



POST- OTTOMAN EMPIRE EUROPEAN IMAGINATIONS OF THE IMAGE OF THE WOMEN OF MAGHREB

MAĞRİPLİ KADIN İMGESİNE AİT OSMANLI SONRASI AVRUPA TAHAYYÜLLERİ

M. Önder GÖNCÜOĞLU

Yrd. Doç. Dr., Muğla Sıtkı Koçman Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi, Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları Bölümü, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı, nafonder@yahoo.com

Abstract

This study, as a critical examination, unravels how the non-Western woman has been both reconstructed and represented from a Western male perspective. The representation of Harem and the idea of the ideal Oriental woman in Harem have been analysed repeatedly in scholarly circles. However, this study analyses primarily how the women of Maghreb, of countries such as Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco, but also Egypt, were represented by the Western male gaze after these places -- once the provinces of the Ottoman Empire -- went under the control of European powers, notably France. Different sources, such as travelogues and paintings, including postcards and drawings from the West -- from Germany, France, Austria, and Britain -- have been analysed with a particular emphasis on the women of the Ottoman Orient. Through the analysis of such sources, an outline of a Western representational practice of the non-Western women in general and the women of the Ottoman Orient in particular has been revealed around the idea of the construction of 'the other' and 'the other's identity', thereby mentally programming a justified understanding of that re-constructed identity of the other.

Öz

Bu makale, Batılı olmayan kadın imgesinin Batılı erkek bakış açısıyla yeniden inşa edilerek nasıl temsil edildiğini analiz eden bir çalışmadır. Ancak akademik çalışmalarda sıklıkla karşılaşılan 'Osmanlı'da Harem ve Kadın' temsillerinin aksine bu çalışma temel olarak 19.yüzyılda Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Kuzey Afrika'daki etkisini kaybetmesi sonrası Batı merceğinde 'Mağripli Kadın' temsilinin nasıl değiştiğini incelemektedir. Bu amaçla genelde 'Batılı-olmayan Kadın' imgesinin, özelde de 'Osmanlı Doğusuna ait Kadın' imgesinin temsili ve beraberinde yeniden inşası Alman, Fransız, İngiliz vb. gibi Batı Avrupa yazınsal kaynaklarına ve görsel literatürüne ait örnekler-seyahatnameler, posta kartları, tablolar- üzerinden incelenmiştir. Bahsi geçen bu kaynakların genel bir kabul ve meşruiyet çerçevesi oluşturma aracı olarak nasıl kullanıldığı ve Öteki ile ötekiliğe ait kimlik fikrinin 'kadın' imgesi üzerinden temsili tartışılmıştır.

Makale Bilgisi

Gönderildiği tarih: 26 Mart 2016
Kabul edildiği tarih: 15 Nisan 2016
Yayınlanma tarihi: 23 Haziran 2016

Article Info

Date submitted: 26 March 2016
Date accepted: 15 April 2016
Date published: 23 June 2016

Anahtar sözcükler

Söylem rolü, Batılı olmayan kadın, Oryantalizm, Temsil, Batılı erkek bakışı, Osmanlı doğusu, Yeniden inşa, Mağrip

Keywords:

Role of discourse, Non-Western woman, Orientalism, Representation, Western male gaze, the Ottoman orient, Reconstruction, Maghreb

DOI: 10.1501/Dtcfder_0000001472

The mutual relationship between ideology, discourse, and hegemony has been influential on post-colonial scholarship, and travel and cultural studies, particularly in the twentieth century with the critical contributions of Althusser, Gramsci, Foucault, and Said. The role of stories told about the Orient and the Western visual literature likewise reveal and depict a lot in this context about the presumptuous psyche of the Western male gaze. As a means of transferring information, introducing people and creating identities, both the stories and the illustrations have always had a vital role in moulding the viewers' perceptions about what should and should not be reality. By shaping opinions and presenting meticulous versions of 'reality', fabricated stereotypes have, frequently, been constructed. Either through print or broadcast sources, the illustrations have always influenced our understanding of the world around us. As a result, the real and the imaginary have become impossible to distinguish through the means of representations.

In the hands of a dominant group, the media, and the literature describing the East, therefore, conveyed, represented, and misrepresented some 'others' not included in the dominant group of decision-makers. Some misleading portrayals of social and cultural others have, therefore, become a natural outcome of such a single and dominant representation. On this account, in terms of ideologically manipulated power relations, the role of Western representation of the East as a means of indoctrination of the masses, have always had a crucial role in constructing images of people, cultures, and events as highlighted by Said as "*the Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences*" (Said 1).

When considered in a historical context, geopolitical relations between the Eastern and Western empires during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were carried out in a constant shift, and which subsequently, paved the way for the emergence of Orientalism as an imperial tool to legitimize the West's colonial maneuvers on the non-Western lands, and the East in this context. Edward Said argues that Orientalism is a politically constructed binary embedded in predetermined ideas about the 'Orient' as an 'other'. Therefore, for him an "imaginative geography" is created through Orientalism where the world is divided into two parts as the Orient and the Occident (12). Orientalism can be said to be a discourse for the vocalization of differences centering around the West and the East dichotomy. The Orient, in this context of differences, is represented immoral, barbarian, "exotic, mysterious, childlike, and irrational" while the West is deemed to be progressive, civilized, moral, "rational, civilized, mature and normal" (emphasis added) (Said 40-42).

On this account, Europe comes to be an idea as much as it is a geographical place where the idea of Occident has been shaped by the lingering encounters with its colonial others. The Western representation of the others, thus, is not a new fabrication as it has been implemented since the West's first contacts with the non-Westerners. However, it should be borne into mind that while Orientalism describes how Western gaze produces its other, this reflexive process also stands for the idea of the West itself in relation to this fabricated, 'inferior' other. Thus, the main function of Orientalism can be said to maintain the asymmetry in the power relations between the West and the Orient.

Through this process of asymmetric relationship, large groups of people with diverse histories became overgeneralized into one monolithic, inferior category. Therefore, a trend, a stereotype, a single story about the non-Westernness both in Western writing and mind was created. Such a problematic representation has been maintained through both visual images and verbal descriptions. Consequently, a large number of representations about the other emerged during the peak of British and French colonialism in particular. Throughout the centuries not only novelists, but also travellers, sketch-artists, painters and later in modern age film producers all served to galvanize the idea of *the Orient* conceptualized by their colonial predecessors.

The idea of representation according to Hall “*is the production of meaning through language. In representation, constructivists argue, we use signs, organized into languages of different kinds, to communicate meaningfully with others*” (28). However, when a group of people is represented as ‘others’, then a dichotomous relation between ‘us and them’ is accordingly created.

When it is about the representation of non-Western woman by the Western male gaze, above-stated dichotomous relation of us and them should be analyzed through the gender related power relations in particular. Admittedly, the idea that the Orient is effeminate is based upon the conceptualization of gender related power relations lurking both in the Orient and the West because while power is frequently related with masculinity, weakness seems to be associated with femininity. Macfie explains how this East and West division functions as such:

Europe (the West, the “self”) is ... essentially rational, developed, humane, superior, authentic, active, creative, and masculine, while the Orient (the East, the “other”) (a sort of surrogate, underground version of the West or the “self”) is ... irrational, aberrant, backward, crude, despotic, inferior, inauthentic, passive, feminine, and sexually corrupt (8).

According to Said, the sexual submissiveness of Oriental women to Western men “*stands for the pattern of relative strength between East and West and the discourse about the Orient that it enabled*” (6). On this account, it could justly be argued that the representation of the other through some male power-fantasy paradigms thereby feminizing the non-Western lands for Western power and possession was carried out since the first encounters with the colonized others. During the colonial period such a libidinous representation of the non-Western

lands according to McClintock was revealing a male fantasy denoting a male-European mind where “its forbidden sexual desires and fears” were embedded:

For centuries, the uncertain continents -Africa, the Americas, Asia- were figured in European lore as libidinally eroticized. Travelers’ tales abounded with visions of the monstrous sexuality of far-off lands, where, as legend had it, men sported gigantic penises and women consorted with apes, feminized men’s breasts flowed with milk and militarized women lopped theirs off. Renaissance travelers found an eager and lascivious audience for their spicy tales, so that, long before the era of high Victorian imperialism, Africa and the Americas had become what can be called porno-tropics for the European imagination, a fantastic magic lantern of the mind onto which Europe projected its forbidden sexual desires and fears (22).

In this context, Theodore Galle’s drawing entitled ‘America’ (1600) stands for one of the earliest examples illustrating the newly discovered ‘the Americas’ as a naked woman inviting Vespucci to hold her hand and fertilize the newly found land. Vespucci, holding in his hands “*the fetish instruments of imperial mastery- astrolabe, flag and sword*” represents “*the patrimony of scientific mastery and imperial might, and invested with the male prerogative of naming, Vespucci renders America’s identity a dependent extension of his and stakes male Europe’s territorial rights to her body and, by extension, the fruits of her land*” (McClintock 28).



(Figure 1 “America”)

As seen in this drawing, representation of non-Western woman even before the heyday of colonial expansion was built upon the idea of an imperial patrimony through which Europe’s territorial desires were satisfied and while the land was feminized, the idea of woman in general as weak, inferior, passive and erotic, accordingly, was legalized. The correlation between land and woman in such a

representation plays a vital role because the woman's body for a child symbolizes the first space for "knowledge, self-discovery" in all psychoanalytical views, the land mapped as a feminine space, on this ground, served for the colonizer as a body "docile for male knowledge and power" (McClintock 82).

Along with the colonial expansion, the borders and lands were feminized, and even newly encountered indigenous peoples were degraded while the idea of femininity was equated with those so-called 'inferior peoples' inviting the colonizer to fertilize their 'body-lands'. During the time of colonization, European men who feminized borders and lands with "the fetish instruments of imperial mastery such as, "astrolabe, flag and sword", also justified their patrimonial mission through female figures and names employed during their discoveries as McClintock argues:

...they (European men) ritualistically feminized borders and boundaries. Female figures were planted like fetishes at the ambiguous points of contact, at the borders and orifices of the contest zone. Sailors bound wooden female figures to their ships' prows and baptized their ships as exemplary threshold objects -with female names. Cartographers filled the blank seas of their maps with mermaids and sirens. Explorers called unknown lands "virgin" territory. Philosophers veiled "Truth" as female, then fantasized about drawing back the veil. In myriad ways, women served as mediating and threshold figures by means of which men oriented themselves in space, as agents of power and agents of knowledge (McClintock 24).

In this respect, from the very onset of the colonial history the idea of woman seems to have been employed in relation to the idea of annexation. Therefore, woman body as an allegory of the earth was discovered, annexed, inseminated and accordingly owned. The world, by this token, was both feminized and baptized with a patriarchal understanding of the Western men who as 'the discoverers of Western history', accordingly, developed the idea of Western civilization on a dichotomous relation between the West and Non-West. Although Said defined *the other* in terms of the Arabs, the others, in this context, seem to mean any group of people that is denigrated by another group of people. Therefore, a Saidian consideration of the others, can rightfully be applied to any group of people anywhere -the non-Western women in this context- degraded by some 'others' regardless of their residing in the East, the South or the North.

It is clear that throughout the centuries the idea of woman in general, non-Western woman in particular was symbolically reduced, in male eyes, to the space or property on which male contests were rewarded. Therefore, patriarchal oppression coupled with Orientalist manipulation of women in general. On this account, non-Western woman had to experience a double colonization when compared to their Western counterparts who experienced a single colonization. In terms of colonial interventions and in comparison to their counterparts, non-Western women were represented in “a demeaning manner by the Orientalists” and “thus wore two badges of humiliation: as women and as “Orientals” (Hasan 31). In other words, non-Western women were already under patriarchal suppression even before the West’s colonial interference, yet it became worse along with the Western incursion as they were now victimized both as women and plus non-Western women. *“The West’s already deep-seated fantasy about non-Western women was intensified by such representations, for the Orientalists were always on the look-out to satisfy the West’s preconceived, imaginary perceptions about the East”* (31). Moreover, while representing the non-Western woman, the idea that *“woman, non-Westerner, and Muslim”* emerged altogether *“a triple orientalization”* (31), thereby reminding Spivak’s construction of “poor, black, and female” (294).

However, the main problem about the Western representation of non-Western woman is that they were frequently seen as one, and hence, cultural, historical, geographical varieties were not taken into account. Except for their being non-Westerner, no other authentic characteristics were taken into consideration, and some groups such as, Middle Eastern women, Balkan women or African women especially the women from the Maghreb countries Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt, but also Central African countries like Sudan were presented under the rubric of non-Westernness as some related groups sharing some similarities abundant enough to put them against the West in general.

Some fixed images of non-Westerners in general and non-Western woman in particular were, in this respect, employed on a large scale by the Western travelogues, periodicals, movies, and cartoons. Ignorant, submissive, domestic, lustful, in this respect, exemplified the position of non-Western woman that would be familiarized by Western eyes. Ridouani points out that *“the examples are numerously various, ranging from legendary figures to realistic ones and targeting both Middle-East people together with North-Africans without heeding the different ethnicities, races and faith. What is astonishingly odd is that such a fixed inflexible*

homogeneous characteristic identifies them all and make them look like one single person” (7). Such a stereotype or a single story about non-Westerners both in Western writing and mind, thus, had already stuck when time evolved into the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. The danger of such a stereotyping here, as Adichie Chimamanda remarks, is that a single story “shows a people as one thing, as only one thing.”*

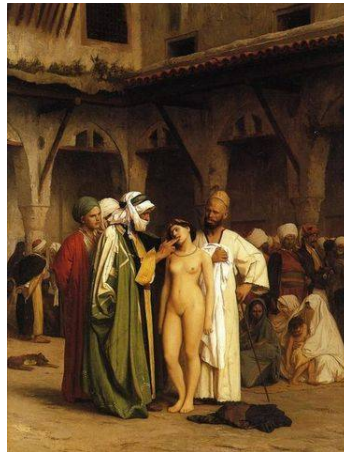
This constructed view or ‘othering’ of the non-Westerner was used to rationalize the West’s imperial invasion of Africa, America, Asia and later the Middle East. During the Western colonization of the far away countries in the world, particularly the Ottoman Orient was considered mysterious and luring with the idea of harem and veiled women. Therefore, during the heyday of the Ottoman Empire that is in its all glory and wealth, the women in the Orient under the protection of a wealthy empire were deemed as a means of curiosity for the Western eyes. As Loomba argues before the eighteenth century, through a Western lens the Asian Empires in general, and particularly the Ottoman Empire in this context was represented as a veiled charming woman riding a camel with a censer in her hand implying the magnificence and the lure of the empire (178). However, when time evolved into the nineteenth century, Western perception of the Oriental women changed as the Ottoman Empire now was weak and commonly regarded as the ‘sick man of Europe’. Therefore, particularly after that period, the image of the Oriental woman lurking in the Western male gaze emerged with some erotic fantasies decorated with some ethnical clothes such as veil or yashmak which accordingly revealed its desire for domination.

Consequently from the nineteenth century on, mainly in the first two decades of the twentieth century the idea of veiled non-Western woman was frequently employed both in the Western verbal and visual literature by the travelers, the writers and the painters. The veil, hence, came to symbolize the oppression and the man’s authority over the non-Western women who were represented as subordinated figures having no identity of their own. An English travel writer and historian Alexander Kinglake in his well-known travelogue *Eothen* (1844) argued the position of the veiled Ottoman women as such: “Of her very self you see nothing

*Chimamanda Adichie's "Danger of Single a Story" Web.14 April 2016
<http://borgenproject.org/review-chimamanda-adichies-danger-of-a-single-story/>

except the dark, luminous eyes that stare against your face and the tips of the painted fingers depending like rose-buds from out of the blank bastions of the fortress” (Kinglake 23). However, when he told what he observed after she takes off her veil seems to function as a means of mystification of the Oriental feminine beauty: “She turns and turns again, and carefully glances around her on all sides, to see that she is safe from the eyes of Mussalamans, and then suddenly withdrawing the yashmak she shines upon your heart and soul with all the pomp and might of her beauty” (23).

The idea of veil was, accordingly, used by the illustrators in a way to justify their decision makers’ colonial policies. That is, they asserted that their intention was to free the women from their submissive positions. Yet, the idea of freeing these women from their suppressed positions in their patriarchal society seems to have been a misleading mission like other missionary services practiced during all colonial intrusions. The idea of veil in such a consideration symbolized the oppression experienced by the women in the East showing how the women in the East were entrapped by a violent patriarchy, and whose only salvation could be carried out by the West. Below in the painting entitled “Slave Market” by the French artist Gérôme Jean-Léon (1824-1904), while there are some veiled, domesticized and ‘owned’ women in the background, another naked woman is illustrated, who is represented as a means of property and subject of bargain by some dark skinned men.



(Figure 2 “Slave Market”)

As Kabbani remarks Eastern men were represented as wicked very frequently by the colonizers, they were, in this respect *“the traders in female bodies. They are the cruel captors who hold women in their avaricious grasp, who use them as*

chattels, as trading-goods, with little reverence for them as human beings" (78). According to Yeğenoğlu the Western male perception was built upon the idea that those women could be saved only by the civilized Westerners who also believed that *"they could take over societies through the conquering of women"* (Yeğenoğlu 40).

On this account, the idea of Eastern man as wicked, barbarian and lascivious was put against the idea of beautiful, passive and exotic women who as *Femme arabe, Femme berbère, Belle Fatma or Aicha* were in need of civilized Westerners' help. In order to justify the Western rescuing mission the paintings, photographs and drawings including the sketches played an important role because with the help of them while the women were eroticised, their male counterparts were demonized. In other words, while the East, particularly the Ottoman Orient was represented lustful, barbarian, blood thirsty, and rapist, the Oriental women were represented as the victims of the very same patriarchal society. However, while representing the women of the East, employing excessive sexual images gave great damage to the West's collective consciousness as the image of the Oriental women reconstructed by the Western gaze came to be unreliable. A reconstructed image of the Oriental women through "semi-clothed 'moresques', 'Belle Fatmas and Aichas' gazing from behind barred windows, or smoking narguileh in Harem and Turkish Bath" came to stand for a certain kind of discourse both distorting reality and erotizing the non-Western women for the Western eyes (Alloula 9).

In this respect, they, at times, were introduced to the Western audience as women who were almost "nymphomaniac preoccupied with sex, and spent their time in sexual preparation" and whose sexual appetite according to Kabbani was so uncontrollable that they would "dally with each other" when there were no men around (26). In such a representation of the Oriental other, women became no more than chattels for men's use and satisfaction, let alone rescuing them from the patriarchal practices of their communities. Some distorted representation of harem, in this respect, fostered the Western understanding of these women as both lecherous and passive chattels. These women who were already into sexual excitement then could satisfy the Western men's desires as Burton remarks *"I am told they have no balls, drums nor operas in the East, but then they have got a seraglio [...]. Besides, I am told, your Asiatic beauties are the most convenient women alive, for they have no souls; positively there is nothing in nature I should like so much as ladies without souls; soul, here, is the utter ruin of half of the sex"* (qtd in Kabbani 31).

As a well known figure Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was one of the very few foreigners, who was able to observe the very private world of the females of the Ottoman Empire in Harem (Karaduman 112). However when the visual literature of the Orient is taken into account, one can come across a great number of painters representing Harem, thereby creating a particular discourse rather than reflecting the ‘reality’. As the controlling gaze, these painters, although most of them had never been to the Ottoman Orient, brought the unknown Oriental world into being by fabricated images of Harem and women.



(Figure 3 “The_Odalisque”) (Figure 4 “Le Marabout in the Harem bath”)



(Figure 5 “Hamam”)

The Western idea of the Turkish Bath and of the Harem, including images of women displayed therein round about, is commonly known in academic circles today. The images illustrated above are only few of the many examples suggesting the closely held concepts of the Ottoman woman, the harem, the bath chambers, and eunuchs. There are a large number of painters who represented and re-created the knowledge about these concepts in their works. In this respect, Edouard Debat Ponsan (French 1847-1913), Mariano Fortuny (Spanish 1871- 1949), Jean-Leon Gerome (French, 1824-1904), Fausto Zonara (Italian 1854-1929), Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (French 1780- 1867), Eugène Delacroix (French 1798-1863), were only some of the many illustrators of this new imperial age who accordingly

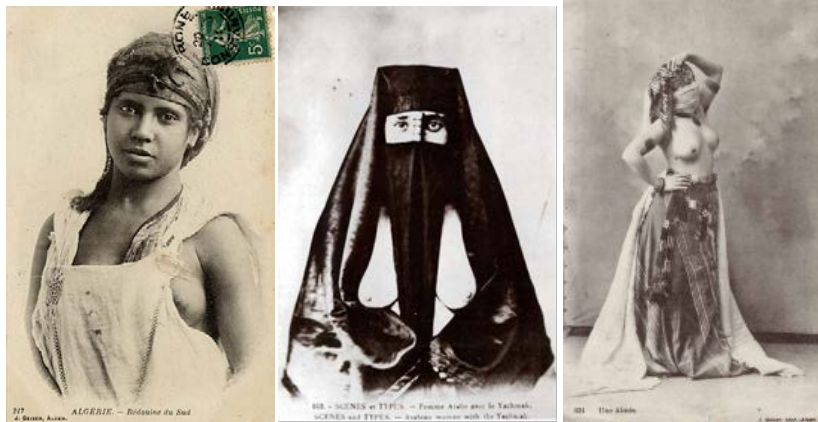
introduced the Orient with sexual images to the Western public from the nineteenth century on. However, the Ottoman Empire has never been colonised. Therefore, within the scope of this paper rather than the representation of the Ottoman Harem and Women, the non-Western lands which once were the Ottoman provinces are aimed to be analyzed with a particular attention on a larger scan. †

Overall, it might well be stated that the west's perception of the Oriental women was built upon the ways how the illustrators wanted to see them by employing some half-dressed or completely nude women mostly in harem as an exotic space to serve men's fantasies. Early paintings, and then photos, hence, included their fantasies in opposition to the reality. Photography which became a predominant tool of propaganda in the late nineteenth century, in this respect, played a crucial role in enabling Europe's colonization of the Orient including the Maghreb countries Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt, but also Central African countries like Sudan by "*assuming the privileged position of the voyeur entering a closed and private space, and allowing the viewer to do likewise*" (Brown 74).

From the nineteenth century on; that is, during the declining period of the Ottoman Empire, the idea of the veiled woman in particular was employed very frequently in the visual literature, such as the postcards illustrated below. While they worked as a reminiscence of the oppression applied by non-Western men over women, they, however, displayed women mostly half naked in their ethnic clothes, both revealing and titillating the sexual desire of non-Western men for the Oriental woman lurking in the Western patriarchal lustful gaze. For instance, after the Ottomans retreated from Algeria (1516-1830) and during the French colonial rule thereafter, the exotic Algerian image, well analyzed in Malek Alloula's *Le Harem Colonial*, was employed especially in postcards to a large extent. Alloula presents a collection of picture postcards that were posted by the French from the late nineteenth century on. These postcards were very popular in that period as it was possible to mail them with erotic motifs without getting into legal troubles. In all of such these postcards, the effects of French colonialism in terms of the

† For more examples see the links: *The massage in the harem*, by French painter Edouard Debat Ponsan 1847-1913. Oil on canvas, 1883. Musée des Beaux Arts Museum of Fine Arts, Toulouse France. <http://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/news-photo/the-massage-in-the-harem-by-french-painter-edouard-debat-news-photo/168965650> and *The Turkish Bath*, by Ingres <http://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/turkish-bath>

reconstruction of a created non-Western feminine identity are illustrated with erotic images of Algerian women.



(Figure 6 “Bedouine de Sud”) (Figure 7 “Yachmak”) (Figure 8 “Une Almée”)

The figures on these cards are alluringly portrayed. They are all represented partly dressed with some ethnic clothes. Moreover, the veil which was regarded allegedly as the Eastern man’s authority over women was delicately employed in the photos, and the contrast stemming from their half nakedness made their bare flesh more visible such as their breasts. In the era when these cards were publicized as Stephan Likosky argues “*images of bare-breasted European women would have been limited to the realm of pornography and officially censored*” (Likosky). A great number of cards were, therefore, sent from newly colonized ‘exotic’ lands through which the idea of Oriental woman by the means of veil and ethnic clothes was eroticized. Fabricated Harem settings likewise worked for the re-construction of a mysterious Orient.

The following cards analysed in Malek Alloula’s *Le Harem Colonial* likewise well exemplify how the Western ideal of Oriental women was introduced to the Western gaze with the epithets “Type de Mauresque”, “Type de Marocaine”, “Bedouine”, “Femme Kabyle”, “Femme du sud”, “Femme arabe”, “Femme Berbere”, “La danse”, “La sieste” “Belle Fathma”, “Aisha” or “La Bele Zinâ”. The reliability and the authenticity of these captions and names are questionable as in some postcards the same models are illustrated with different captions.



(Figure 9 “Belle Arabe”)



(Figure 10 “Mauresque danseuse”)



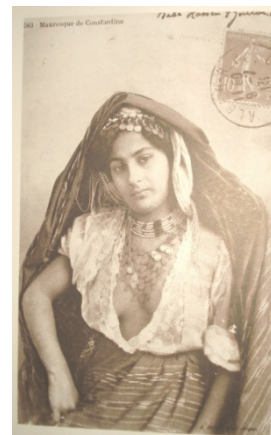
(Figure 11 “Moorish Woman”)



(Figure 12 “Scenes and Types. Young woman”)



(Figure 13 “Jeune Mauresque”)



(Figure 14 “Mauresque de Constantine”)

Exotic eroticism in all of the cards is highly related to the legendary sensuousness of the Oriental woman, as these examples in question are from North African provinces of the Ottoman Empire, which had now come under the control of European powers-- notably, France -- in this context.

There were a great number of Oriental photographers whose works included mostly the cultural representations of the Orient and particularly the Maghreb countries Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt. Some of the very important photographers of the time are as follows Jean Geiser, Abdullah Frères, Pascal Sebah / Sebah & Joaillier, Rudolf Franz Lehnert and his partner Ernst Heinrich Landrock, Paul-Felix Bonfils, Hippolyte Arnoux, Marcelin Flandrin, Émile Frechon, Alexandre Leroux, Felix-Jacques Moulin and Roger Fenton. However, Lehnert & Landrock and Jean Geiser are the most well-known photographers with the erotic motifs on their photographs.

Born in Switzerland but moved to Algeria with his family, Jean Geiser (1848-1923) was a photographer in the same post-Ottoman era, and was well known in France at the time for his Orientalist and erotic photographs of Algerian women. He took plenty of photos in his studio in a particular pre-planned traditional setting. Therefore, most of the cards have no documentary value, they, however, could be analysed to understand how the colonial voyeurism was actualized through these fabricated scenarios documenting the imagery European male view of Oriental cultures, and the women particularly in this context. Geiser won several competitions with his photos providing him medals and reputation. It was, hence an era when the Western interest for Orientalist and erotic photographs of the non-Western women was increasing at a high pace. Geiser's photos were published in a book entitled *Belles Algériennes de Geiser* with a subtitle "costume, parurer et bijoux" that is "costume, adornment and jewellery." However, the photos taken by him revealed more than what the title of the book tells.



(Figure 15 "Bedouine") (Figure 16 "Danseuse du Sud") (Figure 17 "Une Almee")



(Figure 18 “La Danse”) (Figure 19 “Femme du Sud”) (Figure 20 “Femme du Sud”)

The photos above, in this respect, despite the title of Geiser’s book, illustrate a virtual reality rather than the reality, thereby revealing an Orientalist fantasy. Such a fantasy, however, worked as a means of “collective mental programming” (Hofstede 16) through which a continual distorted image of non-Western women was reconstructed and then maintained by the Western male gaze. On the surface, all these sexually explicit photographs seem to be portraying the women in a traditional setting with some ethnic dresses. However, the viewer’s attention is driven to the women’s exposed flesh while their ethnic clothes eroticise the women as sexual objects and create images to be desired and ‘consumed’. Moreover, while their eyes are mystifying the ‘Oriental feminine silence’, their exposed flesh re-tells the story told for myriad of centuries about their obedience to male gaze. Such a mental stereotyping working as a mental programming, hence, reconstructed a distinctive picture of Oriental women who were different from their Western models and accordingly more ready for sexual use as Sego posits it “one’s identity is established cognitively on the basis of contrast to others. If no others are perceived, identity is neither possible nor necessary” (3).

However, within the scope of this study, one should note that Algeria was not the only colonial interest in this light, as very similar images from other North African countries such as Tunisia, and Egypt farther eastward, were accordingly produced in the same era. In this respect, the following postcards with photographs by the Austrian photographers Lehnert and Landrock illustrate Tunisian women as follows:



(Figure 21 “Femme tunisienne assise”) (Figure 22 “Tunis ”) (Figure 23 “Au harem”)



(Figure 24 “Tunis”) (Figure 25 “Fillettes bédouines”) (Figure 26 “Danceuse arabe”)

All the women represented above seem to have been sexualized through the means of photograph thereby making them some exotic objects of desire. In other words they are made to seen as inviting the Western man to ravish them as represented in Theodore Galle’s drawing entitled ‘America’ (1600). The use of veil and ethnic clothes, in this respect is particularly significant as it both reveals and hides the women’s body, thereby eroticizing and fetishizing their ethnic and cultural difference. However it is highly significant to note that these images as Awadalla points out were all taken in a studio with hired models and hence created some fabricated representations (6). In this respect, the way how they depicted these women revealed the lurking desire for how they imagined them to be, thereby showing what they wanted to see.

The visual image of the Orient for the Western- notably French in this context- cultural imagination quickly evolved in the nineteenth century particularly after the retreat of the Ottoman Empire from Algeria. However, as argued above very similar images from other North African countries such as Tunisia, and Egypt

farther eastward, were accordingly produced in the same era by the illustrators and painters. Below some examples from Egypt are illustrated:



(Figure 27 “Jeune fille aux bijoux Egypte”) (Figure 28 “Jeune femme fellah Egypte”)

(Figure 29 “Femme aux longues nattes Egypte”)

When analyzed in comparison to their North African and Middle Eastern counterparts, the women of sub-Saharan Africa were also represented widely on the cards and travelogues of the same new imperial era. They, likewise, were portrayed mostly nude or semi-clothed, and thereby evoking very similar fantasies. On this account, in his *Heroes of the Dark Continent*[‡], written in the year 1890, James Buel employed some sketches where heroes of Western Europe are depicted as demigods, native women seem to be desiring lecherously these heroes of the West.

When academic and popular discourse involves the Third World Woman through a Western lens, women in general seem to share common characteristics, such as their being exotic, ignorant, passive, traditional, and lecherous. Therefore, as is represented below during this new imperial era, the idea of women in general, provided they were non-Westerners from newly colonized lands, was reconstructed through the visual and through visually assisted literature along with the printed word. Mostly with dark skin, they were represented very commonly as flirtatious and seductive.

[‡]For more info. see the link <http://www.erbzine.com/mag18/buel.htm>



(Figure 30 “2. A-Madagascar”) (Figure 31 “Casamance Senegal Flirt”)

In the cards above, some sub-Saharan women are illustrated while their fabricated scenarios serve for erotic purposes like their North African and Middle Eastern counterparts. On the first postcard (Figure 30), a colonial figure is represented while he is touching playfully a Malagasy woman under her chin, and the caption reads in its translation “Oh! How nice these little Negresses are, and they are not at all shy!” The other card (Figure 31) illustrates another Western male figure with his rifle as a phallic symbol for the power. He is depicted while interacting with a bare-breasted black woman and the caption reads “Casamance-Sénégal – Flirt.”

Consequently, fabricated stereotypes of non-Western women were employed in many Western visual and written works. The image of the non-Western woman, in this light, has been created negatively throughout the centuries by the Western male gaze. However, one should note that the misconstrued Western idea that the Orient is effeminate, weak, and inferior, as Said has revealed regarding this particular Western gaze, has been built on the concept of power itself. Therefore, when it is about the conceptualization of power in a gender related context, then it could justly be argued that in the narratives of human history, the situation of Western women was not much different from that of the non-Western woman. However, within the scope of this article, it still needs to be concluded that during the reconstruction period of the Orient including the Maghreb countries Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt, the visual materials along with written captions or texts served extensively as propaganda, thereby fictionalising images and revealing colonial fantasies. Narrations as such, which included generalisations and simplifications, have created a faulty understanding of non-Western identities,

including both women and men, thereby giving harm to mutual relationships even in these modern times. Undoubtedly, mutual contacts are based mainly on stereotypes and also prejudices, and there is no stereotype of innocence, purity, wholesomeness, and goodness. Therefore, Orientalist essentialism can lead to stereotypes not only about the East but also the West, as there are various stories concerning both in this context. Ideologies of verbal and visual literature are certainly important for social analysis because they are not only about words or illustrations, but also about the very reminiscences left for constant misguided acceptance and misguided approval. Mental stereotyping or programming creates conflicts and clashes rather than unconditional acceptance and understanding.

WORKS CITED

- Adichie, Chimamanda. "Danger of Single a Story." Web.14 April 2016.
- Alloula, Malek. *The Colonial Harem*. Trans. Myrna Godzich and Wlad Godzich. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986.
- Awadalla, Maggie ve Anastasia Valassopoulos. "The Politics of Exposure and Concealment in Post-colonial Discourse." Web. 9 Sep 2015.
- Brown, G. Sarah. *Images of Women: The Portrayal of Women in Photography of the Middle East, 1860-1950*. London: Quartet Books Limited, 1988.
- Hall, Stuart. "The Work of Representation." *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. Ed. Stuard Hall. London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 1997. 13-75.
- Hofstede, Geert. "Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work Related Values." *Cross Cultural Research and Methodology Series 5*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1980.
- Kabbani, Rana. *Europe's Myths of Orient: Devise and Rule*. London: Pandora Press, 1988.
- Karaduman, Alev. "The Ottoman Seraglio: An Institution of Power and Education." *Türkiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi (HÜTAD)* 21(2014): 109-120.
- Kinglake, W. Alexander. *Eothen*. London: Century Publishing Co., 1982.
- Likosky, Stephan. *Dark Skin, Light Skin: Sexual Transgression on Early Postcards*. Web. 10 Sep 2015.

- Loomba, Ania. *Kolonyalizm/Postkolonyalizm*. Çev. Mehmet Küçük. İstanbul: Ayrıntı, 2000.
- Macfie, L. Alexander. *Orientalism*. London: Pearson Education, 2002.
- Mahmudul Md. Hasan. "The Orientalization of Gender." *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences (AJISS)* 22. 4 (2005): 26-56.
- McClintock, Anne. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*. New York: Routledge, 1995.
- Ridouani, Driss. "The Representation of Arabs and Muslims in Western Media." *Ruta* 3.1 (2011). Web.20 May 2015.
- Said, W. Edward. *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*. London: Penguin, 1978.
- Sego, P. Lewis. "Philistines, Barbarians, Aliens, et alii: Cognitive Semantics in Political 'Otherness.'" *Language and Ideology the 6th ICLC*, Stockholm (10-16 July, 1999).
- Spivak, C. Gayatri. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Eds. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988. 271-313.
- Yeğenoğlu, Melda. "Sartorial Fabric-ations: Enlightenment and Western Feminism." *Postcolonialism, Feminism, and Religious Discourse*. Eds. Pui-lan Kwok and E. Laura Donaldson. New York: Routledge, 2002. 82-89.

SOURCES COLSULTED FOR ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. 1 "America" Engraving by Theodor Galle after Johannes Stradanus. Plate 1 from the *Nova Reperta*. Rare. Web.28 May 2010.
http://www.sanderusmaps.com/antique-maps/curiosities-and-portraits/the-discovery-of-america_17860.cfm
- Fig. 2 "Slave Market" by Jean-Leon Gerome, 1876. 13 Sep 2015.
<http://www.clarkart.edu/Collection/5538>
- Fig. 3 "The Odalisque" by Mariàno Fortuny, 1861. Web.12 Sep 2015.
<http://fineartamerica.com/products/the-odalisque-maria-fortuny--canvas-print.html>
- Fig. 4 "Le Marabout in the Harem bath" by Jean-Leon Gerome, 1889. Web.13 Sep 2015.
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/sofi01/4778734622/sizes/1>

- Fig. 5 “Hamam”, by Fausto Zonara, around 1888s. Web.13 Sep 2015.
<https://iamachild.wordpress.com/2011/07/07/fausto-zonaro-1854-1929-italian/>
- Fig. 6 “Bedouine de Sud” by Jean Geiser around 1910s. Alloula, Malek, *The Colonial Harem*. University of Minneapolis Press, 1986. Web.13 Sep 2015.
<http://www.helmut-schmidt-online.de/Boudoir-Cards/ep-photo-geiser.html>
- Fig. 7 “Arabian Woman With the Yachmak”, around 1890s. Alloula, Malek, *The Colonial Harem*. University of Minneapolis Press, 1986. Web.13 Sep 2015.
<http://veil.unc.edu/arts/visual-arts/orientalist-photography/colonial-harem/>
- Fig 8 “Une Almee”, by Jean Geiser, around 1910s. *The Colonial Harem*. University of Minneapolis Press, 1986. Web.13 Sep 2015.
<https://saraqaseem.wordpress.com/2013/03/27/orientalism-2/>
- Fig. 9 “Belle Arabe”, Alloula, Malek, *The Colonial Harem*. University of Minneapolis Press, 1986. Web.13 Sep 2015.
<http://veil.unc.edu/arts/visual-arts/orientalist-photography/colonial-harem/>
- Fig. 10 “Mauresque danseuse”, by Jean Geiser, around 1910s. Alloula, Malek, *The Colonial Harem*. University of Minneapolis Press 94, 1986. Web.13 Sep 2015.
<http://www.messynessychic.com/2015/06/11/greetings-from-the-colonies-postcards-of-a-shameful-past/>
- Fig. 11 “Morrish Woman”, Alloula, Malek. *The Colonial Harem*. University of Minneapolis Press, 1986. Web.13 Sep 2015.
<http://www.alwanforthearts.org/event/877>
- Fig. 12 “Scenes and Types. Young woman”, Alloula, Malek. *The Colonial Harem*. University of Minneapolis Press: 90, 1986. Web.13 Sep 2015.
<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/textidx?c=acls;cc=acls;view=toc;idno=hb02140.0001.0>
- Fig. 13 “Jeune Mauresque”, Alloula, Malek. *The Colonial Harem*. University of Minneapolis Press, 1986. Web.13 Sep 2015.
<http://www.alwanforthearts.org/event/877>
- Fig. 14 “Mauresque de Constantine”, Alloula, Malek . *The Colonial Harem*. University of Minneapolis Press, 1986. Web.13 Sep 2015.
http://produto.mercadolivre.com.br/MLB-716434131-unico-no-site-raro-le-harem-colonial-malek-alloula-_JM
- Fig. 15 “Bedouine” Alger 263, by Jean Geiser, around 1900s. Web.11 Sep 2015.
<http://www.helmut-schmidt-online.de/Boudoir-Cards/ep-photo-geiser.html>
- Fig. 16 “Danseuse du Sud” Alger 424, by Jean Geiser, around 1900s. Web.11 Sep 2015.
<http://www.helmut-schmidt-online.de/Boudoir-Cards/ep-photo-geiser.html>
- Fig. 17 “Une Almee” Alger 68, by Jean Geiser, around 1900s. Web.11 Sep 2015.
<http://www.helmut-schmidt-online.de/Boudoir-Cards/ep-photo-geiser.html>

- Fig. 18 “La Danse”Alger 486, by Jean Geiser, around 1900s. Web. 11 Sep 2015.
<http://www.helmut-schmidt-online.de/Boudoir-Cards/ep-photo-geiser.html>
- Fig. 19 “Femme du Sud” Alger 272, by Jean Geiser. around 1900s. Web.11 Sep 2015.
<http://www.helmut-schmidt-online.de/Boudoir-Cards/ep-photo-geiser.html>
- Fig. 20 “Femme du Sud” Alger 142, by Jean Geiser, around 1900s. Web.11 Sep 2015.
<http://www.helmut-schmidt-online.de/Boudoir-Cards/ep-photo-geiser.html>
- Fig. 21 “Femme tunisienne assise” by Lehnert & Landrock, around 1900s. Web.12 Sep 2015.
<http://www.helmut-schmidt-online.de/Boudoir-Cards/op-photo-lehnert-landrock.html>
- Fig. 22 “Tunis” by Lehnert & Landrock, around 1900s. Web.12 Sep 2015.
<http://www.helmut-schmidt-online.de/Boudoir-Cards/op-photo-lehnert-landrock.html>
- Fig. 23 “Au harem” by Lehnert & Landrock, around 1900s. Web.12 Sep 2015.
<http://www.helmut-schmidt-online.de/Boudoir-Cards/op-photo-lehnert-landrock.html>
- Fig. 24 “Tunis” - Serie III - 2528 – Ayada, by Lehnert & Landrock, around 1900s. Web.12 Sep 2015.
<http://www.helmut-schmidt-online.de/Boudoir-Cards/op-photo-lehnert-landrock.html>
- Fig. 25 “Fillettes bédouines” by Lehnert & Landrock, around 1900s. Web.10 Sep 2015.
http://inphoto.blog.hu/2012/02/04/a_lehnert_amp_landrock_alkotoparos_ba_csiszelet_ajanlasi
- Fig. 26 “Danceuse arabe” by Lehnert & Landrock, around 1900s. Web.10 Sep 2015.
http://inphoto.blog.hu/2012/02/04/a_lehnert_amp_landrock_alkotoparos_ba_csiszelet_ajanlasi
- Fig. 27 “Jeune fille aux bijoux Egypte” around 1910s. Brown. G.S. *The Portrayal of Women in Photography of the Middle East 1860-1950: Images of Women*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Fig. 28 “Jeune femme fellah Egypte”, by Andreas Reiser, around 1900s. Brown. G.S. *The Portrayal of Women in Photography of the Middle East 1860-1950: Images of Women*. New York: Columbia University Press: 136.
- Fig. 29 “Femme aux longues nattes Egypte”, by Hippolyte Arnoux, around 1880s. Brown. G.S. *The Portrayal of Women in Photography of the Middle East 1860-1950: Images of Women*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Fig. 30 “2. A-Madagascar”. Web.10 Sep 2015.
<http://www.metropostcard.com/metropcbloga9.html>

Fig. 31 “Casamance Senegal Flirt”. Web.10 Sep 2015.
<http://www.messynessychic.com/2015/06/11/greetings-from-the-colonies-postcards-of-a-shameful-past/>