tharauds insist to characterize as a man of peace, does not hesitate to commit massacres and atrocities against the local population. Therefore, this perversion of facts reflects the extent to which the Tharauds are committed to the idea of empire.⁹⁸

In their blatant attempt to gain the natives' support for Lyautey's presence in Morocco, the Tharauds continue to distort the facts and falsify the realities about the French Resident. Accordingly, they insist to instil in the minds of the natives that Lyautey's fundamental objective is to rebuild and modernize their country. For them, this is obvious from the structural reforms and projects which he implements to further the development and modernization of Morocco. Among the ambitious projects which prove Lyautey's full commitment to work towards building a new Morocco, the Tharauds (1918) mention the construction of roads and railway lines, the development of the ports, the building of new cities and such like. (p .263) Again, these "considerable" projects are evoked here only to make the French Resident appear committed to helping the natives succeed in transforming their "backward" country into a "modern" state.⁹⁹ The

⁹⁸ Indeed, this flagrant way in which the Tharauds implicate themselves in serving the French imperial project can provide a rational justification for Said's serious accusation that Western scholars of the Orient are "the learned division of the army." (Said, 1979, p. 84)

⁹⁹ The imperial idea behind the Tharauds' celebration of Lyautey's so-called development projects is to make the natives believe that it is in their benefit to be colonized by the French. It is this ideological indoctrination, not Lyautey's military power, that enables him to maintain hegemony over Morocco. In other words, once the people of Morocco become convinced that it is in their own good to be ruled by the French, Lyautey's authority will not be put into question.

disturbing fact that the Tharauds refuse to acknowledge here is that the French remain the biggest beneficiaries of the infrastructure reforms achieved in Morocco.¹⁰⁰

Besides, in accordance with the Tharauds' view of Morocco as a dangerous place, where people fight for no apparent reason, they attribute the pacification of the country to Lyautey. According to the brothers' portrait, one of Lyautey's extraordinary achievements in Morocco is the establishment of peace among its inhabitants. In other words, before Morocco is subjected to the French, the country consists mainly of warring tribes. Thanks to the wise policy adopted by the French Resident, the Moroccan warring tribes start to live in peace and tranquillity. (The Tharauds, 1918, p. 263) In fact, the French, as Wyrzten (2011) makes the point, spend two decades (from 1912 to 1934) in establishing peace among the tribes living in Morocco. (p. 229) Therefore, the political implication of the Tharauds' view of Lyautey as a peacemaker in the colony is that it is in the interest of the natives to accept him as the ruler of Morocco.¹⁰¹

On many occasions, the Tharauds characterize Morocco as a placid and immobile country. This vilifying portrayal of Morocco as a dead country that resists progress and development is replaced by another portrayal in which Morocco begins to change and develop. That is, to earn the natives' support for the French Resident General Lyautey, the Tharauds claim that thanks to his wise policy, change starts to find its way to Morocco. As an illustrative example of this change, the Tharauds (1918) speak of the

¹⁰⁰ This is to mean that the French are the ones who reap the benefits of reforming the Moroccan infrastructure. For example, the roads and railways built in Morocco are not meant to modernize the country as the Tharauds pretend, but to ease the transportation of products from the periphery (Morocco) to the metropolis (France).

¹⁰¹ The Tharauds seem to be fully aware that Lyautey's rule can not be secure unless he gains the natives' consent. That's why they ensure to make the natives believe that the peace in which they start to live in itself is brought about by Lyautey's rule. Therefore, this ideological representation of Lyautey as a peacemaker is evoked here only to make the natives accept his leadership willingly.

invitations on Bristol board which were brought for the first time from the capital of France to the Sultan's palace. This is just an example of the numerous benefits that the natives can reap from the French technological superiority. To manipulate the natives into viewing Lyautey and his rule in a positive light, the Tharauds openly express their surprise at the fast pace of change brought about by the French Resident. (p. 216)

However, the introduction of a radical reform in the Moroccan outdated education system remains, in the Tharauds' opinion, Lyautey's most outstanding achievement in Morocco. Relatedly, the Tharauds launch a violent attack on the education provided in the Qaraouiyyine, mainly because of its religious character. In this ancient university, the Tharauds (2012) note, the natives are taught nothing but grammar and law because the purpose is to enable them to read the Coran correctly (p. 172). However, when the French Resident wants to introduce a modern education system that has the potential to change the country into a modern state, all his attempts are rejected by the natives.¹⁰² As the Tharauds make the point, such modern sciences as medicine, theology and philosophy, which Lyautey wants to introduce into the Moroccan education system, are dismissed as having no real value or use: "À leurs yeux notre éducation n'a aucune valeur en elle-même." (p. 184) [In their eyes our education has no value in itself.] The natives, as the Tharauds depict them here, don't seem to understand where their interests lie. As a

¹⁰² Perhaps the Tharauds' view that the Moroccan education system is inadequate and outdated is correct and true, yet their claim that the reform which Lyautey introduces into the Moroccan education system is designed to eradicate illiteracy and ignorance, and as a consequence, to further the development of the colony is false and unsubstantiated by history. Indeed, the fact that the rate of illiteracy becomes even higher under the rule of the French is all by itself enough to belie the Tharauds' claim. Just to be clear, the Tharauds want to convince their readers that the education which Lyautey introduces in Morocco is beneficial for the natives, whereas the real beneficiary of this education is the colonizer himself. To argue this point, Bahij (2012) insists that the education which Moroccans receive under the protectorate is not a means to better their lives, but rather a tool which the colonizer relies on to divide the colonized people in order to control them easily. (p. 8)

consequence of this, they should be protected against themselves. Accordingly, it can be argued that such ideological portrayal of the natives is itself used to justify conquest and domination.

In brief, the purpose of the Tharauds' emphasis on what they refer to as Lyautey's "successful projects" in the colonized Morocco is to create in the natives the desire to always see their country under his rule. That is, to gain support for Lyautey's policy and thereby minimize its opposition in the colony, the Tharauds insist to show him as a philanthropic man whose main concern is to make of Morocco a modern country. A country that is completely different from the medieval Morocco which they describe in their accounts. This is quite the opposite of the truth. Lyautey is appointed in Morocco to serve the interests of his country not to develop or modernize the colony. The purpose of his presence in Morocco is to speed up the development of France at the expense of the natives.

4.7 Conclusion

The first conclusion to be drawn from this chapter is that Jean and Jérôme Tharaud inscribe their name within the same imperialist tradition that Said criticizes in his *Orientalism*. That is to mean that the brothers follow the same line of thinking which Said attacks in his analysis of Western scholarship on the Orient. No wonder the same old-fashioned stereotypes, the same demeaning clichés, the same justifications of power are found in the Tharauds' trilogy to characterize the Sherifian kingdom and its inhabitants. Morocco, as it appears in the Tharauds' accounts, is a very primitive and backward country. Its people are themselves vilified in the same way: The Moroccan is "orgueilleux, fanatique, corrompu, corrupteur, étroit d'esprit, jaloux, toujours prompt à la

critique et peu enclin à reconnaître les services qu'on a pu (lui) rendre.” (Tharaud &Tharaud, 2012, p. 46) [arrogant, fanatical, corrupted, corruptor, narrow-minded, jealous, always quick to criticize and disinclined to recognize the favour we have been able to do for him.]

The second conclusion is that these hostile and aggressive images are meant to confine Morocco and its people in fixed states of backwardness and savagery. The purpose is to adhere to the ideology of difference that looks on the Orient and its people as always inferior to the West. It can, therefore, be argued that the Tharauds' adherence to the ethos of western scholarship on the Orient confirms Said's view of Orientalism as a discourse in the Foucauldian sense; that is, as a discourse that determines how the Orient is viewed and talked about.

The third conclusion is that these stereotypical images are deeply rooted in what Said (1979) calls the West's "imperial culture." (p. 224) Therefore, Morocco and its inhabitants are charged with these vilifying stereotypes only to provide the French conquerors with the required legitimacy and justification. It is, as Said (1979) argues, in such a denigrating description that the Orient is viewed as "a locale requiring Western attention, reconstruction, even redemption." (p. 206) Therefore, it must be clear that Morocco and its People are vilified to emphasize their urgent need for the intervention of an external power. Accordingly, the Tharauds' trilogy can be said to confirm Said's thesis about the implication of Western scholarship in the West's imperial project. What proves the implication of the Tharauds in the French colonial project even more is the lavish praise which Lyautey's "projects" in Morocco receive. Through the celebration of

these so-called “projects”, the natives are made to believe that their country can be better off under the rule of the French, thus, accept it freely.

CHAPTER FIVE:

WRITING MOROCCO BEYOND THE IDEOLOGY OF EMPIRE: USING

MONTHERLANT'S *LA ROSE DE SABLE* AND LE CLÉZIO'S *DÉSERT* AS

CASE STUDIES

5.1 Introduction

In an attempt to deepen the investigations undertaken by Edward Said in his analysis of the West's representations of the Orient, the present chapter proposes to explore the ways in which Morocco and its people are represented in Montherlant's *La Rose de Sable* (1968) and Le Clézio's *Désert* (1980). Although the novels belong to one of the areas Said focuses on (French Orientalism), they do not reflect the racist and imperialist views which the author talks about in *Orientalism*. For Said (1994), the novel as a cultural form plays a fundamental role in "the formation of imperial attitudes, experiences and references." (p. xii) Contrary to the argument put forward by Said, it is difficult to detect any racist or imperialist attitude towards Morocco and Moroccans in the novels under study. The novelists' sympathy with the natives and their ordeal under French colonialism can not be doubted.

In addition to their manifest breakaway from the previously held distorted image of the Orient that is common in the West, Montherlant's and Le Clézio's novels also depart from the Europeans' self-appointed traits of superiority. According to their portraits, the European invaders are neither philanthropic nor humanitarian, but savage and barbaric. They not only exploit the natives, but also commit all kinds of crimes against them. Such portrayal does not conform to the imperial idea that the whites are the most appropriate race to rule over the Orient (Morocco in this case). To say this is to

imply that Montherlant and Le Clézio detach the European conquest of Morocco from its pretended mission to civilize the country and bring the blessings of progress and development to its supposed backward people. Therefore, the novels not only go counter to the argument that the Europeans have always defined themselves as superior to the non-European peoples to justify their conquest (Said, 1979, p. 7), but also prove the complexity and richness of Western discourse on the Orient, which Said's monolithic project ignores.

Indeed, even the crux of Said's thesis that Orientalism and imperialism are two sides of the same coin itself is difficult to apply to Montherlant's and Le Clézio's novels. According to the author of *Orientalism*, western writers are necessarily the products of their imperialist culture, hence what they say about the Orient is often meant to justify its subjection and conquest. Contrary to such a claim, neither *La Rose de Sable* nor *Désert* seeks to promote or justify French power over Morocco. Both novels decry the atrocities which the French colonizer commits against the natives. Therefore, although Said's accusation against some Orientalists of racism and imperialism is reasonable, he ignores the voices which contradict his thesis. The purpose of this chapter is to uncover an area of weakness in Said's research, which is the high selectivity of material. In other words, unlike Said's *Orientalism*, which proposes to study only the texts of those Orientalists who are purely racist and imperialist in their views of the Orient, the present chapter focuses on two anticolonial novels to show that Western scholarship on the Orient can be much broader in scope than what the author of *Orientalism* suggests.

5. 2 Henry de Montherlant's Anticolonialism in *La Rose de Sable*

Montherlant is probably one of the most important figures in French literature who has not inscribed his work within the French imperial tradition. The man, as Ridderstad (2005) makes the point, has always sided with the colonized. (p. 159) For instance, his *La Rose de Sable* (1968), which many literary critics refer to as an anticolonialist novel, takes a tough stand against the French expansionist policy in North Africa.¹⁰³ The novel has clearly declared the failure of the French "Civilizing Mission" in Morocco. (Blanc, 1995, p. 79) Montherlant explains in the Avant-propos that he writes *La Rose de Sable* not only as a solidarity gesture with the colonized, but also as a reaction against the 1930 Paris Colonial Exhibition and France's invasion of Algeria.¹⁰⁴

What is worthy of note, however, is that although Montherlant was done with the writing of his novel during his stay in Algiers between 1930 and 1932, it remained unpublished until 1968. Because *La Rose de Sable* points out the harms of the French presence in North Africa, Montherlant believes it was inappropriate to publish the novel during that period. The novel's immediate publication would have damaged the reputation of France both at home and in the colonies. (Gubińska, 2002, p. 26) Indeed, the decision not to publish *La Rose de Sable* is often attributed to Montherlant's patriotism and his fear of being understood as working against the interests of his country: "It was inappropriate to release a work openly critical of the French presence in Morocco at a time when other European powers, especially Italy, harboured colonial

¹⁰³ Montherlant's desire to write an anticolonial novel was known even before the writing of *La Rose de Sable*. Since 1927, he started to consult Paul Odinet, who was very contemptuous of the French colonial system, and for that reason, disgraced by Lyautey, mainly after the publication of his novel entitled *Le Caïd Abdallah*. (Meynier, 2013, p. 42)

¹⁰⁴ In her book entitled *l'Image de l'Autre dans la littérature coloniale française au Maghreb*, Gubińska (2002) affirms that it was very daring of Montherlant to write such anticolonialist novel at the time of the Colonial Exhibition in Paris and the Centenary of the conquest of Algeria. (p. 67)

ambitions in respect of North Africa.” (Hughes, 2004, p. XII) This explains why Montherlant decides that his novel would be published the day when it would be read only as a historical document. (p. XII)

It was only in 1968, France having already withdrawn its troops from Morocco twelve years before, that Montherlant made up his mind to publish *La Rose de Sable*. Therefore, although the novel launches a harsh attack on the French presence in Morocco, it was not published at the right time. As the Moroccan researcher Lahjomri (1973) makes the point, Montherlant is the only writer who treats the issue of the colonized fairly. (p. 115) For Lahjomri, *La Rose de Sable* is made entirely in favor of the other (p. 295). However, the novel was not published when it was much needed. The anticolonial effect of the novel would have been more significant at the time it was written because it would have produced what Lahjomri calls a crack in the colonial ideological construction. (p. 289)

Montherlant is torn between his desire to decry the violations and atrocities which the French soldiers commit against the natives in North Africa and his concern not to harm the reputation of his country. As Favre (2000) argues, there is a kind of conflict between serving his homeland and serving justice. (p. 35) This is perhaps why Montherlant decides not to include in the final version of *La Rose de Sable* the most openly anticolonialist passages, where we find an unconditional defense of the natives and a harsh attack on the colonizing France. These passages, as Meynier (2013) notes, appear in appendix in the 1982 edition of La Pléiade. (p. 43)

5.2.1 A Brief Survey of *la Rose de Sable*

La Rose de Sable is a long novel of about 600 pages. It tells the story of a French young officer called Auligny. The latter is brought up to believe in the philanthropic character of the French pretended civilizing mission. Therefore, he is made to believe that France does not invade Morocco to oppress its people and dispossess them of their lands and livelihoods, but to raise them to a higher level of civilization and help them come out of their savage and inferior state. (Ridderstad, 2005, p. 148)

The beginning of the novel tells us how Auligny joins the French army. It is his mother's dream to have an officer son. Being herself a daughter of a French General, she urges that Auligny be assigned to Morocco, where she believes he would have the chance to be promoted into higher positions. Surprisingly, Auligny's recruitment as a lieutenant in the south of Morocco leads to a radical change in his colonialist views and attitudes. Indeed, Auligny imports with him many prejudices and clichés to the North African country. For instance, he not only believes that the Arabs in Morocco are insolent (Montherlant, 1968, p. 19), but also associates the French presence in Morocco with a moral character: "La France est quasiment la seule nation d'Europe qui n'ait pas d'impérialisme." (p. 7) [France is almost the only nation in Europe that is non-imperialist.] In brief, Auligny sounds very faithful to the division of the world between what is French and automatically made superior and what is non-French, so regarded as inferior. (Gubińska, 2002, p. 70)

However, the inhumanity of his fellow soldiers and the atrocities they commit in his sight put an end to his idealization of France and its pretended mission to civilize the supposed inferior nations. Therefore, although Auligny receives a colonialist education,

his firsthand experience as a French soldier in the colony allows him to realize the true face of colonialism. He becomes aware that the so-called civilizing mission is nothing but an excuse to invade Morocco and exploit its natural resources. (Montherlant, 1968, p. 306)

Lonely as he is in the desert, Auligny is driven to look for a Moroccan mistress. He finds a young Bedouin girl called Ram. Although the French lieutenant meets the Moroccan girl many times, he does not abuse her. Despite being a soldier who represents colonialism, he is not an abusive man. The only time that Auligny behaves abusively is when he sexually exploits a 12 –year– old girl during his expedition in the desert and threatens to set fire to the tents of her parents if she lets anyone knows. But what would one expect from a person of a good nature? Auligny soon realizes the monstrosity of his disgusting sin, and thus feels true remorse. Therefore, although he is powerful and no one can blame or punish him in the colony, he comes to apologize to the little girl. This would be the first and the last experience of abuse which Auligny commits in the colony. (p. 284)

Wrongly thinking that Ram shares with him the same feeling, Auligny falls blindly in love with her. In addition to the savagery of the French soldiers, his love of the indigenous woman itself leads to a radical change of his ideas and attitudes. (Sorel, 2013, p. 138) For instance, he starts to appreciate the world which he used to consider as inferior to his homeland. He also begins to question his very existence as a French soldier in Morocco. He realizes that he is the colonizer whom no one wants: [I am the foreigner, the master and the enemy. I am the one who keeps them from singing.] “Je suis l’étranger,

le maitre et l'ennemi. Je suis celui qui les empêche de chanter." (Montherlant, 1968, p. 350)

Although Auligny exhibits his love and respect for the natives and sides with them against the expansionist project of his country, he remains rejected among them. For example, although he really loves Ram and he leaves Birbatine just to avoid fighting her people, she refuses him. For Gubińska (2002), Auligny's unrequited love reflects the impossibility of communication between two peoples inscribed in advance in a network of well-defined relations: colonizer-colonized, master-slave. (p. 74) Auligny himself is aware that he is unwanted among the natives. That's why all along his travel to the North, he can not help thinking that his companion Boualem will soon let him down. As Montherlant (1968) points out, Augliny is so betrayed and abandoned by the Muslims of Morocco that he finds Islam synonymous with abandonment and betrayal. (p. 519)

Surprisingly, even if the natives treat Auligny coldly and hurt his feelings, he does not hate them in return, but continues to sympathize with them and take their side. However, he is doomed to die at their hands. When Auligny arrives in the city of Fez in order to meet his friend Guiscart, a violent riot breaks out there. Unlike Guiscart, who manages to escape, Auligny is caught and cruelly massacred by the furious rioters. If any message can be drawn from the death of Auligny at the hands of those whom he defends, it must be that the French as invaders can never penetrate to the souls of the natives. Only the use of force (the little girl abused by Auligny) or money (Ram) would allow the French to forge links with the natives of Morocco. (Ridderstad, 2005, p. 149)

The novel comes to its end, informing us that Madame Auligny, whose son is killed in Morocco, does not respect his will. Before his death, Auligny writes a letter to

his parents asking to send him four thousand francs for the benefit of a native hospital in case he dies. But for Madame Auligny, “quatre mille francs, c’est quand même une somme. Et puis, les morts sont sacrés sans doute, mais non pas dans leurs dernières volontés. Il n’est pas dans les habitudes de la bourgeoisie française de prendre celles-ci au sérieux.” (p. 573) [four thousand francs, it is still a large sum. Besides, the dead are sacred no doubt, but not in their last wishes. It is not in the habits of the French bourgeoisie to take them seriously.]

5.2.2 Montherlant’s Manifest Disapproval of French Colonialism in Morocco

Although Montherlant’s *La Rose de Sable* deals with the issue of colonialism, it does not adhere to the mainstream imperialist thought Said talks about in *Orientalism*. For example, instead of celebrating the French expansionist policy in Morocco as a noble mission to civilize its pretended primitive people, the novel contents itself with diagnosing the phenomenon and informing the readers about its contradictions. Through the eyes of a French soldier, standing as a reliable witness to the atrocities committed by the colonial troops in the colonized Morocco, Montherlant denounces the colonial injustice in all its forms, including the exploitation and the humiliation of the defeated people. (Favre, 2000, p. 34) This indicates that Montherlant swerves away from the Civilizing Mission Ideology, thereby demonstrating his sympathy for “the wretched of the earth”¹⁰⁵

One of Montherlant’s main concerns in *La Rose de Sable* is to expose the brutalities of the French colonial system. Without all that make up commonly employed in colonial texts, the novel presents a long series of scenes in which the pretended bearers

¹⁰⁵ “The Wretched of the Earth” is the title of a book written by Frantz Fanon in 1961. The book explores the nature of colonialism and its effects on both the colonizer and the colonized.

of civilization and progress are associated with many degenerate traits. Not only are they cruel and ruthless, but also devoid of any sense of humanity. Consider, for instance, Ménage's confession to Auligny: "Moi, vous savez, j'ai une règle bien simple. Quand un Marocain geint et se lamente, c'est un fricoteur." (Montherlant, 1968, p. 78) [You know, I have a very simple rule. When a Moroccan groans and complains, he is a crook.] Ménage, as the quote makes it clear, denies the native who works under him the right to rest. Although the latter is truly ill, thus, unable to work, he is not allowed to complain. He must work non-stop as a machine, otherwise he is viewed as a crook. To make more profit, the colonizer, Ménage in this case, is ready to dehumanize the natives and deprive them of their dignity and basic rights. Hence, through this portrayal, in which the colonizer is accused of abuse and exploitation, Montherlant presents an early sign that his *La Rose de sable* unsettles the norms of self-congratulatory colonialist fiction. (Hughes, 2004, p. 79)

All along the novel, Ménage's words and deeds are made to go against the noble ideals on which the Europeans ground their invasion of the Orient. For example, if the Europeans often present themselves as providers of health care in the colonized world, Ménage allows himself to deceive the natives who are sick and in dire need of medical care and treatment. When Auligny asks him if there is any medicine left for the sick of the colony, his answer is this: "La médecine pour indigènes n'est pas de la médecine." (Montherlant, 1968, p. 97) [Medicine for the indigenous is not medicine.] Ménage's deception of the sick does not correspond to the commonplace imperialist view of the Europeans as great heroes who go to the Orient just to do charity work and serve the

needs of its people. *La Rose de sable*, therefore, ridicules the supposed philanthropic purpose of the French presence in Morocco.

The despotic manner in which Ménage treats the colonized constitutes another flagrant violation of the civilizing mission ideology. Although the whites claim that their mission in the Orient aims mainly to protect Orientals from the abusive behaviors of their despotic rulers, Ménage's treatment of the natives often takes on a despotic character. For instance, when he visits the caïd's house to introduce Auligny (his successor), he does not hesitate to despise the old man. He not only ascends to the terrace without taking permission, but also lets his dog eat the dates which the caïd's family set aside to dry under the sun. (p. 82) When the caïd's son Jilani invites him and Auligny for a cup of tea, Ménage's tyrannical nature manifests itself even more. He not only throws the nuclei of the dates he eats on the floor, but also complains that the tea he is served is not good. (p. 83) However, instead of thanking Jilani for his hospitality, he insists to humiliate him even more: "Maintenant qu'on a bu ton thé, on t'a assez vu." [Now that we have drunk your tea, we have had enough of you.] Ménage goes on, but to Auligny this time: "J'aime bien les choquer quelquefois [...] il ne faut jamais cesser de leur rappeler qu'ils ne sont pas les maîtres." (P. 84) [I like to shock them sometimes [...] we must never stop reminding them that they are not the masters.] When he sees the respectful way in which Auligny talks to the locals, he advises him never to use the formal you 'vous' when addressing the natives.¹⁰⁶ (p. 86)

¹⁰⁶ Ménage's despotic nature is a good example to illustrate the subversive character of *La Rose de Sable*. Traditionally, the image of despotism is used in colonial texts to characterize the Oriental ruler. The Europeans often use the image to justify their conquest of the Orient by claiming that they come to liberate Orientals from their despotic rulers.

Ménage's abusive treatment of the natives should not be viewed as an isolated incident. Apart from Auligny who manages to break away from the imperialist ideas inculcated in his mind by education, all characters representing French colonialism in Morocco behave abusively with the colonized.¹⁰⁷ Auligny's adjutant Poillet is a good example to prove the argument. He is described as a merciless soldier who never misses the chance to mistreat the natives. According to Montherlant's portrait, he can not even stand to see the natives who work under him in a restful position. On one occasion, just because he finds some native "mokhaznis" sitting, he starts to curse and beat them. (p. 307) Although it is natural to get tired after standing up for a long time, the natives who work under Poillet are not allowed to sit. They must keep standing up just to please the sadist psychology of the colonizer.

Therefore, Poillet himself breaks away from the Orientalist view of the French as the most appropriate race to rule over the inferior people (Moroccans). He is such an abusive soldier who can humiliate the natives without any apparent reason. The best example to illustrate this is the young indigenous who comes to talk to him and finds his face full of Poillet's spit. (p. 320) Auligny, who attends this uncivilized scene, finds it difficult to understand how this Poillet, who comes from the country of human rights, can allow himself to commit such savagery. What disgusts Auligny even more is this: No sooner had Poillet spitted on the indigenous than he began to caress his dog Citron, saying affectionate words to it. Auligny ridicules and condemns these double standards: "Que d'affection pour un chien! Mais il laisserait crever un indigène." (p. 321) [A lot of

¹⁰⁷ This is to mean that what Montherlant criticizes in *La Rose de Sable* is the nature of colonialism as system of oppression and abuse, and not a specific soldier. For him, it is the colonial system that dictates a common attitude to all its military soldiers. (Garet, 1999, p. 63)

affection for a dog! But he would let an indigenous die.] Such abusive treatment of the natives is what reduces Auligny's patriotism and love of France. (Ridderstad, 2005, p. 149) It leads him even to take an unequivocal moral stand against colonialism:

Et ce Poillet, qui se vante de faire revenir un homme de deux kilomètres pour lui fermer la porte, qui est-il ? Qui serait-il, en France? Un pauvre diable obéissant à tout le monde. Alors, Monsieur est bien content de se faire servir [...] voilà le premier vice de la colonisation. Elle permet de commander en autocrate à des gens qui sont faits pour le subalterne, et qui sentent derrière eux tout l'appareil de leur pays – opinion, bureaux, police, tribunaux... – prêt à les soutenir systématiquement, quoi qu'ils fassent. (Montherlant, 1968, p. 318)

[And this Poillet, who boasts of bringing back a man from two kilometers afar just to close the door for him, who is he? Who would he be in France? A poor devil obedient to everyone. So, mister is glad to be served [...] this is the first defect of colonization. It allows the colonizing people to command autocratically those who are made for the subaltern, and who feel behind them the whole apparatus of their country – Opinion, offices, police, courts – ready to support them systematically, no matter what they do.]

Vincent is another representative of empire who takes part in the system of abuse which the colonizing France orchestrates in Morocco. Like Ménage and Poillet, he does not conform to the imperialist view of the whites as a civilized race. He is a heartless soldier who does not hesitate to exploit the natives who work under his authority. The indigenous people are shown to be fed up with his inhuman and exploitative treatment. Consider, for instance, the complaint which Auligny hears during a discussion between

two natives: “Pourquoi Vincenti il m’a envoyé à la corvée de bois à sa place? Il n’en avait pas le droit. Est-ce qu’ils prennent les Arabes pour leurs esclaves ?” [Why did Vincenti send me to the chore of wood in his place? He had no right to do so. Do they take the Arabs for their slaves?] One of the natives, tired of being exploited by the French, goes on: “On travaille toute la journée comme des chiens.” (p. 377) [We work all day like dogs.] This portrayal not only denounces the excesses of the colonizer, but also shows the extent to which Montherlant’s novel goes against the colonial grain. (Hughes, 2004, p. 72) Normally the exploitation of the natives by the colonizing race goes unnoticed in colonial texts. In general, colonial discourse “tends to exclude [...] statements about the exploitation of the resources of the colonized. (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2007, p. 43)

Instead of sticking to this imperial dictate, Montherlant prefers to expose the unfair treatment of the natives as compared to the French. For instance, he shows how the local workers are always paid far less than what their French counterparts get. On one occasion, they are asked to fix a path for only four francs a day (five times less than what a French worker would get for the same job). When Auligny tells his boss that the pay is not enough, the latter gives ridiculous justifications: “Vous savez bien qu’un Arabe n’a pas de besoins. Avec quatre francs, il est aussi heureux qu’un européen avec vingt.” (Montherlant, 1968, p. 345) [You know well that an Arab has no needs. With four francs, he is as happy as a European with twenty.] Auligny, who feels a pang of guilt, sounds unwilling to perform the captain’s demand. He wonders how he would find one hundred workers for that serious task. But the captain’s answer comes in a very dishonest way: “C’est bien simple, vous n’avez qu’à dire que vous recrutez des mokhaznis. Bourdenaire a fait ce truc-là à Sbiba. Il a eu trois fois plus de demandes qu’il n’en fallait.” (p. 346) [It

is very simple, you just say that you recruit mokhaznis. Bourdenaire has done this thing in Sbiba. He has got three times more applications than needed.] This suggestion again reflects the extent to which the white man can be immoral and degenerate. To get the required number of workers to fix the path, the captain is ready to use any means (including fraud and deceit).

Obviously, these degenerate traits which Montherlant insists to associate with the French go against the values upon which the French Empire is premised. The imperialist view that the Europeans are moral fathers for the pretended inferior nations like the people of Morocco is belied in *La Rose de Sable*. For Montherlant, the Europeans are not only cruel and savage but also unscrupulous and corrupt. The indigenous who works with them is often victim of exploitation and abuse. For instance, he can spend the whole week doing hard jobs, but when the pay day arrives, the French boss often looks for an excuse to avoid paying him. The best example of this is the incident that takes place before Bonnel's eyes in a cafe in Rabat. The cafe owner accuses his Arab employee of theft, begins to beat him in front of every one and then expels him in a very humiliating way. But eventually it turns out that the accusation is just a trick to avoid paying the Arab employee. Bonnel, who attends the scene, narrates to Auligny:

L'Arabe parti, le patron rigole, avec un drôle d'air, les yeux baissés. Un colon était assis à une table voisine, et lui aussi rit en dessous. Je lui demande: « est-ce que vous avez vu cet Arabe mettre la main dans le tiroir-caisse ? – pensez-vous! Mais c'est samedi soir. –Et alors? – et bien! comme ça le patron fait l'économie d'une semaine de paye. » (p. 364)

[The Arab left, the boss laughs, with a funny look, eyes downcast. One settler was sitting at a nearby table, and he also laughed underneath. I ask him: «did you see this Arab put his hand in the cash drawer? - Do you think! But it's Saturday evening. -So what? - well! That way the boss gains a week of pay. »]

The Moroccan worker is doubly abused. He is not only deprived of his pay, but also accused of a theft which he has not committed.¹⁰⁸ This can only endorse the idea that the French invade Morocco for one purpose: to exploit its people and rob their resources.

Another good example that can illustrate the exploitative nature of the French empire is the sequestration of the palm grove of Tamghist. Not only do the colonial powers take hold of the palm grove without indemnifying the owners, but also give it to Mr. Hubert, who rents it to its real owners at exorbitant prices. (p. 362) This portrayal belies the philanthropic character of the French pretended civilizing mission in Morocco. France is not a charity in order to help the country for no consideration, but a colonial power driven by interests: “L’homme qui aime l’indigène d’une façon désintéressée n’existe pas aujourd’hui.” (p. 389) [The man who loves the indigenous disinterestedly does not exist today.] Therefore, even when France achieves something that appears beneficial for the natives, it must have an interest behind that. For example, it is true that it sometimes provides medical care for the natives, but the purpose is not humanitarian at all. The purpose, as Montherlant points out, is to “«conserver par tous les moyens le capital humain local pour un rendement aussi complet que possible de la main-

¹⁰⁸ According to Montherlant (1968), the phenomenon (accusing the native of theft in order not to pay him) becomes widespread and systematic under French colonialism. The native is often heard saying to his French boss: “Ne me paye pas si tu ne veux pas, mais ne dis pas que c’est moi qui a volé.” (p. 363) [Do not pay me if you do not want to, but do not say it is me who stole.]

d'oeuvre.»” (p. 362) [preserve by all means the local human capital for a productivity which is as complete as possible of the workforce.]

From all the examples discussed so far, it is clear that Montherlant does not load his novel with the rhetoric of the civilizing mission to conform to the mainstream imperialist thought. The idea that the pretended primitive people (Moroccans) can be better off if subjected to the rule of a more enlightened race (the French) is totally undermined in *La Rose de Sable*. Nothing in the novel suggests that the French presence in Morocco is good or beneficial to its people. The natives, as Garet (1999) explains, are commonly victims of maltreatment, brutality and abuse of power perpetrated against them by the French. (p. 63) Guiscart's testimony on the subject can provide further evidence of the abusive nature of the French colonial system. When he goes to North Africa, he sees with his own eyes a French man slapping a native. Besides, he observes the racist treatment the natives endure at the hands of the French, mainly in public transportation. For instance, when a French master gets on the train, the Arab servant is obliged to give up his seat so that the French master can occupy it. (p. 240) According to Guiscart, racism and discrimination against Arabs and Muslims in general are committed in France itself. The country, whose national motto is “liberty, equality, fraternity”, does not grant Arabs the same rights as its citizens. For instance, “La moitié des Arabes employés perdent leur place, chaque année, simplement parce qu'ils veulent retourner chez eux pour y passer les jours de l'Aïd. ” (p. 248) [half of Arab workers lose their jobs each year simply because they want to go back home to spend the days of the Aïd.]

In a word, the pretended takers of progress and civilization to the uncivilized Orient are viewed in *La Rose de Sable* as savage and cruel. Even children are not spared

from their brutal repression. Boualem is a good example to illustrate the point. When the boy wants to join his father in France, he is himself exposed to ill-treatment and abuse. Although he has all his papers in order, Boualem is insulted and brutally abused by a French police officer. No wonder he has a negative view of the French: “Non, ils ne sont pas gentils, les Français. Qu’on soit un vaurien ou qu’on soit un honnête homme, avec eux, si on est un bicot, on est toujours traité comme un chien.” (p. 230) [No, the French are not nice. Whether one is a rascal or an honest man, to them, if one is “un bicot”¹⁰⁹, then one is always treated like a dog.]

To sum-up, these are just some examples of abuse which Montherlant exposes to uncover the true face of colonialism. The pages of *La Rose de Sable* are replete with examples which demonstrate the savagery and brutality of the French colonial system. Such portrayal confirms Montherlant’s willingness to draw a clear-cut distinction between the mainstream imperialist thought and his vision of the so-called civilizing mission.

5.2.3 Montherlant’s Sympathetic Views of the Natives

In the same way that Montherlant swerves away from the civilizing mission ideology, he departs from the prevalent clichés about the colonized commonly employed in the Orientalist discourse. For him, these clichés and stereotypes do not reflect the reality of the natives, and thus should be rethought and corrected. According to Auligny, the best way to do this is through education: “Pour moi j’envisage surtout une éducation de l’esprit public. C’est à l’école d’abord, à apprendre aux petits Français le respect de l’indigène; c’est à l’école à enseigner que les indigènes sont dans leur droit.”

¹⁰⁹ This racist term comes from the French history in North Africa. Generally, it is used as a designation for a North African Arab.

(Montherlant, 1968, p. 367) [For me I especially plan an education of the public opinion. It is at the school first, to teach the French children to respect the natives; it is at the school to teach them that the natives are in their right.] As the quoted passage reveals, Montherlant believes that the school can play a fundamental role in changing the vilifying views of the non-Europeans common among the French. In other words, if the French are not taught to look down on other nations, but to respect and treat them justly instead, they will perhaps stop vilifying and demonizing them.

Montherlant is firmly opposed to any portrayal of the colonized based on the common stereotypes about them in colonial discourse. He can not understand why the natives should always remain in the position of subordinates. Aren't they human beings like us? For Montherlant, all races must be equal. No one is superior or inferior to the other. Guiscarts makes the point clearly when he affirms that "Les Arabes, ou plutôt les Berbères, sont des Méditerranéens comme les autres. L'Arabo-Berbère ne diffère pas beaucoup plus du Français que l'Anglais ou l'Allemand ne diffère du Français." (p. 17) [The Arabs, or rather the Berbers, are Mediterraneans like the others. The Arabo-Berber does not differ much more from the French than the English or the German differs from the French.] Such portrayal can be said to establish racial equality and oppose all forms of discrimination that make a certain nation superior to another. This goes against the logic of Orientalism, in which the European self is viewed as superior to the non-European other.

In *Orientalism*, Said (1979) asserts that the Europeans "make out of every observable detail a generalization and out of every generalization an immutable law about the Oriental nature, temperament, mentality, custom, or type." (Said, 1979, p. 86) This

argument can not apply to *La Rose de Sable* because the novel itself criticizes the sweeping generalizations inherent in the French portrayal of the Arabs. For the French, the Arabs are all tarred with the same brush. If one of them commits an act of violence, then all Arabs must be violent and terrorist. Guiscart ridicules this imperial logic that holds the Arab race as a whole responsible for the sins of a minority: “« Chaque défaut de l’un d’eux on en rend responsable toute la race. » Si ton domestique français te vole, tu ne dis pas: « Sales Français ! » ni « Sales Bretons ! ». Tu dis : « quel vaurien ! » Mais si ton domestique arabe te vole, tu dis : « Sales Arabes ! »” (p. 17) [«For every fault of one of them, we hold the whole race responsible. » if your French servant robs you, you don’t say: « dirty French! » nor « dirty Bretons! ». You say: « what a rascal! » But if your Arab servant robs you, you say: « dirty Arabs! »]

Just to be clear, in parallel with its harsh attack on the French presence in Morocco, *La Rose de Sable* makes a radical change in the way in which the colonized are traditionally talked about and represented. In other words, to stir the reader’s sympathy in favor of the colonized, Montherlant departs from the prevalent clichés and stereotypes. For example, instead of depicting the natives in terms of violence, savagery and cruelty, the novelist describes them as helpless victims of the crimes committed by the French. Throughout the novel, they are made into defenseless people cruelly suffering at the hands of the French merciless soldiers. They are not only exploited and marginalized, but also denied the least characteristics of humanity. Certainly, such view of the colonized destroys what Said (1994) calls “the idea of Western salvation and redemption through its “civilizing mission.”” (p. 131)

Montherlant's non-conformist description of Morocco and its inhabitants is conveyed mainly through the views of certain characters. For example, although Guiscart is French, he is shown to prefer Morocco to France. According to Montherlant's portrait, when Guiscart is obliged to go back home in summer, he goes unwillingly because he finds life boring in France: "L'été, la chaleur me fait revenir deux mois à Paris, où la vie est si laide que la question de jouir d'elle ne se pose plus. À Paris il n'y a pas de tentations; alors j'y travaille." (p. 12) [In summer, the heat makes me go back to Paris for two months, where life is so ugly that the question to enjoy it no longer arises. In Paris there is no temptation; therefore, I work there.] In contrast to this debasing view of the French capital, Guiscart likes Morocco. That's why he feels more at home in the North African country than in Europe.¹¹⁰ (p. 16)

In addition to his love of Morocco, Guiscart has a great deal of sympathy for its people. For instance, when his brain-washed friend Auligny demonizes the North African as thief, fanatic, ungrateful, lazy, liar and cruel to animals, Guiscart does not hesitate to take up their defense: "Les colonisateurs ont une autre raison de calomnier particulièrement les colonisés: ils se sentent dans leur tort à l'égard d'eux." (p. 19) [The colonizers have another reason for particularly slandering the colonized: they feel they act wrongly towards them.] According to Guiscart, these vilifying images are nothing but ideological constructs fabricated by the white imperialists to justify their despicable crimes against the colonized. Surprised by his defense of the natives, his manipulated friend accuses him of being arabophile, but Guiscart admits that with pride and

¹¹⁰ It is true that Montherlant makes here a direct contrast between the Orient (Morocco) and the Occident (Paris), but the imperial function of this dichotomy is undermined. In other words, the binary opposition of Montherlant's portrayal does not maintain the Orient as inferior to the Occident, but the other way round.

satisfaction: “Les Arabes, oui, je les trouve gentils.” (p. 235) [The Arabs, yes, I find them nice.] Guiscart illustrates his view with a telling example from daily life: One day, when Guiscart comes across a man preceded by his donkey, he says “sha...” and the donkey stops. Yet, instead of getting angry, the man starts to smile. For Guiscart, if the donkey driver were Spanish, Basque or French, he would behave aggressively towards him. (p. 236)

Guiscart’s sympathetic view of the natives is also embodied in his description of the boy who goes with him to Tangier to help him. He not only describes him as kind and meek, but also characterizes him in terms of wisdom, generosity and seriousness: “Il était très sage, et, tandis qu’il n’achetait jamais de cacahuètes sans m’en offrir, dans le creux de sa main, il refusait tout ce que je lui proposais, limonade, cigarettes. Il me disait avec beaucoup de sérieux : « j’ai vu que ce n’était pas utile de fumer. »” (p. 238) [He was very wise, and while he never bought peanuts without offering me some in the palm of his hand, he refused everything I offered him, lemonade, cigarettes. He was telling me very seriously: «I found that it was not useful to smoke. »]

Another character through whom Montherlant conveys sympathetic views of the natives is Guiscart’s friend Auligny. Although the latter comes to Morocco indoctrinated by his upbringing with colonialist views and attitudes, the savagery and brutality of the French shake his idealization of colonialism and causes his attitudes towards the natives to shift from hostility and aggression to love and admiration. These pro-Arab sentiments are strengthened even more when he falls in love with Ram (Coverdale, 1992, p. 106): Because of his love for the Moroccan girl, “il change de maillot, se met avec l’adversaire! il a cessé de voir à travers les idées qu’on lui a apprises, les lunettes qu’on lui a données.

Maintenant il voit avec ses yeux à lui, et il oblique, prend une autre direction.” (Montherlant, 1968, p. 304) [he changes his shirt, puts himself into the position of the opponent! he stopped seeing through the ideas he was taught, the glasses he was given. Now he sees with his own eyes, and he deviates, takes another direction.]

Therefore, a simple love-affair with a young Bedouin girl leads him to a radical change in his ideas about the colonized and the nature of colonialism in itself. (Gubińska, 2002, p. 67) For instance, not only does he start to acknowledge the right of the natives to defend themselves, but also considers their violent resistance against the white colonizers justifiable and legitimate: “Quel que soit sa culture, quel que soit son degré de civilisation, un peuple envahi est toujours un peuple envahi. Et, quand il cherche à faire le plus de mal possible à l’envahisseur, le bon sens élémentaire proclame cela légitime.” (Montherlant, 1968, p. 440) [Regardless of their culture, no matter their degree of civilization, an invaded people is always an invaded people. And when they try to do the most possible harm to the invader, the basic common sense proclaims this legitimate.] From this quote it is clear that Auligny is no longer faithful to the colonialist vision of the native anticolonial resistance as an act of terror. More than that, he condemns the colonizers’ detention of the rebels whom he considers as innocent victims: “Je ne peux pas croire qu’une grande nation qui a fait tout ce qu’elle a fait, ait besoin d’innocenter les coupables et condamner les victimes – et quelles victimes ! de pauvres bergers à qui on a volé leurs terres.” (p. 432) [I can not believe that a great nation that has done what it has done, needs to exonerate the guilty and condemn the victims - and what victims! poor shepherds who were robbed of their lands.] This passage provides another piece of evidence about the anticolonial character of *La Rose de Sable*.

Auligny's anti-colonial feeling becomes even more obvious when he applies for a non-combative post so as not to fight the natives. Indeed, the esteem which Auligny exhibits for the people of Morocco is so great that he never allows himself to deceive them. Even when his life is threatened, the man prefers to die rather than to deceive the indigenous. For example, when he is besieged with Guiscart by the furious rioters in a house in Fez, the idea to say the "shahada"¹¹¹ comes to him, but soon gives it up even though he knows that if a threatened man pronounces the act of the Muslim faith, his life is in principle saved. However, he hates the idea and waives it. After all, he believes, they are right in this riot. (p. 547)

In parallel with his constant defense of the natives, Auligny launches a vehement attack on the traitors who choose to side with the French against the interests of their country: "Le chien arabe adopté par un maître français aboie contre les arabes." (p. 505) [the Arab dog adopted by a French master barks against the Arabs.] For Auligny, the colonizers and the traitors are two sides of the same coin. They both exploit the weak and helpless. (p. 365) However, he believes that the blame for encouraging this betrayal ought to be placed where it belongs: France. After all, it is the colonizing power that allows these traitors to make profit out of the wretchedness and misery of innocent people: "Les renégats indigènes, ceux qui sacrifient les intérêts de leurs coreligionnaires aux intérêts des Français, sont accueillis à bras ouverts par ces derniers. À eux les sous, les places et les honneurs. Les autres restent des suspects." (p. 362-63) [The indigenous renegades, those who sacrifice the interests of their co-religionists to the interests of the French, are

¹¹¹ The "shahada" is the first of the five pillars of Islam. It is summed up in a short formula: "Achhadou an lâ ilâha illa-llâh, wa ashadou ana muhammadan rasûlu-llâh," which means "I testify that there is no God but Allah, and that Muhammad is his messenger." Therefore, when a person pronounces the shahada, (s)he not only declares his/her belief in the oneness of God, but also accepts Muhammad as his last messenger.

welcomed with open arms. For them the money, the jobs and the honors. The others remain suspects.] In brief, as soon as Auligny falls in love with Ram, all his views about the natives start to go against the mainstream imperialist discourse.

Montherlant's nonconformist attitude manifests itself more clearly in his portrayal of the Moroccan woman. Unlike the white imperialists who often describe the Oriental woman as weak, passive, immoral, submissive and the like, Montherlant associates her with so many admirable qualities that even the most colonialist soldiers are made to see her in a positive light. For instance, Manchin describes her as more appropriate for the soldier than the European woman. According to the Colonel, the qualities of spontaneity, tranquility and obedience that she embodies can provide a lot of help in the soldier's harsh life. This view is confirmed by Gobey, who compares her to a sedative because of her tendency to facilitate her husband's life. For him, unlike her European counterpart, the Arab woman does not stir up trouble. (p. 144) Similarly, Guiscart's view of Ram itself reflects Montherlant's valorization of the Moroccan woman. As soon as he sees her, he is struck by the expression of honesty emanating from her face. For Guiscart, the girl is worthy of being loved. (p. 250)

Auligny himself describes Ram in a way that departs from the degenerate traits that are commonly associated with the Oriental woman. The girl as she is viewed by the French Lieutenant is docile, punctual, sweet and discreet. She is so malleable that she never objects to Auligny: "Jamais un non, jamais une observation, jamais une question."¹¹² (p. 253) [Never a no, never an observation, never a question.] In brief, she is "une petite personne bien élevée." (p. 339) [a small well-bred person.]

¹¹² Ram's automatic docility should not be taken as a conclusive sign of her submission and passivity. Although she never objects to Auligny, she does not incarnate the image of submission commonly

Throughout the novel, Auligny is made to talk positively about the Moroccan woman. For instance, when he wants to convince doctor Bonnel to examine Jilani's mother, he describes her as a strong and pious woman whom everyone admires and respects. (p. 369) For Auligny, the Moroccan woman in general is less stupid than what the Europeans often claim. She undoubtedly works hard, but her hard work gives her authority. Besides, although her conditions in rural areas are bad, they are certainly not worse than those of the French woman. At least, in the Moroccan rural areas, men are not as alcoholic as French men. Surprisingly, Auligny does not see in the hijab which the Moroccan woman wears a sign of oppression and persecution as often claimed in Orientalist writings, but a symbol of love and jealousy which her husband feels toward her: "Ils n'aiment pas qu'on voit leurs femmes sans raison [...] Je comprends très bien qu'ils cachent leurs femmes jeunes, je comprends même qu'ils les voilent." (p. 369) [They don't like their wives to be seen for no reason [...] I understand very well that they hide their young women, I understand that they even veil them.]

To sum-up, the positive images associated with the natives in *La Rose de Sable* prove that Montherlant breaks away from the common negative stereotypes and clichés. The novel, therefore, presents an example of a Western text on the Orient that contradicts Said's view of the Orientalist discourse.

employed in colonial texts. Indeed, when Auligny expresses his desire to take her away with him, the apparently submissive woman asserts herself. Although he tries hard to convince her to go with him, the previously passive Ram refuses categorically. She reveals a determination to stay with her parents which Auligny is unable to change. Therefore, despite Ram's previous passivity, she eventually proves herself to be the master of her own destiny. She, therefore, can be said to finally break away from the traditional image of the Oriental woman as always passive and submissive.

5.3 Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio's Anticolonialism in *Désert*

Though written in 1980, *Désert* is still recognized as Le Clézio's most groundbreaking work. The novel, for which he received the Grand Prix Paul Morand from the French Academy in the same year, can be said to have established his future output and contributed, at least to a large extent, to his Nobel Prize Win in 2008. (Koumba, 2017, p. 13) *Désert* is made up of two interwoven stories. The first story, whose events are set in Morocco during the colonial period, is replete with historical information. It relates the experience of a Tuareg boy called Nour. Expelled from their homeland, Nour and the other Saharawis are forced to cross the Sahara desert to reach the Northern cities of Morocco in order to be safe from the onslaught of the Christian invaders. The second story, on the other hand, is set in the postcolonial present and relates a fictional tale of a Moroccan young girl called Lalla. The latter, who lives in a shanty town on the coast of Morocco, is herself forced to leave her homeland. She flees to the French city of Marseille in order to escape economic exploitation in Zora's factory and sexual exploitation in an unwanted marriage. Neither Nour nor Lalla is able to find what they travel for. If Nour does not manage to find a place where he and his companions can live in peace and security, Lalla herself does not find what she comes to look for in Marseille. Therefore, both protagonists decide to go back to the places from which they flee.

5.3.1 Le Clézio's Manifest Disapproval of French Colonialism in Morocco

Another writer who manages to break away from the influence of colonial discourse is Le Clézio. The man, as Preetha (2013) points out, "has been able to use his imagination to free himself from his own identity in order to relate to humanity at large."

(p. 100) Relatedly, unlike the writers who express their full allegiance to the imperialist agendas of their countries, Le Clézio opts to speak out of colonial conquest from the victims' perspective. (Woodhull, 1993, p. 137) An example of this anticolonial commitment can be found in *Désert*. In this novel, the novelist not only makes the natives of Morocco the subjects of his narrative, but also narrates the sufferings they go through at the hand of the colonizer from their own point of view. Certainly, this sort of narrative talk does not conform to the rules of the French imperial discourse. To argue this point, Barclay (2006) affirms that by placing the people of the desert centre-stage in a radical act of de-centring, Le Clézio's text clearly subverts the conventions of the colonial novel. (p. 48)

Le Clézio's *Désert* is mainly concerned with exposing the horrors of the European colonial regime. (Duton, 1999, p.276) In this sense, the novel can be said to represent a loud outcry against all the barbaric crimes and atrocities which the invaders commit in Morocco under the false guise of civilizing the country. Through the story of Nour, Le Clézio creates a series of heart-wrenching and painful scenes which denounce the savagery, cruelty and inhumanity of the invaders. The story tells us that Nour and the other Saharawi Tribes, under the attack of the Christian soldiers, are forced to brutally leave their homeland.¹¹³ Following their leader, a holy man called Sheikh Ma al-Aynayn, they wish to find a place where they can live in peace and security. Hence the story begins with a description of their legendary march through the arid desert towards the Northern cities of Morocco.

¹¹³ It is in this light that Duton (1999) affirms that the images which *Désert* conveys of colonialism in Morocco often give the impressions of exile, of alienation and of deadly violence. (p. 276)

The description of the march is made in such a way that the reader is left reeling with sympathy with the desert people. Not only do they have to go through a difficult geography to escape the savage invaders, but they also have to endure the harsh climate of the desert: the wind, the sun and the sand of the desert all are shown to be hostile to these helpless people. As Le Clézio's portrait indicates, the wind of the desert is never pleasant: it is either too hot or too cold. Besides, its strength and constant blowing allow the aggressive sand to lash their pale faces. This situation becomes even more exacerbated by the desert sun which the novelist describes as always burning. (Le Clézio, 1980, pp. 7-8) However, no matter how harsh and inhospitable the desert is, the Saharawis have to continue their escape in order to be safe from the invaders' savagery.¹¹⁴ As a consequence of this, they have to go through a series of difficult ordeals which Le Clézio uncovers to express his sympathy with their just cause.

Rather than turning a blind eye to the natives' tragic fate as most colonialist writers would do, Le Clézio sounds determined to speak out of the Saharawis' sufferings in reproach and condemnation. In other words, in his attempt to uncover the unpleasant reality of colonialism, Le Clézio insists to record all the hardships which the people of the desert go through while fleeing from the invaders. For instance, the Saharawis, Le Clézio (1980) points out, are not only tired, but also suffer from thirst and hunger due to the long march in the inhospitable desert. Their tongues and lips become so dry that they can not speak. They become mute like the desert itself. (p. 8) What attracts the attention even more in Le Clézio's description is his focus on the sufferings of the weakest such as children and women. Consider this passage, for instance:

¹¹⁴ In this respect, Chebbah (2015) maintains that the native's endurance in such particularly hostile space reflects the greatness with which they accept their cruel fate. (p. 187)

Les femmes marchaient à côté des chameaux de bât, cheminant lentement, portant leurs bébés dans leurs manteaux, pieds nus sur la terre brûlante [...] mais tout à fait en dernier venaient ceux qui n'en pouvaient plus, les vieillards, les enfants, les blessés, les jeunes femmes dont tous les hommes étaient morts, et qui n'avaient personne pour les aider à trouver la nourriture et l'eau." (p. 226)

[The women walked beside the pack camels, walking slowly, carrying their babies in their coats, barefoot on the burning earth [...] but in the end came those who were very exhausted, the elderly, the children, the wounded, the young women whose men were all dead, and who had no one to help them find food and water.]

It is clear that the focus of Le Clézio's portrayal in this passage is put on the suffering of the children, of the elderly and of the women. This is supposed to denounce what the Europeans pretend to be a civilizing mission in Morocco as something abhorrent and repulsive. In other words, that the Europeans appear to show no mercy for the helpless people suffering before their eyes really betrays their extreme brutality and barbarism.

Le Clézio's novel is full of images that reflect the hardship and misery which the desert people experience during their escape from the war brought by the colonial powers. However, as if these images can not denounce European colonization of Morocco enough, Le Clézio moves on to uncover the exploitative nature of the colonial system imposed on the Saharawis. For instance, he reports that the Christian soldiers occupy the natives' lands and forbid them to use their own wells. (p. 39) They even steal and rob the inhabitants of their goods and properties: "Les soldats des chrétiens venaient souvent dans la ville d'Agadir, ils prenaient pour eux la plus grande part des récoltes." (p.

359) [The Christian soldiers often came to the city of Agadir, they took for them the largest share of the harvest.] Therefore, Le Clézio's *Désert* does not associate the Europeans' invasion of Morocco with their pretended noble mission to civilize the country and bring progress to its people. On the contrary, colonialism as displayed in the novel is based on pure greed and a desire to make more profit even at the cost of these wretched and miserable people.¹¹⁵

However, to make the European exploitative system appear even more repugnant, Le Clézio insists to emphasize the Saharawis' abject poverty. According to his portrait, the people whom the Europeans come to persecute and exploit are originally poor and wretched. Their clothes are generally worn and tattered. However, instead of providing the help which these miserable people need, the Europeans come to loot them, making therefore their lives even more difficult.¹¹⁶ For example, due to the displacement imposed on the Saharawis, Le Clézio informs us that they no longer have the food to eat or the water to drink. (p. 9) As a consequence, they eat whatever they find: stumpy grasses, thistles, euphorbia leaves which they even share with their herd. (p. 10)

Therefore, unlike the imperialists whose texts often cover up for the exploitative side of colonialism, Le Clézio opts to expose the economic exploitation which the natives suffer from at the hands of the invaders. More than that, he does not hesitate to denounce

¹¹⁵ This should not come as a surprise, because the novelist often uses his writings to denounce the colonization, exploitation and usury that the European powers inflict upon the Oriental world. In *Le Livre des fuites* for example, Le Clézio (1969) does not hesitate to characterize the Europeans as robbers and thieves: "Est-ce ma faute, dit-il, si je suis de la race des voleurs ? Le blanc a toujours tout volé à tout le monde." (As cited in Kadioğlu, 2007, p. 125) [Is it my fault, he said, if I belong to the race of thieves? The White has always stolen everything from everyone.]

¹¹⁶ This goes against the common image which the Europeans often give of colonialism as a philanthropic project. The Europeans often describe their invasion of the Orient as motivated by a noble mission to spread civilization and progress throughout the pretended uncivilized world. Montherlant rejects this claim.

the crimes and massacres which the invaders commit against the people of the desert.¹¹⁷

The white Europeans, who often claim to have “a noble” mission in the countries they colonize, appear in Le Clézio’s novel to be savages and barbarians. They have no humanitarian outlook towards the Saharawis. Since their arrival in the Moroccan desert, they unleash their savagery and brutality against its peaceful people. They not only terrorize and expel them from their lands, but also burn their villages.¹¹⁸ (pp. 230-231) In the process of expelling the Saharawis and seizing their lands, the Europeans commit terrible atrocities and massacres against them, which Le Clézio does not hesitate to reveal. Throughout his novel we are faced with a series of horrible scenes which reveal the cruelty and the bloody nature of the invaders. Consider the following passage:

Les rafales des mitrailleuses balayaient le lit du fleuve, et les corps des hommes et des chevaux ne cessaient de tomber, comme si une grande lame invisible les fauchait. Sur les galets, des ruisseaux de sang coulaient, se mêlant aux minces filets d'eau. Puis le silence est revenu, tandis que les derniers cavaliers s'échappaient vers les collines, éclaboussés de sang, sur leurs chevaux au poil hérissé par la peur. (p. 436)

[The machine guns opened fire over the riverbed, and the bodies of men and horses kept falling, as if a large invisible blade mowed them. Streams of blood flowed over the pebbles, mingling with thin trickles of water. Then silence fell

¹¹⁷ Normally the brutalities and massacres which accompany the establishment of colonial rule go unnoticed in colonial discourse. Le Clézio’s choice to expose them in his novel can be read as another sign of his willingness to break away from that kind of discourse.

¹¹⁸ In this regard, O'Brien (2000) notes that the relationship of the desert people with the land is viewed in *Désert* as much superior to that of the European invaders. For him, while the invaders destroy the space they colonize, the Saharawis are seen as an unobtrusive presence on the earth’s surface. (p. 113)

again, while the last horsemen escaped to the hills, drenched in blood, on their horses whose hair was bristling with fear.]

Le Clézio's fixed focus on these horrible crimes denounces the colonizers and removes the human mask they often wear under the false guise of the white man's burden and the civilizing mission. Le Clézio's insistence to characterize the Europeans in images that suggest cruelty, savagery and inhumanity makes the naked truth about their real mission clear and obvious, which is to dispossess the natives of their lands and plunder their natural resources.

Therefore, as Woodhull (1993) argues, Le Clézio's denunciation of colonialism is unequivocal. (p. 172) Nothing in *Désert* implies a kind of ambivalence towards the European colonization of Morocco. The same argument runs throughout the novel, which is to protest against the excesses that the invaders inflict upon the natives who live peacefully in their lands. Indeed, the pitiless inhumanity which the novel attributes to the Europeans sometimes goes beyond imagination. During Mangin's assault alone for example, Le Clézio (1980) asserts that "quelques minutes suffisent pour tuer mille hommes, mille chevaux." (p. 436) [few minutes suffice to kill a thousand men, a thousand horses.] Even the Sahrawis' livestock can not escape the Europeans' savagery and pervasive killing.¹¹⁹ Therefore, as if watching a horror film, the reader of Le Clézio's *Désert* finds himself/herself in front of thousands of dead bodies strewn everywhere. Again, it is worthy to note that Le Clézio insists in his portrayal to put a particular focus

¹¹⁹ For further details on this point, see Le Clézio's description of the devastating consequences of the sanguineous attack launched by colonel Mangin and his army against Molay Sbaa and his warriors in the city of Agadir on page 437.

on the dead or injured women and children.¹²⁰ This can be interpreted as a clear sign of Le Clézio's strong disapproval of colonialism. For him, the colonization of the indigenous peoples by the brutal forces of the European conquerors is the greatest mistake made in the history of mankind. (Duton, 1999, p. 359)

On the other hand, although the colonizers manage to defeat the native warriors, Le Clézio (1980) insists to depict their victory in a way as to appear absurd and ridiculous. Accordingly, when the invaders launch their destructive war against Morocco, Le Clézio stresses that the warriors of the desert are in a state of complete distress. Most of them are feverish, sick with scurvy and badly wounded. More than that, Le Clézio goes on, their weapons are out of use. (p. 360) Similarly, in the course of his talk about the crushing defeat of the blue men at the hands of Moinier in June 1910, the novelist describes the native warriors in a manner that the general's triumph becomes less heroic and epic than tragic and abhorrent: "Ce ne sont pas les guerriers invincibles qu'on attendait. Ce sont des hommes en haillons, hirsutes, sans armes, qui courent en boitant, qui tombent sur le sol caillouteux. Des mendiants, plutôt, maigres, brûlés par le soleil, rongés par la fièvre, qui se heurtent les uns aux autres et poussent des cris de détresse." (p. 384) [They are not the invincible warriors we expected. They are men in rags, shaggy, unarmed, who run limping, who fall on the stony ground. Beggars, rather thin, sunburned, consumed by fever, who come up against each other and cry out in distress.]

Le Clézio's belittlement of the invaders' victory over the natives is also obvious from his insistence on the visible inequality in the military equipment of the two rival

¹²⁰ It is to be noted that Le Clézio's portrayal here belies the Europeans' self-appointed trait as protectors of human rights, especially of the rights of women and children. Contrary to what they claim, Le Clézio describes them in his novel as the ones who violate the most basic right of women and children: the right to live in peace and security in their own country.

sides. Whereas the invaders are equipped with modern and sophisticated weapons, the natives are shown to possess only one simple and primitive tool: “Un seul d’entre eux portait un fusil, une carabine à pierre au long canon de bronze noirci. Il la portait sur sa poitrine, serrée entre ses deux bras, le canon dirigé vers le haut comme la hampe d’un drapeau [...] Nour, le fils de l’homme au fusil.” (p. 9) [Only one of them was carrying a gun, a stone rifle with a long barrel of blackened bronze. He carried it on his chest, gripped between his two arms, the barrel pointed upward like a flag pole [...] Nour, the son of the man who has the rifle.] However, despite their helplessness and primitive equipment, the natives are shown to fight with dignity and courage. For example, when their leader Moulay Sbaa orders them to back down because he knows that the battle with the Colonel Mangin would be lost in advance, they refuse to withdraw from the battlefield. They prefer to fight and die rather than back down in a humiliating way.

According to Le Clézio’s portrait, the natives’ faith in the fairness and justice of their case is what sustains them and gives them courage and strength. If the European war against the blue men is driven mainly by economic interests and a desire to make profit even at the cost of poor and helpless people, the driving force behind the natives’ fight against the invaders is neither money nor anything material, but their dignity and love for liberty and freedom: “Ses guerriers ne combattaient pas pour de l’or, mais seulement pour une bénédiction, et que la terre qu’ils défendaient ne leur appartenait pas, ni à personne, parce qu’elle était seulement l’espace libre de leur regard, un don de Dieu.” (pp. 381-382) [His warriors were not fighting for gold, but only for a blessing, and because the land they were defending was not theirs, nor anyone’s, because it was only the free space of their look, a donation from God.] As is clear from the passage, unlike the Europeans, who

invade the desert to dispossess its inhabitants of their lands, the Saharawi people seem to have no concept of property. For them, the land, the food, everything must be shared. Relatedly, O'Brien (2000) notes that Le Clézio introduces into his novel *Désert* two contrastive concepts of space: the enclosing space which relates to the European notion of ownership and the limitless space which pertains to the natives' philosophy. For O'Brien, Since the Europeans began the process of colonization, these two philosophies have come into conflict, causing the deaths and sufferings to the natives for whom the concepts of property and ownership did not exist. (p. 113) These sufferings are what Le Clézio's novel seeks to uncover and expose in an attempt to open the reader's eyes to the unpleasant reality of colonialism.

After all, although the Saharawis are defeated, Le Clézio ensures that they are not totally annihilated. This is achieved mainly through the intervention of the mythic in the death of their spiritual leader sheikh Ma al-Aynayn. In other words, when the sheikh is dead and buried, his corpse, as Le Clézio (1980) makes the point, is lost in the sand of the desert and carried away by the wind. (p. 404) According to O'Brien (2000), "the incorporation of the sheikh's body into the desert sands and its dispersal by the wind symbolise the integration of the nomadic people with the desert space."¹²¹ He adds, "this relationship of human and space [itself] constitutes a form of resistance." (p. 114) In other words, although the desert warriors are finally killed by the invading troops, they leave behind them a spiritual power which empowers their descendant Lalla and enables

¹²¹ Indeed, this fusion of the people and the desert sand is referred to since the beginning of the narrative: "Ils étaient nés du désert." [They were born of the desert.] (p. 8) "Ils étaient les hommes et les femmes du sable." (p. 9) [They were men and women of the sand.]

her some six decades later to stand up against imperialist culture and re-establish the lost national identity.¹²² (Preetha, 2013, p. 102)

5.3.2 Le Clézio's Vilifying Views of the West in Lalla's Story

Said (1979) argues in *Orientalism* that the essence of Western scholarship is “the ineradicable distinction between Western superiority and Oriental inferiority.” (p .42) Such a view is difficult to apply to Le Clézio's *Désert* as the novel paints a contemptuous picture of Marseille, thus, inferiorizes the Occident not the Orient. Relatedly, by keeping the French city in an inferior position, the novel constitutes a radical shift away from the mainstream imperialist thought. In other words, contrary to the dictate of the French imperial tradition -that the West must always be seen in a positive light as superior to the East- Le Cézio's portrayal places Marseille in a negative light as a monstrous city.¹²³ Marseille as appears in Le Clézio's *Désert* bitterly denounces the appalling and horrifying face of Western civilization. (Kadioğlu, 2007, p .133) This vilifying portrayal of Marseille is made through the use of a literary tool which consists of viewing the French city through the eyes of a Moroccan young girl called Lalla.¹²⁴

¹²² The possibility of resistance and reassertion which the author of *Désert* allows the people of the desert can be said to confirm the complexity of power relations at work in the cultural discourse haunting contemporary France. (Barclay, 2011, p. 4)

¹²³ In this respect, it is important to note that while much of Le Clézio's work undermines the cultural divide between the Orient and the Occident, his writing, as Barclay (2011) remarks, “does not exhibit the conventional sense of the imperialist confidence in European mastery.” (p. 2)

¹²⁴ This way of viewing one's home country through the eyes of a foreigner was very common among French writers and philosophers, mainly in the eighteenth century. The technique was used at the time to get round state censorship. Montesquieu, for example, in *Lettres Persanes* provided a satirical portrait of France through the eyes of two Persian travelers, Usbec and Rica. In this way, he was able to criticize even the reign of the king Louis XIV. However, unlike the eighteenth century philosophers, Le Clézio does not use the technique to avoid state censorship. On the contrary, it can be suggested that the novelist makes use of this technique to get round the dominant discourse which Edward Said calls Orientalism. The latter, as Said affirms, always represents the West as superior to all other non-Western countries. Le Clézio subverts this dominant view through the use of Lalla's experience of the French city.

Lalla is the protagonist of the second story of Le Clézio's novel. She is forced to leave her homeland to escape an unwanted marriage. In other words, when her aunt Aamma decides to marry her off to an old but rich man without her consent, Lalla decides to flee across the border.¹²⁵ She heads for France in search of a better life. However, as soon as she arrives at the city of Marseille, she feels completely disappointed. Le Clézio (1980) voices this disappointment in the following words: "Lalla a beau regarder, elle ne voit pas la ville blanche dont parlait Naman le pêcheur, ni les palais, ni les tours des églises. Maintenant, il n'y a que des quais, sans fin, couleur de pierre et de ciment, des quais qui s'ouvrent sur d'autres quais." (pp. 260-261) [Although Lalla watches carefully, she does not see the white city of which the fisherman Naman spoke, nor the palaces, nor the church towers. Now there are only endless wharves, color of stone and cement, wharves which open onto other wharves.] The French city that she dreamed of when she was in Morocco has nothing in common with the real Marseille she comes to find out. As O'Brien (2000) makes the point, the real Marseille proves to be the exact opposite of the heavenly city described by the Jewish fisherman.¹²⁶ (p. 115)

Seen through the eyes of the Moroccan girl, the French city is associated with many degenerate traits.¹²⁷ For example, since her arrival, Lalla finds the French city dirty

¹²⁵ In her refusal of the rich man and decision to marry the poor Hartani because she loves him, Lalla rebels against the traditions of her tribe. As Rowley (2008) remarks, Lalla's marriage with the Hartani goes against the nomad tradition in two ways: First, she does not obey the wishes of her adoptive mother. Besides, she marries a man whose origin is different from her own. The Hartani means a man from the south with a very black skin. (p. 50)

¹²⁶ Naman, who had gone to various European ports, used to talk to Lalla about Marseille as a bright and beautiful city and as a place where one's future is by all means guaranteed. Unluckily, the protagonist finds none of these things when she visits the French city in person.

¹²⁷ These degenerate traits are commonly used by imperialist writers to describe the Orient in order to justify its invasion and conquest. That Le Clézio uses them in his novel to describe the West (the city of

and unclean. The filth of Marseille, we are told, manifests itself to Lalla from her first contact with the city. (Chebbah, 2015, p. 190) The scenes of rubbish, as Le Clézio (1980) affirms, become even more appalling when Lalla starts to wander through its filthy streets:

Tandis qu'elle avance le long des rainures étroites des rues, rue du Refuge, rue des Moulins, rue des Belles-Ecuelles, rue de Montbrion, Lalla voit tous les détritrus comme rejetés par la mer, boîtes de conserves rouillées, vieux papiers, morceaux d'os, oranges flétries, légumes, chiffons, bouteilles cassées, anneaux de caoutchouc, capsules, oiseaux morts aux ailes arrachées, cafards écrasés, poussières, poudres, pourritures, ce sont les marques de la solitude, de l'abandon, comme si les hommes avaient déjà fui cette ville, ce monde, qu'ils les avaient laissés en proie à la maladie, à la mort, à l'oubli. (pp. 306-307)

[While she advances along the narrow grooves of the streets, Rue du Refuge, Rue des Moulins, Rue de Belles-Ecuelles, Rue de Montbrion, Lalla sees all the trash as if thrown away by the sea, rusty tin cans, waste papers, parts of bone, wilted oranges, vegetables, rags, broken bottles, rubber rings, caps, dead birds with torn wings, crushed cockroaches, dust, powders, rots. They are the marks of loneliness, of abandonment, as if people had already fled the city, this world, left them prey to sickness, death, oblivion.]

Marseille) is, therefore, supposed to mean that his novel has nothing in common with the discourse of power Said calls Orientalism.

Obviously enough, the passage shows the extent to which Marseille is dirty and unclean. As if nobody lives in the city, rubbish is piled up everywhere.¹²⁸

In addition to being filthy as described above, Marseille is also viewed as an alienating city. It is a real prison that deprives people of liberty and freedom. Le Clézio illustrates the point through the example of Lalla. The Moroccan girl, who was totally free in the desert, is no longer allowed to behave the way she likes in Marseille. Due to the shackles the French city imposes on her, she can not even sit peacefully and watch the passing cars. And when she does so, Le Clézio (1980) affirms, the police would come to ask her what she is doing there. (p. 269) These constraints are what make Marseille appear unbearable to Lalla, who can not accept to be deprived of her liberty. The Moroccan girl, as Rowley (2008) argues, wants a life of a radical freedom, a life that departs from any form of constraint. (p. 49) Therefore, it comes as no surprise that whenever her liberty is at stake, she rebels. For example, when she feels that the marriage arranged by her aunt Amma would threaten her liberty, she categorically refuses. More than that, when her aunt insists, she comes to Marseille in search of a place where she would undergo no constraint.¹²⁹ Unluckily, this liberty, Le Clézio suggests, can not be found in “the so-called civilized” France.

As far as human relations in Marseille are concerned, Le Clézio affirms that the absence of communication between people is the essential character of the city.

¹²⁸ It should be clear that such a view does not reveal the sense of Western superiority which Said detects in his study of Western travel writing on the Orient. In other words, Le Clézio's portrayal of Marseille as a dirty city does not conform to what Said (1979) calls “the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and culture.” (p. 7)

¹²⁹ The same thing can be said about her work with Zora. When Lalla begins to feel that her freedom is at stake due to Zora's abusive treatment of the little girls who work with her, she quits her job immediately although she is in dire need of money. As Le Clézio points out, when leaving Zora's factory, Lalla says that liberty is beautiful. (p. 189)

(Kadioğlu, 2007, p. 133) People in Marseille are too busy to care about each other. During Lalla's walk in the streets for example, she notes that people may bump each other with indifference as if the other had no existence at all. When she goes she goes to the railway station, she remarks the same thing. Although the place is full of people, they are all in such a hurry that they do not pay attention to each other. (p. 272) Lalla attempts to break through the indifference she sees in the people towards each other by engaging in a conversation with a local woman, but she does not succeed. The woman, as Le Clézio (1980) maintains, veils her face with a pan of her dress to signify the refusal of any exchange.¹³⁰ (p. 304) Therefore, far from being viewed as a warm and welcoming city, Marseille rhymes with fear, coldness and incommunicability. (Chebbah, 2015, p.192) Unaccustomed as she is to such atmosphere, Lalla feels very lonely even in the crowd of the city: "La solitude est grande ici, comme un navire en pleine mer." (Clézio, 1980, p. 306) [Loneliness is great here, like a vessel at sea.] The subject that seems to absorb Lalla's greatest attention in Marseille is the exploitation of immigrants and the terrible conditions in which they live and work. These immigrants leave their home country to escape poverty and misery, but find themselves obliged to live in worse conditions. Therefore, although France claims to be the cradle of human rights, Le Clézio belies such a claim through Lalla's experience in Marseille. In other words, the immigrants whom Lalla meets in the city are disadvantaged compared with the French population and often live on the margins of society. (Koumba, 2017, p. 245) Consider

¹³⁰ The reaction of the local woman towards Lalla also reflects the suspicion and distrust which the people of Marseille retain for each other. In an atmosphere such as this, there can not be any sort of collaboration and solidarity between people.

this passage, for instance, in which Le Clézio (1980) uncovers the harsh conditions that await these immigrants in France:

Elle [Lalla] regarde ceux qui s'en vont vers d'autres villes, vers la faim, le froid, le malheur, ceux qui vont êtres humiliés, qui vont vivre dans la solitude. Ils passent, un peu courbés, les yeux vides, les vêtements déjà usés par les nuits à coucher par terre, pareils à des soldats vaincus. Ils vont vers les villes noires, vers les ciels bas, vers les fumées, vers le froid, la maladie qui déchire la poitrine. Ils vont vers leurs cités dans les terrains de boue, en contrebas des autoroutes, vers les chambres creusées dans la terre, pareils à des tombeaux, entourées de hauts murs et de grillages. (p. 273)

[She [Lalla] looks at those who go towards other cities, towards hunger, cold, misery, those who will be humiliated, who will live in solitude. They pass, little bent, eyes empty, their clothes already worn from the nights of sleeping on the ground, like defeated soldiers. They go towards the black towns, towards the low skies, towards the fumes, towards the cold, the disease which tears the chest. They go to their shantytowns in muddy terrains, down below the highways, towards the rooms dug into the earth, like tombs, surrounded by high walls and fences.]

To say the least, France, as the passage makes it clear, robs these immigrants of their dignity and humanity and forces them to live in sub-human conditions. In addition to the difficult material conditions in which these immigrants live and work, they are most of the time subject to feelings of solitude and loneliness because they are away from their families and friends. However, and despite their enormous contribution to the construction and development of France, these immigrants are exposed to a great deal of

racism and xenophobia. To make the point, Le Clézio asserts that none wants them in Marseille. (p. 290)

Another picture of Marseille which Le Clézio paints concerns the absence of security and safety which the inhabitants of the city enormously suffer from. Marseille is described as a dangerous place, or to put it in Kadioğlu's own words (2007), it is a place of aggression, terror, fear and mistrust. (p. 131) Criminals, we are informed, circulate in each of its streets. Therefore, violence and crimes constitute an integral part of Marseille. During Lalla's stay in the city, she is often awakened by the sound of fighting at night. (Le Clézio, 1980, p. 284) She is even terrorized by the violent scenes taking place before her eyes. She repeatedly stresses the fear and anxiety she feels due to the lack of security, mainly at night. Men, as the Moroccan girl believes, have terrifying faces at night. (p. 274) In fact, like all the inhabitants of Marseille, Lalla is herself vulnerable to abuse and harassment. We are told, for example, that a man follows her during her walk in the street; he seeks to come near her to take her by the arm, but Lalla hides behind a car and disappears from sight. (p. 274) On another occasion, she is attacked by a homeless woman who begs in the street. According to Le Clézio's portrait, a homeless woman comes after Lalla and grabs her by the coat in an attempt to pull the girl over to her, but Lalla snatches her coat out of the woman's hands and runs away. When the aggressive woman does not manage to catch the fugitive girl, she starts to insult her relentlessly. (p. 310) In brief, the story of Lalla is replete with images that reflect this absence of safety and security in the French city.¹³¹

¹³¹ It is to be noted here that Le Clézio's portrayal of Lalla's stay in Marseille as a dangerous experience does not seem to conform to the rhetoric of colonial discourse. The novelist subverts what the author of *Orientalism* calls the image of "the Orient as insinuating danger." (Said, 1979, p. 57) In other words, in Le

Another vilifying view which Le Clézio (1980) articulates about Marseille pertains to the poverty of its inhabitants. According to the novelist's portrait, poverty seems to affect all types of people: Men and women, young and old, all are shown to live in abject poverty. Consider this passage, for instance:

Dans les quartiers où il y a du monde, il y a beaucoup de gens pauvres, et ce sont eux que Lalla regarde. Elle voit des femmes en haillons, très pâles malgré le soleil, qui tiennent par la main de tout petits enfants. Elle voit des hommes vieux, vêtus de longs manteaux rapiécés, des ivrognes aux yeux troubles, des clochards, des étrangers qui ont faim, qui portent des valises de carton et des sacs de provisions vides. Elle voit des enfants seuls, le visage Sali, les cheveux hérissés, vêtus de vieux vêtements trop grands pour leurs corps maigres. (pp. 269-270)

[In the overpopulated neighborhoods, there are many poor people, and these are the ones whom Lalla watches. She sees women in rags, very pale despite the sun, who hold very small children by the hand. She sees old men, dressed in long patched coats, drunks with blurry eyes, tramps, foreigners who are hungry, who carry cardboard suitcases and empty shopping bags. She sees children alone, faces dirty, hair spiky, dressed in old clothes too big for their small bodies.]

The people who live in the same hotel as Lalla are themselves described as extremely poor and miserable: "Les gens de l'hôtel Sainte-Blanche. Ils sont tous pauvres, venus de pays où on ne mange pas, ou il n'y a presque rien pour vivre."¹³² (pp. 317-318) [The

Clézio's novel *Désert*, it is the city of Marseille (the Occident not the Orient) that is viewed as a dangerous and hostile space where the Oriental (Lalla) is constantly in danger.

¹³² It is true that the people who are described here as poor are just immigrants who come from non-Western countries, but the fact that they are abandoned to their uncertain fate in a Western city, a place where all human beings are supposed to be equal in rights and dignity, calls upon the reader to question the West's pretended mission to civilize the natives and promote their progress: How can the French, for

people of the Hotel Sainte-Blanche. All of them are very poor, they are from countries where there is nothing to eat, where there is almost nothing to live on.]

Since the poor make up a large proportion of Marseille's inhabitants, the city suffers from many serious social ills associated with poverty. At the top of these social problems is the issue of mendicity. Begging, as Le Clézio (1980) makes the point, is the only means of income for many people. No wonder beggars are everywhere in Marseille. For example, when Lalla goes to the railway station, she sees many beggars sleeping in front of the doors, bundled up in their tatters or surrounded by pieces of paperboard. (pp. 315-317) Indeed, these beggars sometimes become annoying: "Il y a aussi les vieux et les vieilles, les misérables, les affamés, qui s'agrippent aux vestes et aux jupes des bourgeois et ne les lâchent plus en marmonnant des incantations, jusqu'à ce qu'on leur ait donné une petite pièce." (p. 279) [There are also the old men and women, the poor, the hungry, who cling to the jackets and skirts of the rich people and won't let go, muttering incantations, until they give them a small coin.]

Le Clézio's satirical portrait of Marseille does not stop here. On the contrary, he continues to throw light on other social ills that threaten the French city. One of these is prostitution, a widespread phenomenon in Marseille. Indeed, Lalla's walk in the streets of Marseille allows her to see many prostitutes, but the one who captures her attention the most wears very sexy clothes, or as we are told, "elle est habillée d'une jupe noire très courte qui montre ses cuisses grasses et blanches, et d'une sorte de pull-over violet décolleté." (p. 313) [she is dressed in a very short black skirt which shows her fat and

example, claim that they come to Morocco only to help its people achieve progress and prosperity if those who live with them in their own country themselves do not receive the assistance they need?

white thighs, and a kind of low-necked purple pull-over.] Lalla arrives near a den of prostitutes and begins to imagine what happens inside: “Les vieilles femmes sont couchées sous le poids des hommes qui les écrasent, qui salissent leurs chairs jaunes.” [Old women are lying down under the weight of the men who crush them and dirty their yellow flesh.] She becomes very angry, or as Le Clézio writes: “Elle veut crier, même pleurer, mais c’est impossible. Le vide et la peur ont fermé étroitement sa gorge, et c’est à peine si elle peut respirer. Alors elle s’échappe.”¹³³ (p. 315) [She wants to scream, even cry, but it's impossible. The emptiness and fear closed her throat tightly, and she can hardly breathe. So she runs away.]

It becomes clear that through the experience of Lalla, Le Clézio (1980) gives a portrait of a very bad city. Nothing in Marseille can leave a good impression on her: “Partout il y a la faim, la peur, la pauvreté froide, comme de vieux habits usés et humides, comme de vieux visages flétris et déçus.” (p. 303) [There is hunger everywhere, fear, cold poverty, like old worn and wet clothes, like old, wilted and fallen faces.] Hence, it comes as no surprise that Lalla soon becomes tired of life in the French society, thus, decides to go back to her place of origin in Southern Morocco in order to give birth to her child far from the brutality and ugliness of Marseille. It must be noted here that, unlike Nour’s story which ends in death and destruction of the desert people, Lalla’s story “ends optimistically with the birth of a ‘culturally pure’ native, a girl child,

¹³³ The prevalence of prostitution in Marseille is supposed to show the French city as a place where sexual pleasures are easily obtainable. This association between the Occident (Marseille) and sex which Le Clézio uncovers in his novel is not common in texts of Orientalism. Normally, it is the Orient which is often viewed as a place where one could search for sexual experience inaccessible in Europe. As Said makes the point clearly in his analysis, “no European writer who wrote on or traveled to the Orient in the period after 1800 exempted himself or herself from this quest: Flaubert, Nerval, “Dirty Dick” Burton, and Lane are only the most notable. In the twentieth century one thinks of Gide, Conrad, Maugham, and dozens of others. What they looked for often—correctly, I think—was a different type of sexuality, perhaps more libertine and less guilt-ridden.” (p. 190)

who holds the promise of ushering in new generations and a New World, a world free from colonialism's pervasive influence." (Preetha, 2013, p. 108)

5.3.3 Le Clézio's Sympathetic Views of the Natives

In stark contrast to the vilifying images which Le Clézio provides for the Europeans, the novelist shows the people of the desert in a very positive light. Such negative traits as materialism, greed, cruelty and inhumanity, which are shown in Le Clézio's *Désert* to characterize the Europeans, are on no occasion associated with the natives. In other words, unlike the materialistic culture of the Europeans which is devoid of any moral status, the Saharawi culture is shown to prioritize humanity over materialism. According to Le Clézio's portrait, what distinguishes the European culture from that of the Saharawis is the first's tendency towards self-interest, greed and exploitation. For the sake of their personal interests, the Europeans are ready to expel the people of the desert from their lands, steal their wealth, kill their women and children and commit all types of crimes against them.¹³⁴

The materialism upon which the colonial system is based is on no occasion found in the Novel to characterize the Saharawis and their culture. According to Le Clézio's portrait, the people of the desert are not interested in money, gold or anything else perishable. Unlike the Europeans who conquer the desert in search of wealth and natural resources, the Saharawis are not interested in these material things. Therefore, although they resist the European invaders, Le Clézio (1980) affirms that they do not fight for

¹³⁴ Such a view departs from the imperialist vision of the Europeans as bearers of civilization and progress to the pretended primitive and backward Orient. The white man's burden and the civilizing mission are turned into empty slogans in Le Clézio's novel.

money or gold, but for pride and dignity.¹³⁵ (p. 380) What proves the immaterial nature of the Saharawi society even more in Le Clézio's text is the fact that even the concept of individual ownership does not exist in the Moroccan desert. As Le Clézio points out, the land they fight for is neither theirs nor anyone's, but a donation from God. (pp. 380-381) This valorization of the desert people is a clear sign that Le Clézio is not faithful to the static view of Orientals which Said believes Orientalism promotes.

This nonconformism with the Orientalist discourse is also manifest in Le Clézio's view of Islam. The latter has traditionally been associated with violence, terrorism and bloodshed.¹³⁶ Le Clézio belies such stereotypical claim through the portrayal of sheikh Ma el Ainine. The natives' spiritual leader is described as a religious man who abides by the prescriptions of Islam, but also as a man of peace. Throughout the novel, he is made to behave in such a way as to contradict the imperialist vision of Muslims as blood shedders and murderers.¹³⁷ More than that, he often dissuades his people and sons from resorting to violence. For instance, when his son Larhdaf expresses his desire to fight the invaders during a meeting of the heads of the tribe, the spiritual leader does not allow

¹³⁵ It is worthy of note that the non-attachment to material assets which Le Clézio associates with the desert people is also used to characterize their descendant Lalla. For example, when the latter becomes famous in Marseille, she does not accept to be photographed with a financial counterpart. (Koumba, 2017, p. 184)

¹³⁶ Said (1979) makes the same point in *Orientalism*, asserting that the Islamic faith has become the symbol of terror and devastation. (p. 59)

¹³⁷ It is important to note that before he proceeds to form his view of Ma el Ainine as a man of peace, Le Clézio (1980) allows his readers to see him through the eyes of the general Monier as a murderous and fanatic person. (p. 374) Le Clézio exposes this imperialist view of the leader only to uncover its falsity through real facts and events. Throughout the novel, Ma el Ainine is never seen to be engaged in any act of violence. Therefore, Monier's imperialist view of the sheikh must be refutable because, as the old saying goes, "actions speak louder than words." On the other hand, the fact that we have two contradictory views of the same person in the novel leads us to question the credibility of history. As Preetha (2013) points out, "Ma-al-Ainine is revered by his people but demonized as a fanatic and witch doctor by the French thereby questioning history as a grand narrative which is ideologically constructed to claim authority over the colonized other." (p. 102)

such violence to take place. (Le Clézio, 1980, p. 246) Similarly, when Larhdaf and Saadbou want to launch their attack on the city of Taroudant, the sheikh does not allow them to carry out their violent acts. (p. 360) Therefore, it can be argued that through Le Clézio's portrayal of Ma el Ainine both as a practical Muslim and as a man of peace, the novelist makes a further step towards the subversion of the traditional Orientalist portrayal of Islam as being a religion that promotes violence and bloodshed.

However, Lalla is the character that Le Clézio tends to valorize the most. The descendant of the desert people can be said to incarnate the identity of the Saharawi tribe at large. As such, Le Clézio's valorization of Lalla is a valorization of the desert people as a whole. That's why the protagonist is associated with many positive traits: Pride, dignity, gratefulness, agency, humanity and the like are some of the main characteristics that Le Clézio uses in his portrayal of Lalla. In fact, Lalla is made to behave wisely from an early age. For example, when she goes with other children to play next to the sea, she protects the crabs which other children attempt to catch and kill. (Le Clézio, 1980, p. 82) Similarly, unlike other children her age, Lalla treats the defenseless insects such as the wasps with unparalleled humanity. Rather than killing them, Lalla allows them to fly freely around her hair. She loves the wasps because of their bright yellow and black colours. (p. 101)

The representative of the Saharawi people is provided with many admirable qualities that make her the most lovable character. The first quality associated with Lalla is gratitude. That is, she is shown to be a grateful person who always appreciates what others have done for her. For example, when the fisherman Naman becomes ill and helpless, she does not forget the good time she spent with him, listening to the beautiful

tales he used to tell her. On the contrary, as soon as she hears the news that he is ill, she feels great emotional pain and immediately decides to help him. She goes running towards his house to provide the help and assistance needed. She finds him suffering all by himself, thus, tries to soothe his anxiety and provide him with the warmth he needs. (Le Clézio, 1980, p. 196) If she were selfish and thankless, she would not care about him. But grateful as she is, she finds in his illness a good opportunity to express her immense indebtedness and gratitude to him.

Lalla's relationship with Naman is not based on opportunism and self-interest, but on a sense of a fatherly love. This absence of self-interest in Lalla's relationship with Naman is obvious even from the nature of her talk with him. The best example which Le Clézio uses to illustrate this point is Naman's conversation with Lalla and Aamma's children about the European cities which the fisherman has already visited. While Lalla asks very innocent questions because she wants to know only the names of these cities for the sake of knowledge itself, Aamma's children ask questions that are driven by narrow self-interest. Consider the following passage, where Le Clézio (1980) reveals Lalla's innocence in contrast to the opportunism of Aamma's children:

Lalla aime bien entendre les noms des villes, et elle demande souvent à Naman de les lui dire, comme cela, rien que les noms: « Algésiras » « Granada » « Sevilla » « Madrid ». Les garçons d'Aamma veulent en savoir davantage. Ils attendent que le vieux Naman ait fini de manger, et ils posent toutes sortes de questions, sur la vie là-bas, de l'autre côté de la mer. Eux, ce sont des choses sérieuses qu'ils veulent savoir, pas des noms pour rêver. Ils demandent à Naman l'argent qu'on

peut gagner, le travail, combien coûtent les habits, la nourriture, combien coûte une auto, s'il y a beaucoup de cinémas. (p. 102)

[Lalla likes to hear the names of cities, and she often asks Naman to tell them to her, just like that, only the names: «Algeciras» «Granada» «Sevilla» «Madrid». Aamma's boys want to know more. They wait until the Old Naman finishes eating, and they ask all kinds of questions, about life over there, on the other side of the sea. The things they want to know are serious, not just names to dream about. They ask Naman about the money that one can earn, the work that one can have, how much clothes cost, food, how much a car costs, if there are many movie theaters.]

As is obvious from the quote, Lalla's questions are always innocent and disinterested while those of Aamma's children are serious and centered on things that can benefit them in the future, mainly because they already know that Naman has a brother who work in Marseille and thus can be useful to them one day. (p. 103) What highlights the goodness of Lalla even more in contrast to the evil nature of Aamma's children is the way in which they react when Naman leaves the house. Whereas Lalla behaves wisely and says nothing bad about Naman, Aamma's children seem to believe nothing of what he said, thus, begin to make fun of his answers. (p. 104)

Lalla exhibits all the qualities it takes to be an admirable person. For instance, when her aunt Aamma decides to marry her off to an old but rich man, she refuses categorically despite the wealth and the power the man has. In Lalla's opinion, marriage is not an economic contract that is based solely on benefits and personal interests. It is,

rather, a sacred bond between a man and a woman that must be based on love, respect and mutual understanding. Therefore, when Aamma chooses a rich and powerful husband for her, she says no because she does not love him. For Lalla, love and affection must be the foundation of her marriage. But her aunt Aamma, fascinated by the valuable presents offered by the rich man, decides otherwise. This decision to marry her off against her will pushes her to rebel:

« Tu ne peux pas m'obliger à épouser cet homme! » dit Lalla.

« Ce sera un bon mari pour toi », dit Aamma. « Il n'est plus très jeune, mais il est riche, il a une grande maison, à la ville, et il connaît beaucoup de gens puissants. Tu dois l'épouser. »

« Je ne veux pas me marier, jamais ! » (Le Clézio, 1980, p. 193)

[« You can not force me to marry that man! » says Lalla.

«He will be a good husband for you », says Aamma. «He is no longer very young, but he is rich, he has a big house in the city, and he knows many powerful people. You must marry him. »

«I don't want to get married, ever! »]

As the passage points out clearly, Lalla is not the type of person who accepts to marry only for money and material wealth. She would marry a poor man whom she loves and understands rather than a wealthy and powerful man whom she does not love. Therefore, when the proposed man comes again and again to Aamma's house, Lalla feels that his decision to marry her is definitive, thus, decides to flee with the Hartani towards the desert. More than that, she decides to marry the latter although he is poor and has no family. (p. 219) Whether the Hartani is poor or rich does not matter for her as long as she

gets along perfectly with him. What is important for Lalla is not money as much as love and respect.¹³⁸

It must be clear, Lalla's rejection of the arranged marriage is supposed to indicate her full agency and autonomy. Lalla is a powerful agent who always takes her matters into her own hands. Such portrayal does not adhere to the traditional conception of the Oriental woman as passive, mute and odalisque. (Barclay, 2006, p. 61) Lalla's active agency manifests itself on another occasion when Lalla is brought to work at Zora's carpet factory. When she notes with unpleasant disgust Zora's inhuman and cruel treatment towards the little girls who work with her, she decides to defend them. The next day, as soon as the boss starts to beat a poor little girl called Mina, Lalla intervenes angrily, asking her to immediately stop punishing the helpless little girl:

Comme la grosse femme pâle [Zora] commence à donner des coups de canne à Mina, une petite fille de dix ans à peine, toute maigre et chétive, parce qu'elle avait cassé sa navette, Lalla se lève et dit froidement : « Ne la battez pas ! »

Zora regarde un moment Lalla, sans comprendre. Son visage gras et pâle a pris une telle expression de stupidité que Lalla répète : « Ne la battez plus ! » (Le Clézio, 1980, pp. 188-189)

[As the big pale woman [Zora] starts whipping Mina, a girl of barely ten years, skinny and weak, because she has broken her shuttle, Lalla rises and says coldly: «Do not beat her! »

¹³⁸ Lalla's refusal of the marriage arranged by her aunt Aamma makes her worthy of respect and creates a lot of sympathy for her in the eyes of the reader, mainly because she is herself poor. A woman who is in dire need of money like her is supposed to accept the rich man as her spouse without hesitation, but the Moroccan Lalla is not so materialist as to marry some one whom she does not love only because he is rich and powerful.

Zora looks a moment at Lalla, without understanding. Her pale fat face, took on such an expression of stupidity that Lalla repeats: «Do not beat her any more! »]

Although Lalla is poor and miserable, thus, in dire need of her work, she takes the risk to defend Mina against the ill-treatment of her boss. This self-denial makes her not only admirable, but also worthy of sympathy and respect.

Therefore, unlike the imperial vision that shows the Oriental as a degenerate being, Le Clézio speaks of the protagonist as a woman of high morals and values; a woman who always keeps herself away from sinful deeds. In Marseille for example, despite her difficult circumstances, she never prostitutes her self for money even if prostitution is widespread there. It is true that Marseille does not provide her with real alternatives, yet she remains chaste and pure. She would rather do a hard but honorable job than making easy money out of selling her body. For example, she accepts to work as a maid in the Sainte Blanche Hotel although the job is hard and less rewarding. As Le Clézio (1980) points out, the first time Lalla comes to the Sainte Blanche Hotel, she feels frightened because of its chaotic state. The hotel is dirty, smelly and messy to say the least. However, unlike prostitution, her job in the hotel would not hurt her pride and dignity. Thus, she accepts it without hesitation. (p. 290)

On the other hand, although Lalla is seen as a sexual object many times in the novel, she always remains beyond the reach of the male sexual desire.¹³⁹ For example, when she goes to see Naman's brother Asaph in order to work in his grocery store, the man makes his sexualized thoughts obvious. Asaph, as Le Clézio (1980) informs us,

¹³⁹ In the same line of argument, Rowley (2008) remarks that no sensual contact is established between Lalla and the West. For her, the girl is almost deified. (p. 62) Therefore, it can be argued that by portraying Lalla in this way, the novelist breaks away from one of the prevalent clichés about the Oriental woman as sexually promiscuous and easily accessible.

looks so happy and pretends that he is in need of a young girl to help him manage his grocery store, but Lalla immediately knows his bad intentions, especially that he does not take his bulging gray-green eyes off her belly and breasts. Thus, she decides to go and never come back again. (p. 267) Indeed, this non-conformity to the standards of the Oriental woman as a symbol of sexuality, promiscuity and eroticism becomes even more manifest when Lalla starts her job as a model. Captivated by her beauty and charm, the French photographer keeps photographing her, but Lalla betrays neither passion nor any desire for the French man. She always maintains herself at a distance so that the French admirer would never reach her. What the photographer manages to get out of Lalla's sacred and inviolable Oriental femininity is only "sa forme, son image, rien d'autre."¹⁴⁰ (p. 349) [her shape, her image, nothing else.]

According to Le Clézio's portrait, Lalla is also a woman of pride and dignity. Although she is in dire need of money, she does not allow herself to beg. Immigrants like her in Marseille do not feel embarrassed to make money out of begging. But Lalla, as Le Clézio (1980) affirms, does not dare to ask for money because she is ashamed. (p. 178) However, although she does not allow herself to beg, Lalla takes pity on and feels sorrow for those who beg. For example, when she meets a beggar boy called Radiez, she feels so much pity for him that she gives him all what she has for lunch. In other words, although

¹⁴⁰ Photography is often used in Orientalism as a means to possess the Oriental other: "To photograph is in some way to appropriate the object being photographed. It is a power/knowledge relationship. To have visual knowledge of an object is in part to have power, even if only momentarily, over it. Photography tames the object of the gaze." (Urry, 2002, p. 127) But Lalla, who incarnates the identity of a people forever free, never lets herself be the possession of the French photographer. On the contrary, it is she who controls the situation. As Preetha (2013) remarks, "the photographer tries to capture her image in different ways but always finds something elusive about her. He feels an emptiness as Lalla walks away, tired of being photographed. There is transference of discursive power from colonizer to colonized as Lalla appears exotic and mystifying to him." (p. 107)

she has only a little piece of bread and an orange, the generous Lalla gives them to the beggar boy and leaves nothing for her. (p. 276) When she finds success as a model, her philanthropy towards beggars becomes even more obvious. In other words, as soon as she earns money, she goes out willingly in search of beggars to help them:

Elle [Lalla] parcourt les rues de la ville, à la recherche des mendiants aux coins des murs, et elle leur donne l'argent, par poignées de pièces aussi, en appuyant bien sa main dans la leur pour qu'ils ne perdent rien. Elle donne de l'argent aux gitanes voilées qui errent pieds nus dans les grandes avenues, et aux vieilles femmes en noir accroupies à l'entrée des bureaux de poste; aux clochards allongés sur les bancs, dans les squares, et aux vieux qui feuillent dans les poubelles des riches, à la nuit tombante. (p. 352)

[She [Lalla] roams the streets of the city, in search of beggars at the corners of the walls, and she gives them money, by handful of coins, pressing her hand firmly into theirs so that they would not lose anything. She gives money to the veiled gypsies who walks around barefoot in the great avenues, and to old women dressed in black squatting at the entrances to the post offices, to bums lying on benches in the squares, and to the old who rout out in the garbage cans of the rich at nightfall.]

In brief, the positive elements of Le Clézio's text on the people of the desert which have been highlighted in the above discussion can be said to represent another telling example of a Western portrayal of the Orient that runs against the monolithic project suggested by Edward Said and those who support him.

5.4 The Irrelevance of Said's *Orientalism* to Montherlant's *La Rose de Sable* and Le Clézio's *Désert*

Despite the fact that Said's *Orientalism* is a foundational text that offers a lot of theoretical help for anyone concerned with criticizing the Western construction of the Oriental world, many arguments of the book become problematic when applied to Montherlant's *La Rose de Sable* and Le Clézio's *Désert*. The purpose of this section is to explore the most important points in the Novelists's representations of Morocco and its people which obviously present a problem for any analysis that follows Said's model.

The first main argument of Said's *Orientalism* which Montherlant and Le Clézio turn upside down in *La Rose de Sable* and *Désert* is the binary opposition that allows the European self to form a sense of identity in contrast to the non-European Other. According to Said, this binary opposition constitutes a pre-established assumption which every European necessarily takes into consideration whenever (s)he talks about the Orient. It is true that this kind of binary reasoning is frequently felt in the novels under consideration, but its Orientalist meaning is no longer kept in the way in which Said talks about. In other words, although both Montherlant and Le Clézio describe the Occident and the Orient in a dichotomous way, this dichotomy is not made in favor of the Occident as Said pretends. For example, in contrast to the positive picture painted of Morocco in *La Rose de Sable*, Paris is described as a boring city. Similarly, compared to the purity and natural beauty associated with the Moroccan desert in Le Clézio's *Désert*, Marseille is vilified as a dirty and insecure city. Therefore, Said's argument that the binary opposition of Orientalism maintains the Orient as inferior to the Occident loses its strength and validity when applied to Montherlant's and Le Clézio's novels.

The same thing can be said about the binary opposition employed in the novelists' portrayal of the European invaders and the natives of Morocco. In contrast to the essence of Said's argument, the binary mode of thinking adopted in Montherlant's *La Rose de Sable* and Le Clézio's *Désert* does not confirm the superiority of the Europeans and the inferiority of the non-Europeans, but the opposite is true. Unlike the natives who are endowed with the virtues that are commonly associated with the European Self, the white imperialists are charged with many degenerate traits. Therefore, it must be admitted that the central thrust of Said's argument about the dualistic reasoning of Orientalism is hard to apply to the two novels because neither Montherlant nor Le Clézio treats the Moroccan people as inferior to the colonizing race.

The second argument of *Orientalism* which is difficult to Prove in *La Rose de Sable* and *Désert* is the idea that Orientalism tends to produce a stereotypical image of the Orient and Orientals. According to Edward Said, the West's construction of the Other involves a set of derogatory clichés and stereotypes that keep the Orientals in an inferior position to justify their conquest. Unlike what Said would have us believe, Montherlant and Le Clézio depart from the racial stereotypes that are common among the French imperialists. For example, such debasing stereotypes as cruelty, savagery, degeneracy and the like, which the white imperialists often use to portray the non-European Other, are found in *La Rose de Sable* and *Désert* to describe the European Self. On the contrary, the indigenous are associated with such admirable qualities as self-sacrifice, courage, peace, generosity and such like. These positive images can only prove the novelists' willingness to break away from the Orientalist stereotypes Said talks about in his analysis of Orientalism.

It is important to note that when Le Clézio associates the people of the desert with poverty and hunger, he does aim to vilify the natives, but to expose their sufferings under French colonialism. Therefore, even his negative portrayal of the Saharawis as needy and poor does not prove the validity of Said's argument. However, in order to be fair in our assessment of Said's *Orientalism*, the point being made should not be taken to mean that Said's argument is totally wrong. On the contrary, the vast majority of Western texts do make use of these negative stereotypes to denigrate the Orient and Orientals, but to claim that these stereotypes are impossible to avoid in texts of Orientalism is what opens the argument to criticism. According to Said (1979), the Oriental is always doomed to be vilified because he is "first an Oriental, second a human being, last again an Oriental." (p. 102) This essentialist claim, which leaves no room for exception, runs counter to Montherlant's *La Rose de Sable* and Le Clézio's *Désert*, and thus makes Said's thesis easily critiquable.

Just to be clear, Said's pretension that Orientalism is always hostile to the Orient, mainly the Arabo-Islamic World, is not always relevant. It is true that many Orientalists are aggressive and hostile towards Arabs and Muslims; most of them are indeed, yet to say that all of them are is what undermines the validity of the argument. To say, for instance, that no American scholar has ever been sympathetic to the Orient is an exaggerated point of view to put it mildly. For Said (1979), "no person academically involved with the Near East-no Orientalist, that is-has ever in the United States culturally and politically identified himself wholeheartedly with the Arabs." (p. 27) Contrary to such claim, it is very difficult to detect any type of aggression or hostility in Montherlant's and Le Clézio's construction of Morocco and its inhabitants. The

novelists' sympathy with the natives and their ordeal under colonialism is very obvious. Therefore, to adopt the premise that if "an Orientalist had to decide whether his loyalties and sympathies lay with the Orient or with the conquering West, he always chose the latter" (Said, 1979, p. 80), would be to distort the novelists' views of Morocco and Moroccans.

With respect to Said's belief in the impossibility of Western scholarship on the Orient to be objective and disinterested, it can be said that nothing in *La Rose de Sable* or in *Désert* can suggest that the novelists take a partial stand for the French and their invasion of Morocco. In the same way that Montherlant exposes the brutalities and cruelties committed by the invaders in Morocco, Le Clézio denounces the crimes and massacres of the French colonial system in the colonized country. If Montherlant and Le Clézio had in mind to be partial in favor of the French as the Saidian logic presumes, their concern would be to cover up for the crimes and massacres that the soldiers of their country commit against the natives, not to emphasize and highlight them. Indeed, since neither *La Rose de Sable* nor *Désert* speaks of French colonialism as a civilizing mission, but as an exploitative system that inflicts upon the natives all kinds of crimes and massacres, any attack on the novels in the Saidian way would be not only unjustifiable but also unfair.

Indeed, even the power-knowledge nexus, which Said borrows from Foucault to demonstrate the unavoidable marriage between Orientalism and Western imperialism becomes problematic when applied to the novels under question. According to the author of *Orientalism*, the body of knowledge which Western scholars and writers create on the Orient aims mainly to justify and perpetuate its subjection. Contrary to what Said would

have us believe, Le Clézio's *Désert*, for instance, can not legitimize or justify the French conquest of Morocco. If the purpose of Lalla's story is to vilify the West through a debasing description of Marseille, Nour's story exposes the crimes and brutalities committed by the French to reveal the true face of their Mission in Morocco. Similarly, the anticolonial standpoint of *La Rose de Sable* is clear and explicit. The novel as a whole is nothing but a furious outcry against the French abusive treatment of the natives. How is it possible, then, that the novels, whose main concern is to uncover the hypocrisy of the French and the evil nature of their pretended civilizing mission, can provide an ideological support for the French colonial system? Without further ado, Montherlant's and Le Clézio's texts develop an undoubted perspective against colonialism, and thus provide us with enough evidence to argue against Said's idea of the inevitable coalition between Western power and Orientalist knowledge.

La Rose de Sable and *Désert* also present a problem for Said's adoption of the Gramscian concept of Cultural hegemony. Drawing on the concept, Said claims that Orientalism is used to keep Oriental people under control. For him, one way of doing this is through their consent, mainly by manipulating them into viewing colonialism in a positive light. How can the horrible images which Montherlant and Le Clézio convey of the French military invasion of Morocco manipulate the natives into seeing colonialism as something positive or beneficial? Since colonialism is described as an oppressive system that inflicts upon the colonized all kinds of suffering, from exploitation to bloodshed and death, the aim of the novelists can not be to gain the natives' consent as Said's *Orientalism* supposes. On the contrary, such dark vision of colonialism can only create in the natives a sentiment of anger, and thus would agitate them against the French

and their colonial ambitions. For this reason, it would be unfair to borrow Gramsci's concept of hegemony to characterize Montherlant's and Le Clézio's novels.

However, the explicit standpoint against colonialism which Montherlant and Le Clézio adopt in *La Rose de Sable* and *Désert* must not be taken to imply that Orientalism is always innocent and has nothing to do with the West's desire to dominate and possess the Orient. On the contrary, a large number of European scholars and writers are implicated in the colonial project of their countries. Yet it must be admitted that Said's overgeneralization about all Orientalists makes his argument less convincing. For Said, all Orientalists, without exception, collude with imperialists: "Every European, in what he could say about the Orient, was consequently a racist, an imperialist, and almost totally ethnocentric." (Said, 1979, p. 204) Such essentialist view makes Said's thesis controversial to say the least. The manifest anticolonialism of *La Rose de Sable* and *Désert*, for example, makes it difficult to include Montherlant and Le Clézio in the same totalizing framework of Edward Said that Orientalism and imperialism always go hand in hand.

It needs to be emphasized here that Said's tendency to essentialize and overgeneralize in his analysis of Orientalism arises from his reliance on Foucault's concept of discourse. The French philosopher succeeds in convincing the author of *Orientalism* that Western knowledge of the Orient is always produced within the discourse of Orientalism. If the latter is what frames how the Orient is talked about and represented as Said pretends, then what Montherlant and Le Clézio have to say about Morocco must be said in total conformity with Orientalism. The novels prove the opposite, however. Neither *La Rose de Sable* nor *Désert* is the case in which French

representations of Morocco abide by the rules set by the discourse of power Said calls Orientalism. The novels being studied generate a new way of seeing the Orient (Morocco) which has nothing in common with the ways of seeing that Said claims Orientalism always promotes.

This apparent disparity between Montherlant's and Le Clézio's texts and the West's imperial discourse renders Said's idea of Orientalism as a discourse in the Foucauldian sense problematic. In other words, *La Rose de Sable* and *Désert* problematize what Said calls the consistency of Western discourse on the Orient. It is true that Said manages to study different texts as a unified entity, yet this unity is achieved only through a conscious selectivity of his material. For instance, Had Said studied texts similar to *La Rose de Sable* and *Désert*, he would have been unable to prove the unified character of Orientalism. For this reason, the idea that Orientalism is a self-referential system and that "every writer on the Orient (and this is true even of Homer) assumes some Oriental precedent, some previous knowledge of the Orient, to which he refers and on which he relies" (Said, 1979, p. 20) needs to be reconsidered.

In a nutshell, the aforementioned discussion has been an attempt to highlight some interesting points in Montherlant's *La Rose de Sable* and Le Clézio's *Désert* which contradict Said's understanding of Orientalism as a unified discourse which always directs its open hostility towards non-Western countries and people in order to serve the interests of Western power and domination over the Orient.

5.5 Conclusion

The sympathetic views which Montherlant and Le Clézio adopt in their description of Morocco and Moroccans prove their tendency to distance themselves from

the racist and imperialist views which Said detects in his study of Orientalism. Besides, unlike the imperialist writers who are often caught in the web of glorifying the West's imperialist project as a civilizing mission, Montherlant and Le Clézio are objective enough to uncover the reality of colonialism by denouncing the crimes and atrocities committed against the colonized. Therefore, since they not only break away from the civilizing mission ideology, but also attempt to correct the negative views and stereotypes that are commonly associated with the natives in imperialist texts, Montherlant and Le Clézio deserve to be freed from the charges of hostility and racism which Said makes for the European writer

CONCLUSION

This study has been an attempt to examine the ways in which Morocco and Moroccans are represented in the works of four French writers: Jean and Jérôme Tharaud, Henry de Montherlant and Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio. The main finding of the research indicates that French discourse on Morocco as a place and people instances clearly the diverse character of Orientalism. The four French writers showcased in this study prove that French travel writing is more heterogeneous than what Edward Said suggests in his *Orientalism*. In other words, the French literary construction of Morocco, as viewed in this thesis, is neither homogeneously biased nor completely neutral, but reflects a mixture of different views and attitudes. The analysis shows that the pictures which the writers under study convey of the Sherifian kingdom and its people are highly varied and diverse. While it is true that some of these pictures confirm the commonly held assumptions established by colonial discourse, other pictures, on the contrary, seem to subvert traditional prejudices and stereotypes.

On the whole, the analysis of the Tharauds' portrayal points out clearly that their trilogy on Morocco is established according to the parameters set by the Orientalist typical discourse. The authors' views and attitudes towards Morocco and Moroccans are, for example, constructed in accordance with the East-West dichotomy, one of the main patterns of Orientalism Said talks about in his project. Relatedly, it is argued that Morocco, as seen through the Tharauds' ideological perspective, is put in a binary opposition in which the country is viewed as inferior to the West. Similarly, the people themselves are described in such a way as to stick to this dualistic mode of thinking. They are made to assume features that are contradictory with those associated with the

so-called “civilized” West. Hence the brothers’ trilogy can be said to promote a way of seeing in which the non-European Other (the Moroccan people) and the European Self (the French) are viewed as two opposing entities. It must therefore be concluded that the brothers’ portrayal of Morocco and its inhabitants does not depart from the binary oppositional reasoning of Orientalism, thus, confirms Said’s argument that “a very large mass of writers [...] have accepted the basic distinction between East and West as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, “mind,” destiny, and so on.” (Said, 1979, pp. 2-3) In accordance with the argument being made, the brothers create an artificial boundary between the Occident (France) and the Orient (Morocco) to stress the difference between the two. This difference is of course made in favor of the former as it upholds its superiority in contrast to the inferiority of the North African country.

In addition to its binary oppositional reasoning, the brothers’ portrayal of Morocco and Moroccans is also subordinated to a conformity with the Orientalist stereotyping Said discloses in his study of Western scholarship. Overall, the analysis leads to the conclusion that the same stereotypes and prejudices by which the Orient is traditionally viewed are used in the Tharauds’ texts to characterize Morocco and Moroccans. For instance, besides its permanent traits of backwardness and primitiveness, the Sherifian kingdom is Orientalized as a timeless and an unchanging entity. Its people themselves are inferiorized through a set of negative images as being lazy, sensual, irrational, degenerate and such like. These are indeed the most recurring images of the Other Said detects in his criticism of Orientalism. Therefore, the ultimate conclusion to be drawn from this is that the brothers, rather than describing Morocco and Moroccans

for what they stand for, are determined to stick to the Orientalist ideological concept of the Orient and the Oriental other. It may be in this light that Said tends to view Orientalism as a discourse in the Foucauldian sense; that is, a discourse that determines how the Orient should be looked at and represented.

The Tharauds' conformism with the discourse of power that Said calls Orientalism is also embodied in their strong engagement with the French imperial establishment. Foucault's nexus of power/knowledge, which the author of *Orientalism* adopts to accuse Western scholars of being implicated in the West's imperial project, is conspicuous not only in their ideological portrayal of Morocco, but also in their despicable views of its inhabitants. As the findings of this research reveal, the natives of Morocco are constructed as "primitive" and "backward," thus, "inferior" to the French who are, in turn, depicted as a "civilized" race. Such ideologically loaded portrayal can only lead to the justification of invasion and conquest. Not only does it propound the idea that it is Morocco's destiny to be dominated by a more civilized race, but it also implies that the West (France) has a moral responsibility to assume towards the "backward" Morocco; that is, it has to invade the country to bring progress and civilization to its people. My conclusion therefore is that the Tharauds' portrayal of Morocco and its people provides a good example to illustrate Said's argument about the tight connection between Orientalism as a form of knowledge and colonialism as a form of power.

However, in the case of Montherlant's *La Rose de Sable* and Le Clézio's *Désert* studied in the fifth chapter, the outcome of the analysis indicates that the two texts constitute a complete breakaway with the principles of the French imperial tradition. For example, the contempt which Western scholars and writers often hold for the Orient and

Orientalism seems to have no place in Montherlant's and Le Clézio's novels. The novelists' sympathy with the natives and their ordeal under the yoke of French colonialism is clear and obvious. Therefore, this research argues that the ways in which the natives of Morocco are viewed in Montherlant's and Le Clézio's texts reflect the novelists' endeavor to swerve away from the Orientalist stereotyping Said talks about in his critical analysis of Orientalism. What proves the novelists' nonconformity with the dictates of colonial discourse even more is their portrayal of the Europeans. The analysis reveals that the stereotypical images which are traditionally associated with Orientals are used in the novels to characterize the French. It is they who are described in a vilifying way as inhuman, savage and cruel invaders. This contemptuous attitude surely goes against the traditional view the Europeans often give of themselves as a civilized and refined race, thus, can be used as a strong example to argue against Said's view of Orientalism as a homogeneously biased discourse.

In addition to their manifest digression from the preexisted myths and stereotypes, the novels also appear to swerve away from the binary opposition which Said clusters among the unquestionable dogmas of the Orientalist discourse. Unlike the model elaborated by Edward Said in *Orientalism*, this research shows that the dualistic reasoning of Orientalism does not form the basis of Montherlant's and Le Clézio's portrayal of Morocco and Moroccans. Furthermore, when the novelists allow themselves to use this kind of binary oppositional reasoning in their texts, they subvert its Orientalist gist. Therefore, unlike the binary opposition which is normally used in the mode of discourse Said criticizes to uphold the superiority of the Occident and the inferiority of the Orient, the one which Montherlant and Le Clézio employ in their texts makes the

opposite case. In other words, whereas the Orient (Morocco) is seen in a positive light, the Occident (Paris in Montherlant's *La Rose de Sable* and Marseille in Le Clézio's *Désert*) is provided with a negative portrayal. Much the same can be remarked about the novelists' depiction of the people. Therefore, even when the binary mode of thinking is adopted by Montherlant and Le Clézio, its Orientalist meaning is subverted, thus, runs counter to the model elaborated by Said in *Orientalism*.

The novelists' trenchant criticism of the French presence in Morocco remains the most significant indicator of their breakaway from the discourse of Orientalism in the Saidian sense. Unlike the Tharauds' trilogy, which celebrates French colonialism as a "noble" mission to "civilize" Morocco, the analysis shows that Montherlant's and Le Clézio's novels denounce it as an exploitative system that inflicts upon the natives all kinds of crimes and massacres. Normally the crimes and atrocities which accompany the establishment of colonial rule should go unnoticed in colonial discourse. This is how hegemony is established over the natives. The latter, as Said argues, are often manipulated through texts of Orientalism into viewing colonialism in a positive light. Instead of expressing their allegiance to this imperial tradition, Montherlant and Le Clézio choose not to cover up for the excesses committed by the French in the colonized Morocco. As such, it is argued that their novels can not fit within Edward Said's postcolonial theory.

In brief, Montherlant's and Le Clézio's sympathetic views of the colonized, their vilifying portrayal of the Europeans, not to mention their scathing criticism of the system of abuse the French orchestrate in Morocco, all these things go against the central thesis of Said's *Orientalism*, "that all Orientalists produced knowledge that generated power,

and that they colluded and helped imperialists found empires.” (Warraq, 2007, p.32)

However, despite the flaws and shortcomings that may be contained in Said’s *Orientalism*, it must be stated clearly that the book remains one of the most influential studies of the last century. Its influence has extended to include anthropology, historiography, Arab Studies, Middle East Studies and many other disciplines in the fields of humanities and social sciences. In addition to its enormous influence, Said’s *Orientalism* is credited by many scholars and specialists for having laid the cornerstone of postcolonial theory. For example, Homi Bhabha praises Said’s *Orientalism* as the work that “inaugurated the postcolonial field” and Gayatri Spivak describes it as “the source book in our discipline,” (as cited in Moore-Gilbert, 1997, p. 34.) Therefore, whatever criticisms may have been directed against Said’s *Orientalism* in this research, the book’s academic value is difficult to ignore completely. In the introduction to *Edward Said: A Critical Reader*, Sprinker (1992) makes the point clearly: “Specialists in these fields have often been critical of his [Said’s] interventions, but they have not on the whole been able to ignore or dismiss him out of hand.” (p. 2)

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