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**Francis Parkman's *The Oregon Trail* (1849) and Alexandre
Dumas's *Adventures in Algeria* (1848): A Postcolonial
Comparative Study.**

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Dedication

In memory of my dear Mom;

To my caring sisters, Nassima, Syham and Lyliia;

My dear brother, Redouane;

My Father and stepmother;

My lovely aunts Dahbia and Nacera;

My dear uncle **BIA Med Ameziane** for his constant guidance;

My sweet nephews and nieces, Nadir, Mehdi-Amine, Melek, Rania and Amel;

Sonia, Hayat, Rachida, Radia, Amine, Salah and Massi who believed in me;

My best friend, HALLOU Kahina for her unconditional support and help;

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Abstract

This research paper is a postcolonial comparative study of Francis Parkman's *The Oregon Trail* (1849) and Alexandre Dumas's *Adventures in Algeria* (1848). To carry out this study, I have relied on Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) and Homi K. Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994). Focus has been laid on the affinities in the two authors' misrepresentation and Orientalist description of the 'natives' and their cultural and social systems. I have also dealt with the 'ambivalence' of colonial discourse in the two works, and studied the authors' altering attitudes towards the colonial subject. Yet, my work is not restricted to the study of similarities between the two works. I have also examined Parkman's and Dumas's different approaches to celebrate and consolidate their respective nations' imperial ideologies. This dissertation is divided into five major sections: an introduction, a section for methods and materials, another for results and discussion, a conclusion and a bibliography. After a thorough analysis of the two works, I have come to some conclusions. The first conclusion is that both Parkman and Dumas stigmatize the 'natives' by depicting them as backward and inferior. They also place the white man at the center of civilization, in opposition to the coloured one whose state of primitiveness is emphasized. The second conclusion reveals that Parkman and Dumas adopt ambivalent attitudes towards Indians and Arabs in their texts. The narratives highlight the two authors' anxiety and uncertainty regarding the 'natives' during the colonial encounter. The last conclusion reached in this study is that Parkman and Dumas embrace the imperial enterprise and engage themselves in supporting their nations' expansion.

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*I learned that there is no such thing as merely given ;
beginnings have to be made.*

Edward. W Said

I. Introduction

The roots of travel writing can be traced back to the ancient Greco-Roman times and the writings of Herodotus ¹. As a genre in literature, travel writing consists mainly of accounts that portray new, remote and often unknown places and record the details of the journey. It gives information about geography and involves a confrontation with human nature or human contact. In a study of the evolution of the genre, Casey Blanton defines travel writing as “a conscious commitment to represent the strange and exotic in ways that both familiarize and distance the foreign.”² With the advent of imperialism and Western expansion, many travelers, historians and writers sought to describe and document their encounters with the newly conquered lands and their ‘native’ inhabitants. Travel writing became quite popular throughout Europe and the United States of America. It accounted for the stunning views and fascinating landscapes of the places visited as well as the habits, customs and culture of their inhabitants.

The discourse of travel writing involved a random description of nature and often a subjective and prejudiced representation of the inhabitants of the places visited. Authors tended to measure all that was different from their culture as ‘inferior’ and ‘uncivilized’. Therefore, this misrepresentation can be identified as colonialist and ‘Orientalist’ since its main aim is to stigmatize the ‘native’ way of life and define the West against a projected ‘other’. Edward Said defines ‘Orientalism’ as “a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between the ‘orient’ and ‘occident’ ”³, aiming to glorify and celebrate the Western culture. He argues that travel literature contributes to the reinforcement of the stereotypes about the non-Western countries. Said claims that the discourse of travel writing “strengthened the divisions established by Orientalists between the various geographical, temporal and racial departments of the Orient.”⁴ Such a discourse is meant to define the West as ‘superior’ in opposition to the Orient as ‘inferior’. His work on

‘Orientalism’ and the Orient encompassed a large body of texts but Said’s major focus was on those produced by and in the three greatest empires: Britain, France and Northern America. Among numerous authors, Francis Parkman and Alexandre Dumas can be considered as examples of American and French travel writers who wrote respectively *The Oregon Trail* (1849) and *Adventures in Algeria* (1848).

Review of the Literature

Both Parkman’s *The Oregon Trail* and Dumas’s *Adventures in Algeria* have received their share of scholarly criticism and attention. The two works have been considered as pro-imperialist travelogues which exoticize and discredit the lands they describe. For example, *The Oregon Trail* (1849) has been the target of many scholars who questioned the cultural prejudices in the narrative and Parkman’s attitude towards the Indians and Mexicans during his journey. In an article entitled ‘Francis Parkman on the Oregon Trail: A Study in Cultural Prejudice’, L.Hugh Moore argues that a close study of the work reveals its nature “not as a serious study of the West but rather a drama of cultural confrontation”⁵. He points out that despite Parkman’s effort to detach himself from his culture and his surrounding environment, he could not escape falling in the traps of prejudice. Parkman in his portrayal of the ‘natives’ has measured their culture, customs and beliefs by the standards of his society⁶. According to Moore, Parkman’s racial attitude towards the Indian way of life denotes his failure to understand and consider a culture that is different from his own. Other cultural prejudices are also manifested in Parkman’s treatment of the Mexicans and his assumption about them, as being inherently cruel.

Another article entitled ‘*The Oregon Trail* and the US-Mexican War: Appropriations of Counter-Imperial Dissent’, written by Nicholas Lawrence, discusses *The Oregon Trail*’s engagement with the US-Mexican War (1846-1848). Lawrence argues that Parkman’s stand

regarding the war was an ambiguous one.

According to him, Parkman endorsed the United States' first foreign war patriotically and promoted the great expansionist movement. However, his position was not explicitly reflected in his work. He asserts:

The most recent edition on *The Oregon Trail* suggests that in the popular mind, at least one component of our vision of the West has remained remarkably stable through time: a desire to avoid the complex and deeply troubled political history of a region more happily conceived in terms of adventure, innocent hardihood, and libertarian exceptionalism.⁷

It is obvious from this quotation that Parkman avoids including politics in his travelogue. He rather tends to consider this episode of the United States' history only as an amusing part of his adventurous journey. Yet, Lawrence states that Parkman's narrative serves as a reminder to the readers about the slavery issue as being a tracker "of the nation's Westward movement"⁸. Yet, in my opinion, little criticism has been conducted in relation to Parkman's behavior concerning Indian culture. Therefore this aspect needs more attention and analysis.

Similarly to *The Oregon Trail*, Dumas's *Adventures in Algeria* (1848) has received much attention and was considered by critics as a pro-imperialist travelogue. In 'Native Mis/Rule and 'Oriental Despotism' in Alexander Dumas's *Adventures in Algeria* (1848) and Rudyard Kipling's *From Sea to Sea, Letters of Travel* (1889)', Siber and Riche shed light on Dumas's view on 'native' rule in Algeria. They both agree that Dumas attributes a set of stereotypes to 'native political structures' during his visit to Algeria. Siber and Riche argue that Dumas's attitude towards Algerian 'structures of power' is meant to justify French colonial presence in Algeria. They also assert that, in Dumas's point of view, "misgovernment fosters the spread of corruption and violence among their subjects and engenders an insecure environment"⁹. Siber and Riche claim that Dumas's prejudiced conception of 'native' rule reinforces French imperial ideology which promotes the idea that colonized peoples are incapable of ruling themselves. According to the authors, Dumas's emphasis on "tyranny",

“corruption” and “misrule”¹⁰, which are customary to Turkish rule in Algeria, is done for the purpose of both supporting the imperial mission of his country and legitimizing French rule over other territories.

Another article about Dumas’s travelogue was written by Gaston Palisser, entitled ‘Alexandre Dumas et l’Algérie’. Palisser discusses the French colonial policy whose main aim was to widen its territories, especially in Africa. To achieve its policy, France sent Dumas on a journey to Algeria, in a “mission littéraire”¹¹ which has as a basic goal the popularization of “cette farouche et mystérieuse El Djazair”¹², recently conquered by the French soldiers. According to Palisser, Dumas was commissioned by the minister Salvandy in order to make Algeria known through his writings. He asserts: C’est la politique coloniale du gouvernement désireux de mieux faire connaître l’Algérie, afin d’y attirer un grand nombre de colons qui offre enfin à Dumas l’occasion d’y aller voir de plus près.¹³ It is the colonial policy of the government, anxious to make Algeria better known so as to draw the attention of a great number of settlers, ultimately offering Dumas the occasion to look closely. (Translation mine).

By so doing, the French colonial government purposefully wanted to capture the attention of its citizens and encourage them to settle there. In fact, Dumas’s mission was to celebrate the victories of the French army in Africa in order to incite the aspiring colonizers to set foot on this land and ensure the continuity and development of their country’s empire. In spite of the scholarly attention devoted to Dumas’s literary mission in his travelogue, it seems to me that critics have somehow neglected the author’s own point of view in relation to France’s expansionist ideology. Therefore, it would be interesting to shed light on this perspective.

It follows from the above Review of the Literature that each of the two works has been already studied, through different perspectives. However, the two works have not been brought together before. Therefore, the main concern of this dissertation is to study and compare Francis Parkman's *The Oregon Trail* (1849) and Alexandre Dumas's *Adventures in Algeria* (1848), in the light of a postcolonial perspective, in terms of similarities and differences.

Issue and Working Hypotheses

The aim of this research paper is to compare Francis Parkman's *The Oregon Trail* (1849) and Alexandre Dumas's *Adventures in Algeria* (1848) in terms of similarities and differences. To my best knowledge, little comparison has been carried out in relation to this topic and this is what primarily motivated me to conduct this study. My first hypothesis is that the two works have a lot of things in common, but my discussion will be narrowed down to two aspects which are: the misrepresentation of the natives and the ambivalence of colonial discourse. Concerning differences, my second hypothesis suggests that the major difference that lies between the two works is in the authors' respective nations' ideologies, which are used to accomplish the imperial mission and the way they are supported by the two authors in their works.

First, I aim to study the way in which descriptions in both works denigrate and otherize 'Indians' and 'Arabs' as 'native' inhabitants in the two narratives by making use of stereotypes and prejudices as part of the colonialist and Orientalist discourse. Second, I intend to analyze the way in which the two authors shift from stigmatizing and marginalizing the 'native' as inferior, to depicting him as conforming to the European norms. Third, it is part of my concern to study both Parkman's and Dumas's engagement in supporting the American and French empires by setting out their colonial ideologies.

To deal with this issue, I intend to base our analysis on postcolonial concepts borrowed from Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), his *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) and Homi K. Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994).

Said argues that the study of 'Orientalism' as a discourse enables us to understand how European culture managed to produce the Orient on the different perspectives¹⁴. Throughout *Orientalism*, Said tries to demonstrate how Western culture has gained its strength and identity to the detriment of other cultures.

In addition to an introduction, methods and materials, the discussion of the present dissertation is divided into three sections. The first section examines the way in which the two authors describe and represent the natives in their works. As for the second section, it explores the ambivalence of the discourse of colonialism in Parkman's and Dumas's narratives. The third section is devoted to the study of the two authors' celebration of their nations' colonial policies and their justification of the 'civilizing mission'.

Endnotes

¹. Casey Blanton, *Travel Writing: the Self and the World (genres in context)*, (London: Routledge, 2002), 1-2.

². Ibid, 5.

³. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), 2.

⁴. Ibid, 99.

⁵. L.Hugh Moore, "Francis Parkman on the Oregon Trail: A Study in Cultural Prejudice", in *Western American Literature*, Vol.12, No.3 (FALL 1977), 185, accessed on: 9 January 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43018038>.

⁶. Ibid, 196.

⁷. Nicholas Lawrence, "Francis Parkman's *The Oregon Trail* and the US-Mexican War: Appropriations of Counter-Imperial Dissent", in *Western American Literature*, Vol.43, No.4 (Winter 2009) p378, accessed on: 6 March 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43022674>

⁸. Ibid, 381.

⁹. Siber.M and Riche.B, “Native Mis/Rule and ‘Oriental Despotism’ in Alexandre Dumas’s *Adventures in Algeria* (1846) and Rudyard Kipling’s *From Sea to Sea: Letters of Travel* (1889), in *Asian Journal of Humanity, Art and Literature* 1,9-14 (Asian Business Consortium, 2014), 72.

¹⁰. Ibid, 72.

¹¹.Gaston Palisser, “Alexandre Dumas et L’Algérie”,http://alger-roi.fr/Alger/litterature/pdf/28_dumas_algerianiste113.pdf , accessed on: 11 April 2017.

¹². Ibid.

¹³. Ibid.

¹⁴. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin,2003), p 3.

III. Methods and Materials

1. Methods

The theoretical framework

This dissertation studies misrepresentation, colonial discourse and the celebration of imperial power in Francis Parkman's *The Oregon Trail* (1849) and Alexandre Dumas's *Adventures in Algeria* (1848). To accomplish our study, I have decided to rely on Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) and Bhabha's *The Location of Culture* (1994).

a. Orientalism

My choice of Edward Said's *Orientalism* is justified by the fact that Said has disclosed several facets of Western representation of the non-European societies and peoples. According to him, Orientalism is a European creation of the Orient which

expresses and represents that part culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles.¹⁵

It follows from this quotation that, for Said, Orientalism as a way of thinking can be considered as a form of discourse based upon Western domination over other territories. It is true that Said has centered his study and analysis on the Orient, but *Orientalism* is not geographically limited. Said does not consider the Orient as a geographical space solely but rather as an ideological construction. Therefore, his ideas can be extended to the study of relations of domination namely those between the colonized and colonizer. Therefore, I found it relevant to carry out my study of Dumas's *Adventures in Algeria* and Parkman's *The Oregon Trail* in the light of Said's *Orientalism*. In fact, Said explains that Western representations of all that is non-Western are inaccurate and distorted. He claims that writers promote the idea that such "exotic beings"¹⁶ and places cannot represent themselves and need

to be represented by the West. Henceforth, the stereotyped image and the received ideas about ‘unfamiliar spaces’ are accentuated namely by the use of a “limited vocabulary and imagery”¹⁷ to represent and speak for them. This discourse is prevalent in travel literature which, basically, aims to celebrate and glorify the ‘white man’s’ civilization in contrast to the non-white one. Parkman’s *The Oregon Trail* and Dumas’s *Adventures in Algeria* are no exceptions since they comprise instances of racial and cultural prejudices. In the description of their journeys and encounters with the natives, both authors attribute a bundle of stereotypes to Indians and Arabs. Indeed, Said argues that travel writing “makes a significant contribution to building the Orientalist discourse”¹⁸ by minimizing and dehumanizing other cultures as a means to legitimize Western hegemony over the non-white world.

b. The Location of Culture

In support of Said’s notion of Orientalist misrepresentation, I have resorted to Bhabha’s analysis of colonial discourse to consolidate my study. By extending Said’s idea, Bhabha has explained how colonial discourse functions and has identified the “stereotype”¹⁹ as one of its primary strategies. He asserts:

The stereotype can also be seen as that particular ‘fixated’ form of the colonial subject which facilitates colonial relations, and sets up a discursive form of racial and cultural opposition in terms of which colonial power is exercised.²⁰

Bhabha points out that the stereotype is a complex strategy that establishes a set of racial and cultural distinctions to discriminate the colonized people and “enable colonial authority”²¹. Bhabha claims that colonial discourse as a form of domination and ‘governmentality’ aims to stigmatize and otherize ‘subject nations’ and peoples. He also clarifies that the main objective of this discourse is to justify and reinforce the ‘encroachment’ of imperial powers over their colonies. Considering that Parkman’s *The Oregon Trail* (1849) and Dumas’s *Adventures in Algeria* (1848) are two travel narratives which represent negatively Indians and Arabs, I found it appropriate to apply Bhabha’s notion of ‘colonial stereotype’.

Bhabha's analysis of colonial discourse goes beyond representation and stereotype. In fact, he has developed several other concepts that are central to the understanding of the relationship between the colonizer and colonized. Among these concepts, 'mimicry' and 'ambivalence' will provide a basis to my study of the ambivalence of colonial discourse in Parkman's and Dumas's works. In the fourth section of *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha discusses the authority of colonial discourse and questions its absoluteness. He identifies mimicry as "a sign of double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualizes power"²². Bhabha claims that mimicry, similarly to the stereotype, is a strategy of colonial power yet, operating in a quite different manner. He explains it as an imitation of the colonizer performed by the colonized but with a certain degree of difference. More simply, mimicry according to Bhabha stands for a mode of colonial representation which simultaneously accepts and rejects the colonized as an appropriated equal. However, this paradoxical attitude can become a serious threat to colonial authority. Bhabha claims that this binarism falls into ambivalence which denotes the complex attraction and repulsion that marks the relationship between the colonizer and colonized. He clarifies that this ambivalence stands for the colonizer's anxiety to keep his identity as superior. Yet "the menace of mimicry", according to Bhabha, "is its double vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority"²³. Bhabha's use of mimicry and ambivalence is meant to demonstrate how colonial authority is undermined and disclose the failure of such strategies to secure the stability and integrity of the empire.

c. Culture and Imperialism

Edward Said considers *Culture and Imperialism* to be a sequel to *Orientalism*, in which he attempted to extend his ideas on the relationship between the empire and its colonies. This is what motivated me to rely on Said's analysis, in my study of the celebration

of empire. Said starts by discussing imperialism in general terms. He assumes that “ at some very basic level, imperialism means thinking about, settling on, controlling land that you do not possess, that is distant, that is lived on and owned by others”.²⁴

Said goes on to explore the traits of the American empire and reveal its characteristics. He also discusses the views about its specialness and uniqueness. He argues that with its Westward expansion, the United States as a newly rising imperial power “emerges to rival the European one”²⁵. Said also explains the hegemony of the imperial powers over their overseas territories and examines the nature of this relationship. As a case study, he chooses the French empire and analyzes the strategies it implemented over its colonies. France’s ideology for Said was more like “a science of ruling inferiors whose resources, lands and destinies France was in charge of”²⁶. Said’s analysis reveals that the United States and France maintain different views and adopt different policies. This is what initially motivated me to use his *Culture and Imperialism* to study the celebration of empire in Parkman’s *The Oregon Trail* and Dumas’s *Adventures in Algeria*. Said claims that while France uses assimilation and expropriation to keep hold over its territories, the United States goes beyond and claims itself to be destined to rule mankind and “dictate its views about law and peace all over the world”²⁷. Yet, Said concludes that, despite the difference in strategies and policies, it is needless to say that the objective is one and the relationship between the empire and the colony is unchangeably that of colonizer and colonized.

2. Materials

a-*The Oregon Trail*

The Oregon Trail is a book written by Francis Parkman and published in 1849. Before it was officially published as a book, it was first serialized from 1847 to 1849 in Knickerbokers Magazine²⁸. The book narrates Parkman’s journey to the Oregon territory from St Louis to the Rocky Mountains, with his cousin Quincy A. Shaw. Parkman’s “tour of

curiosity and amusement”²⁹ took place in the spring of 1846 and coincided with important events in American history. The author’s expedition started from St Louis where he left to Westport. Once there, Parkman had to complete his preparations for his adventurous journey namely securing mules and horses. There, he met with an old acquaintance of his, a British Captain with his brother and his friend. The five men arranged to set out for the expedition together. Yet, when they reached the South Fork of the Platte, Parkman and his cousin decided to break from the party. Riding a few miles further, they reached Fort Laramie where Parkman decided to join an Indian tribe to achieve another purpose of his journey: “observing the Indian character”³⁰ since he was particularly interested in Indian manners and attitudes. During his stay with the Ogallallah tribe, Parkman was amazed and fascinated by Indian life. He admired the Indian ritual of smoking which is “seldom omitted”³¹. Indeed, Parkman was so struck by Indian customs, namely the dog feast which he enthusiastically endeavored to prepare for the Ogallallah villagers to show his congeniality and sympathy. Yet, Parkman got seriously ill. He was constantly attacked by crises of dysentery. But thanks to calomel, he overcame his delicate situation. Parkman was also interested in hunting buffalo and paid much attention to this sport in his travelogue. He amused himself by chasing bulls and killing them. His detailed descriptions of the hunting expeditions in which he took part along with his cousin and their guide Henry Chatillon, demonstrate his fascination by this aspect of prairie life. After having roamed the Oregon trail among the Indians in the wild West, Parkman decided to return “to home and civilization”³², though so reluctant to leave those “arid deserts”³³. Parkman as a historian and eyewitness of life in the wilderness, accounted in his travelogue for the different tribes of Indians , trappers, emigrants as well as the historical events that marked the occupation of the American frontier.

b-Adventures in Algeria

Adventures in Algeria is a book written by Alexandre Dumas and published in 1848. It narrates Dumas's journey from Cadiz to North Africa aboard a French warship named the *Véloce*. The author was in a mission and his duty was to account for France's recently captured Algiers. He started from Cadiz to reach Morocco, where he was struck by the Arab market. After attending a Jewish wedding, Dumas took leave for Algiers passing through Gibraltar. While crossing the Mediterranean, he came to learn about the French prisoners at Melilla and was so anxious to rescue them that his mission was to be diverted for a while. During the operation, Dumas expressed his distrust of the Arabs and his suspicion towards them. He labels them with "treachery"³⁴, greed and hostility. Once the prisoners were rescued and celebrations completed, Dumas was finally to reach Algiers. To his disappointment, Marshal Bugeaud, who was governor general of Algiers at that time, left for Oran for political matters. On this occurrence, Dumas decided to visit Tunis while waiting for him to come back. When he got there, Dumas was fascinated by Tunis's white buildings and its streets and, mostly, by the beauty of Arab and Moorish women. He had also visited the tomb of St Louis, the French hero whom he admired. This done, he left again for Algiers passing through Bona and Philippeville. Once back in Algiers, Dumas excitedly accounted for the magnificent views, the wonderful mountains and the Eastern buildings that characterized this part of Africa. He was also fascinated by the hospitality and "friendliness of its people"³⁵. Having experienced amusement and gathered enough data to accomplish his mission, Dumas bid farewell to magical Africa.

Endnotes

¹⁵. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), 2.

¹⁶. Ibid, 1.

- ¹⁷. Ibid, 60.
- ¹⁸. Ibid, 99.
- ¹⁹. Homi K.Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 66.
- ²⁰. Ibid, 78.
- ²¹. David Huddart, *Homi K.Bhabha* (London: Routledge, 2006), 55.
- ²². Homi K.Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 86.
- ²³. Ibid, 88.
- ²⁴. Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 7.
- ²⁵. Ibid, 63.
- ²⁶. Ibid, 170.
- ²⁷. Ibid, 286.
- ²⁸. Nicholas Lawrence, “Francis Parkman’s *The Oregon Trail* and the US-Mexican War: Appropriations of Counter-Imperial Dissent”, in *Western American Literature*, Vol.43, No.4 (Winter 2009) p372, accessed on: 6 March 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43022674>.
- ²⁹. Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E.Merrill, 1910), 21.
- ³⁰. Ibid, 175.
- ³¹. Ibid, 151.
- ³². Ibid, 524.
- ³³. Ibid, 525.
- ³⁴. Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia: Chilton Company-book Division1959), 62.
- ³⁵. Ibid, 85.

III. Results and Discussion

The following dissertation studies the colonial discourse and the misrepresentation of ‘native’ people in Alexandre Dumas’s *Adventures in Algeria* (1846) and Francis Parkman’s *The Oregon Trail* (1849). To carry out this study, I have decided to rely on Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978), his *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) and Homi K. Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture* (1991). My choice of these theoretical frameworks is motivated by the fact that Said has covered nearly all the aspects of colonial discourse, while Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture* has extended some of Said’s concepts and goes beyond the geographical limitations. The investigation has revealed that both authors are pro-imperialist writers. In order to legitimize their claims, they falsify and distort the image of the indigenous people in order to reinforce the discourse of colonialism. Yet, when it comes to the celebration of their respective empires, the two authors differ in the way they praise and pay tribute to their nations’ ideologies.

The study reveals that Dumas and Parkman portray the ‘natives’ in a fallacious and injurious manner. They attribute them a set of stereotypical descriptions as a way to justify and substantiate colonization. The two notions of ‘misrepresentation’ and ‘colonial stereotype’ developed by Said and Bhabha unveil the core of colonial discourse which is used to construct the identity of North American and North African ‘natives’ as inferior to the white colonizer. Both authors represent the inhabitants as ‘backward’, ‘savage’ and ‘primitive’. They argue that the barbarity of their manners and culture require the intervention of the white man to bring enlightenment and civilization.

Bhabha’s theory of ambivalence of colonial discourse has been of great usefulness as it helped me to discern Dumas’s and Parkman’s ambivalent attitudes towards the ‘natives’. Through the implementation of Bhabha’s concept of mimicry, I came to disclose the two

authors' uncertainty and the tension they experience when facing the colonized. Their shift from devaluing the culture of the colonized to admiring it undermines the authority of colonial discourse and reveals its superficiality and hollowness. The reading of *The Oregon Trail* and *Adventures in Algeria* in the light of Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism* displays the two authors' attitudes towards their nations' engagement with the imperial enterprise. Said explains how the United States as a new empire differs from the other Western powers and discusses France's ideology in North Africa. While France's ideology is more about assimilating the 'natives' and reforming them, the United States' policy is more about expansion and domestication of the wilderness and populating the Western frontier. Both Dumas and Parkman celebrate their nations' ideologies and support imperialism as a 'civilizing mission'.

Chapter One: Colonial Stereotypes of the 'Natives' in Parkman's and Dumas's works

Stereotypes are preconceived images based on false information. In postcolonial criticism, they constitute a basic element of colonialist and Orientalist discourse. They are considered as an ideological operation which identifies the colonized people as 'other'. In *The Location of Culture*, Homi K. Bhabha defines the 'colonial stereotype' as:

that particular 'fixated' form of the colonial subject which facilitates colonial relations, and sets up a discursive form of racial and cultural opposition in terms of which colonial power is exercised.³⁶

According to him, the stereotype is a system of identification that fixes the identity of the colonized and allows the colonizer to exercise power. In this perspective, Edward Said draws attention to the distinction between the 'Orient' and the 'Occident' which characterizes orientalist discourse. He asserts that "such divisions are generalities whose use historically and culturally has been to press the importance of the distinction between some men and some other men."³⁷ For him, the colonial discourse is used by the West to render the Orient

‘visible’; it is reinforced by institutions, conventions and traditions which perpetuate the standardized image of the Orient, and by extension other colonized spaces, as ‘remote’ and ‘exotic’. Therefore, the Western cultural discourse becomes a dominating power and reinforces the stereotyped representation of the colonized people. Both Said and Bhabha share the viewpoint that the main function of colonial discourse is to justify the hegemony and domination of the colonial administration.

To begin with, one of the most recurrent stereotypes used by Parkman and Dumas in their works to describe the ‘natives’ is that of ‘backwardness’. Speaking of backwardness in Parkman’s travelogue is evocative of his description of the ‘native’ Indians of North America as savage and primitive. Throughout the travelogue, he constantly displays degeneracy, barbarity and violence as characteristic features of the Indian race. Parkman’s narrative devotes a prominent part to the Indian way of life in the wild prairies of the Western ‘frontier’. He cautiously scrutinizes each encounter with Indians and recounts each scene with every possible detail. He illustrates their backwardness by portraying their habits and manners. For instance, while he was at Fort Laramie waiting for the rest of the party to join him, he describes a dispute that occurred between the emigrants and the Indians. He asserts:

The Ogallallahs, the Brulés, and other Western bands of the Dahcotahs are *thorough savages*, unchanged by any contact with civilization. Not one of them can speak a European tongue, or has ever visited an American settlement.³⁸

This quotation vividly illustrates Parkman’s view about the Indians as being primitive. He supports his assumption by the idea that the Indian is not likely to become civilized since despite all the attempts made by the white man to enlighten him and awaken his reason, he remains unchanged and backward. By such a prejudiced description of the Indians, Parkman tends to “make out of every observable detail a generalization and out of every generalization an immutable law.”³⁹

During his stay with the Ogallallah tribe for several weeks, Parkman had the opportunity to

closely watch the Indian and observe him while doing his daily business. He makes use of his experiences to keep the distinction between the two races and radically reject whatever is different from all that is 'white'. According to him, Indians are best seen as warriors since wars are the only thing that they champion at:

It is chiefly this that saves them from lethargy and utter abasement. Without its powerful stimulus they would be like the unwarlike tribes beyond the mountains, who are scattered among the caves and the rocks like beasts living on roots and reptiles. These latter have little of humanity except the form.⁴⁰

This quotation suggests that Indians have no other qualities or virtues except their warlike exploits.

Unlike the white man whose countless merits had destined him to civilize the rest of the world, the Indian, for Parkman, is no more than a wild beast dwelling in the vast wilderness. Such prejudices reveal the author's misunderstanding of the Indian community and his failure to accept Indians as they are. Instead, he insists that when dealing with Indians "a civilized white man [...] must be conscious that an impassable gulf lies between him and his red brethren of the prairie."⁴¹ Therefore, Parkman evokes his sense of superiority throughout the narrative and contrasts it to the assumed inferiority of the Indians.

Similarly, Dumas's account of his journey from Cadiz to Algiers reflects his misconceptions about the 'natives' whom he encountered. For him, Arabs are inferior and other. This idea of inferiority is reinforced by the need to demonstrate European superiority to the "Orient as insinuating danger"⁴². Dumas asserts:

Those fires you see were lit by men of race alien to your own, who regard you as their enemy though you have done them no harm...Once you set foot in that land, even if you evade the *wild beasts*, how shall you escape the enmity of men?⁴³

This quotation suggests that the Arabs are not only hostile but also more dangerous than animals. Dumas's conception of the Arabs is obviously a stereotyped one, definitely based on some previous knowledge and reading about the Arabs. In this perspective, Edward Said asserts:

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.⁴⁴

In the case of Dumas, most of his representations of the Arabs were based on the writings of the French reputed writer Châteaubriand whom he mentions in his travelogue.

The author indeed, recurrently hints to his readers that the Arabs are an uncivilized race and are likely to remain as such. During his visit to Tunis, and while he was at the palace of the Bey, preoccupied with the description of Arab and Moorish women, he asserts:

Remember, the desert Arab of today is still the Arab of the thirteenth and fourteenth century, and, like the *knight of the Middle Ages*, he glories in proving his skill and courage in single combat or in some hazardous enterprise.⁴⁵

This quotation suggests that the current Arab is as barbarous and primitive as his ancestors had been since Antiquity and that he has remained the same, without the slightest change or progress through time. It is worth noting that the comparison which Dumas draws between the Arab and the feudal English knight is not done haphazardly. In fact, it is meant to emphasize the unchanging degree of backwardness of the Arab because during the Middle Ages England witnessed a period of severe degeneracy. The quotation also draws a parallel with the Indian of Parkman in the sense that both the Arab and the Indian are best seen as warriors. Dumas and Parkman appreciate the ‘natives’ only when they are at war and denigrate them in peacetime because it is only during wars that Indians and Arabs manifest their virtues of courage, bravery and energy. As it can be understood from above, one of the crucial stereotypes that prevail in Parkman’s and Dumas’s works is that of backwardness. Such attribution is meant to legitimize European and Western colonial domination over other races under the pretext of their inferiority and incapability to speak for themselves. Therefore, such narratives are meant to reduce the colonized people and minimize their cultural and social foundations.

In support of the notion of primitiveness inherent in colonial subjects, both Parkman and Dumas make reference to the ‘nakedness’ of the ‘natives’ as a sign of lack of civilization. They contrast the advanced white man with the colored one by associating the latter’s ‘undress’ with primitivism. In an article entitled “The Aesthetic of Natives’ Dress and Undress: Colonial Stereotype and Mimicry in Paul Gauguin’s and William Somerset Maugham’s Cultural Forms”, Siber and Riche assert:

‘Nakedness’ can be considered as the physical attribute for primitivism, for it is generally associated with the primitive people who do not bother about covering their bodies.⁴⁶

The authors suggest that nakedness is referred to as a marker of the primitive state of the colonized people whose ‘undress’ denotes their debased and inferior condition. Both Parkman and Dumas make constant reference to the nakedness of the indigenous people whom they encountered during their journeys. Parkman continually hints to the Indian lack or absence of dress. In his account of a morning scene during which the Ogallallahs were preparing to leave their camp in search of buffalo, he declares:

Boys with miniature bows and arrows were wandering over the plains, little *naked* children were running along on foot, and numberless dogs were scampering among the feet of the horses.⁴⁷

It is clear from this quote that Parkman’s portrayal of the children’s absence of dress is meant to distinguish the Indian from the white man by reducing the former’s cultural habits and manners to mere primitiveness.

Similarly to Parkman, Dumas does not fail to allude to the feature of ‘native’ nakedness in his narrative. In a description of an Arab market in Tangier, Dumas asserts:

The market closed at one o’clock, and ten minutes later it was completely deserted, except for little *naked* children searching among the debris for a fig or a raisin.⁴⁸

This quotation reveals Dumas’s stereotypical attitude toward the Arab children which he employs to stress the idea that their physical appearance is a proof of their deficiency.

The author does so to emphasize the connection between nakedness and primitiveness. Siber and Riche quote David Spurr, who asserts that nakedness is “a kind of personal and community attribute that marks the lack of virtue in ‘savage’ people.”⁴⁹. In fact, it may be deduced that Parkman and Dumas do not make an effort to understand the reason behind the nakedness of the children they describe in their travelogues. Instead of taking it as a sign of difference, Parkman and Dumas believe that the lack of dress in the Indian and Arab communities is no more than an indication of the barbaric and uncivilized mode of life which connotes “their fate of being inferior to the white race.”⁵⁰.

Yet, the notion of native ‘undress’ as a sign of savageness is not the only attribute that Parkman and Dumas associate with the ‘natives’ to support the idea of backwardness. They also place the cultural systems of the indigenous people within the wide range of colonial stereotypes which they use to describe them. The two authors consider ‘native’ music as “the savage sublime [which] takes a leasing sense of danger and menace without any real threat”⁵¹.

For instance, Parkman continuously hints to his discontent with Indian music. One evening while he and Shaw were resting in their lodge in the camp, their contemplation of the sky and stars was suddenly interrupted. He asserts:

We could hear the monotonous notes of the *drum* from the Indian village, with the chanting of the war song, deadened in the distance, and the long chorus of quavering yells, where the war dance was going in the largest lodge.⁵²

The word ‘drum’ according to Siber, “is commonly associated with savage rituals that very often imply sacrifice whatever its form”⁵³. In the above quote, the drum is referred to as a ritual performed by the Indians to call for the great spirits’ approval to go to war. Parkman expresses his distaste with the beating of the drums, which stand for native music. Another instance which shows Parkman’s dissatisfaction with the drums is when he retreated to the lodge of his host in the Indian village to rest. He asserts:

Wrapping myself in my blanket I lay down, but had I not been extremely fatigued the noise in the next lodge would have prevented my sleeping. There was the monotonous thumping of the Indian drum, mixed with occasional sharp *yells*, and a chorus chanted by twenty voices.⁵⁴

The word ‘yells’ is used pejoratively to demonstrate well Parkman’s denigration of the Indian music. He considers the sound of the drums extremely disturbing and annoying to the extent of preventing him from sleeping.

Dumas, too seems to be critical of native music in his travelogue. In his description of a Jewish wedding that he attended at Tangier, he declares:

A hundred yards from the house, we could hear tambourines rattling, the scraping of violins and tinkling of little bells, the characteristic music of Morocco with its **strange, barbaric** harmony.⁵⁵

Dumas conveys an “Orientalist prejudice towards non-Western music”⁵⁶ by associating its instruments with barbarity. He also stresses the idea of strangeness to denote his abomination and displeasure with the cultural practices of Moroccan people. Like most travel writers, Parkman and Dumas express their abhorrence and disgust with the cultural customs and systems of the ‘native’ people which they identify as a mark of debasement and primitiveness.

In fact, Parkman and Dumas go beyond native music in their stigmatization of native practices. They are so obsessed with proving the superiority of the Western civilization to the extent of belittling ‘native’ weapons. Parkman in his narrative constantly contrasts his “good rifle”⁵⁷ with the “bows and arrows”⁵⁸ of the Indians which he describes as “*primitive* weapons”⁵⁹. It is another way of saying that Indians are backward not only at the social and cultural levels but also in terms of technology and progress. Dumas shares Parkman’s idea and associates the Arab weapons with inferiority as a feature of the primitive man. In his description of the Arab market he notes that, among all the men he saw “only two or three were armed, and with very *inferior* guns”⁶⁰. Both Parkman and Dumas consider the inferiority of ‘native’ weapons as a mark of primitiveness and discredit.

Yet, backwardness is not the only stereotype that Parkman and Dumas attribute to the 'natives' in the two works. Colonialist discourse recovers an inexhaustible range of prejudices and negative labels when it comes to non-white countries. Bhabha argues that colonial discourse is "a form of governmentality that in marking out a 'subject nation', appropriates, directs and dominates various spheres of activity"⁶¹ According to him, the colonial stereotype is one of the various apparatuses used by the colonial enterprise to ensure its continuity and effectiveness.

Another prominent stereotype in Parkman's and Dumas's works is 'superstition'. Both authors believe that 'native' Indians and Arabs are extremely superstitious. In their descriptions, they eminently illustrate their conceptions relying on the experiences they have witnessed during their journeys. Parkman constantly describes the Indians as superstitious. He thinks that they act according to their beliefs rather than to rationality. He also asserts that it is common among Indian community that spirits are divine and should be venerated. In fact, they play a major role in taking important decisions, namely those concerning tribal wars. There exists a set of rituals that are to be performed by the person willing to solicit the spirit's highly accredited aid. Like most of the Indian tribes, the Ogallallahs believe in the sacredness of the spirits and conform to their dictates. Among the numerous stories that the elders of this village told Parkman, while he volunteered to join their camp earlier at Fort Laramie, the one of Le Borgne received particular interest. When he was young, Le Borgne submitted, like most of his tribesmen, to a ritual consisting of fasting and praying to the Great Spirit⁶². The spirit's revelation was to be communicated through a vision whereby Le Borgne would be told by an antelope, which in Ogallallah tradition is a messenger of peace that "he was not to follow the path of war; that a life of peace and tranquility was marked out for him."⁶³. This quotation singularly illustrates how extremely superstition is present in Indian community. Another significative instance that captured Parkman's attention concerning

superstition and its prevailing practices in Indian culture was the story of thunder. Old men of the Ogallallah tribe believed that thunder was some sort of a black evil bird which roams the sky, sweeping along the peaks of the Black Hills; this bird had loud and roaring wings and once it flapped them, they struck lightening from the water. During a conversation with the elders Parkman recounts the story of the association of ‘thunder-fighters’, as had been told by Mene-Seela:

Whenever a storm which they wished to averse was threatening; the thunder-fighters would take their bows and arrows, their guns, their magic drum, and a sort of whistle, made out of the wingbone of the war eagle. Thus equipped, they would run out and fire at the raising cloud, whooping, yelling and beating their drum, to frighten it down again.⁶⁴

This quotation prominently illustrates the superstitious aspect of Indian culture and beliefs. Indeed, Parkman reflects them as mere manifestations of mysticism which debase the Indian of humanity.

Similarly, Dumas in his narrative includes examples of superstition that reign over Arab culture and community. Dumas depicts the Arabs as being deeply attached to their superstitions, and like the Indians they stick to rites which are portrayed as totally strange, inapprehensible and most of all primitive. He illustrates his assumption by relating the story of the widely acknowledged ‘Marabout’ of Sidi-Fathallah, who was reputed for the magical power of curing women from sterility. Dumas attentively describes the steps of the ritual:

A woman seeking the blessing of fruitfulness must slide from top to bottom of this slope twenty-five times; five times face downward, five times on her back, five times on her left side, five times on her right, and the last five head first. Having performed this ritual, she spends an hour praying with the marabout.⁶⁵

This quotation denotes Dumas’s conception of the Arabs as belonging to primitive, ridiculous and uncivilized culture whose chief characteristic is strangeness and fantasy.

Another instance of superstition which Dumas endeavored to narrate to his readers is the one he heard from the Arab trader at a bazaar stall. The latter offered him a bargain on a lion skin whereupon Dumas recalled the French officer Jules Gerrard known as “lion-killer”⁶⁶.

It turned out that the trader knew well Gerrard and had heard of his absolute skills in hunting.

Dumas notes that Arabs have superstitious beliefs concerning lions; he asserts that:

They believe that the lion can understand human speech in all languages, and when they hunt him they are careful to bear this in mind [...] Yet, they think, a lion is terrified of women and will not attack one unless hunger has driven him to desperation. They credit the lion with all the noble virtues, chivalry, and the ability to recognize and spare any adversary whose courage is equal to his own. A coward he will slay and eat at leisure, leaving only the hands and feet.⁶⁷

This quotation denotes the precariousness and irrationality of Arab thinking and supports Dumas's view on the Orient as "a place of romance, exotic beings"⁶⁸. In fact, this description aims to reduce the Arab and his religious beliefs to childlike experiences. Dumas purposefully makes recourse to this specific stereotype to criticize the culture of the colonized and render it as nothing but "a living tableau of queerness"⁶⁹. The above-mentioned stereotypes used by Dumas and Parkman are not the only ones which Indians and Arabs are subjected to. Both narratives are full of stereotyped descriptions whose chief aim is, as Bhabha argues,

to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction.⁷⁰

By this assertion, Bhabha clarifies the assumption that colonial discourse stresses the cultural, social and racial differences between the colonizer and the colonized. This long-maintained distinction is used by the Western and European powers to extend their foothold of civilization in different places of the world, under the slogan of 'the civilizing mission'.

In addition to backwardness and superstition, treachery is a defect that both authors use to label the Indians and Arabs. Parkman considers the deficiencies of Indian society and dismisses the abhorrent features of its people, namely chaos and disorder that seem characteristic to the "diminutive Indian"⁷¹ of the wild West. In the beginning of his narrative, Parkman speaks about a widely dreaded Indian tribe named the Pawnees. Its inhabitants were reputed for treachery and cruelty and known throughout the country for their monstrous

murders and robberies. When they were coming near the Platte, Parkman and his companions came across two white men belonging to an emigrant party who went to recover their oxen. Neglectful as they were, they forgot their rifles. They were caught by Pawnee Indians and within a pace, they would have been slaughtered. Parkman asserts:

The inhabitants are wandering over the plains, a *treacherous* cowardly banditti, who by a thousand acts of pillage and murder have deserved summary chastisement at the hands of government.⁷²

Yet, these two emigrants were not the only victims of the dishonest and deceitful Indian tribes. At Fort Laramie, Indian traders took advantage of the emigrants' lack of experience in trading and made them targets of cheating and trickery. Parkman asserts:

They were plundered and *cheated* without mercy. In one bargain concluded in my presence, I calculated the profits that accrued to the fort, and found that at the lowest estimate they exceeded eighteen hundred percent.⁷³

He strongly denounces such "system of contemptible *trickery*"⁷⁴ which characterizes most dealings with the Indians.

Parkman resorts to this negative description in order to strengthen the bunch of stereotypes and prejudices with which the Indian character is fixed. He wants to keep firm hold of the generalized image of the Indian as barbarous and primitive to disguise his fear of any possibility of change whose consequences will be definitely disturbing. By disturbing, I mean the prospect of the Indian becoming an equal of the white man and thus, the balance between the two races and cultures.

Dumas, in his turn, labels the Arabs with treachery all along his narrative. He associates them with dishonesty, robbery and suspicion. His racist attitudes towards the Arabs are so explicitly manifested in his travelogue. In fact, he recurrently hints to the Arab as despicable and hostile. As an instance, he recounts his hurried return from Gibraltar and the sail along with his comrades, to Oran in order to rescue French prisoners. Since the warship

was put at Dumas's disposal to lead his expedition, he felt inclined and anxious to save his compatriots. However, the operation in such a "hostile land"⁷⁵ was of expected difficulty. The plan of the rescue was by no means possible without the help of the Arabs. Yet, despite an agreement on a ransom of six thousand duros, the French were always on "guard against *treachery*"⁷⁶ since the Arabs were "by nature extremely suspicious"⁷⁷. Dumas willingly insinuates the distrust and deceit that, according to him, were chief features of the Arab character. Therefore, "the whole affair had an atmosphere of mystery and tragic uncertainty that characterizes all dealings with men of the Arab race"⁷⁸. This vehement stigmatization and fixed image of the Arab as a "tyrant"⁷⁹ is motivated by the author's will to preserve his superiority over the colonial subjects "whose hearts are full of trickery, whose moods can change in a flash."⁸⁰

Another instance that illustrates Dumas's attempt to authorize colonial power and impose an image of the Arab as treacherous and disloyal is the story of Colonel De Montagnac who was trapped by an Arab tribe named Beni-Snanens. They sent him "a *treacherous* message and so caused the disaster of Sidi-Ibrahim"⁸¹ whose casualties were phenomenal to the French army. Dumas describes the Arabs with such a pejorative manner so as to disqualify them as "two-faced, perfidious allies who fondle with one hand and strike with the other."⁸² Dumas does so to falsify the image of the colonial subjects and deny their identity. It goes without saying that the colonial stereotype functions on the basis of discarding the colonized and disavowing his presence. Edward Said argues that "the Orient was reconstructed, reassembled, crafted, in short, born out of the Orientalist's efforts"⁸³. Considering Dumas's attitudes and conceptions of the Arabs in his narrative, it may be deduced that he is Orientalist. Therefore, it can be assumed that the stereotypical discourse used by Dumas is based on a false foundation.

Both Parkman and Dumas depict Indians and Arabs as backward, inferior and primitive races which need an enlightened and civilized race to represent them and speak for them “on a theatrical stage whose audience, manager, and actors are for Europe, and only Europe.”⁸⁴. Colonial discourse functions on binary oppositions in which the colonizing force creates a space to exercise power over the colonized. It is also a system of representation which places the West at the “center”⁸⁵ of all that goes with positive attributes such as civilization, knowledge, and power and, at the “periphery”⁸⁶, the rest of the world which goes with all that is negative such as backwardness, savagery and barbarity. Colonial discourse operates on the basis of fixing the identity of the colonized and simultaneously disavowing it. However, this paradoxical mode results in “an anxious colonial knowledge”⁸⁷ which splits the authority of colonial discourse and reveals the threat of its ambivalence. Therefore, the next chapter will try to explore the altering attitudes of Parkman and Dumas towards the ‘natives’ in their travelogues by making recourse to Bhabha’s concepts of ‘mimicry’ and ‘ambivalence’.

Endnotes

³⁶. Homi K.Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 78.

³⁷. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), 45.

³⁸. Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E.Merrill, 1910), 169.

³⁹. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), 86.

⁴⁰. Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E.Merrill, 1910), 213-14.

⁴¹. Ibid, 376.

⁴². Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), 57.

⁴³. Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia: Chilton Company-book Division 1959), 15.

- ⁴⁴. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), 20.
- ⁴⁵. Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia: Chilton Company-book Division 1959), 115.
- ⁴⁶. Mouloud Siber, Bouteldja Riche, “The Aesthetic of Natives’ Dress and Undress: Colonial Stereotype and Mimicry in Paul Gauguin’s and William Somerset Maugham’s Cultural Forms”, *Revue des pratiques langagières*, 2013, 40-41.
- ⁴⁷. Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E. Merrill, 1910), 288.
- ⁴⁸. Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia: Chilton Company-book Division 1959), 27.
- ⁴⁹. Mouloud Siber, Bouteldja Riche, “The Aesthetic of Natives’ Dress and Undress: Colonial Stereotype and Mimicry in Paul Gauguin’s and William Somerset Maugham’s Cultural Forms”, *Revue des pratiques langagières*, 2013, 29.
- ⁵⁰. Ibid, 45.
- ⁵¹. Bennett Zon, *Representing non-Western Music in Nineteenth Century Britain*, quoted in Mouloud, Siber. Rudyard Kipling, Edward Morgan Forster, William Somerset Maugham and Joseph Conrad: *The British Imperial Tradition and The Individual Talent*, (Doctorate Thesis, Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou, 2012), 46.
- ⁵². Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E. Merrill, 1910), 216.
- ⁵³. Mouloud, Siber. Rudyard Kipling, Edward Morgan Forster, William Somerset Maugham and Joseph Conrad: *The British Imperial Tradition and The Individual Talent*, (Doctorate Thesis, Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou, 2012), 46.
- ⁵⁴. Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E. Merrill, 1910), 322.
- ⁵⁵. Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia: Chilton Company-book Division 1959), 121.
- ⁵⁶. Bennett Zon, *Representing non-Western Music in Nineteenth Century Britain*, quoted in Mouloud, Siber. Rudyard Kipling, Edward Morgan Forster, William Somerset Maugham and Joseph Conrad: *The British Imperial Tradition and The Individual Talent*, (Doctorate Thesis, Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou, 2012), 46.
- ⁵⁷. Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E. Merrill, 1910), 528.

- ^{58.} Ibid, 38.
- ^{59.} Ibid, 181.
- ^{60.} Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia: Chilton Company-book Division 1959), 22.
- ^{61.} Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 70.
- ^{62.} Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E. Merrill, 1910), 216.
- ^{63.} Ibid, 216.
- ^{64.} Ibid, 279.
- ^{65.} Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia: Chilton Company-book Division 1959), 121.
- ^{66.} Ibid, 138.
- ^{67.} Ibid, 139.
- ^{68.} Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), 1.
- ^{69.} Ibid, 103.
- ^{70.} Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 70.
- ^{71.} Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E. Merrill, 1910), 162.
- ^{72.} Ibid, 102.
- ^{73.} Ibid, 166.
- ^{74.} Ibid, 166.
- ^{75.} Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia: Chilton Company-book Division 1959), 15.
- ^{76.} Ibid, 62.
- ^{77.} Ibid, 63.
- ^{78.} Ibid, 67.
- ^{79.} Ibid, 67.
- ^{80.} Ibid, 67.

^{81.} Ibid, 73.

^{82.} Ibid, 75.

^{83.} Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), 87.

^{84.} Ibid, 72.

^{85.} Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 123.

^{86.} Ibid, 123.

^{87.} David Huddart, Homi K.Bhabha (London: Routledge, 2006), 35.

Chapter Two: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse

Colonial discourse places the West at the center of the world and dismisses the non-white societies. It initially rejects the cultural and social systems of the colonized and considers them as 'depraved' and 'strange'. As it has been previously mentioned in this dissertation, stereotyping constitutes a basic element of colonial discourse. It is through stereotypes that the colonizers exercise their power over the colonized. Constructed upon the binaries of superior/inferior, civilized/backward, Western/Oriental, colonial discourse functions on behalf of the promotion of Western and European imperialism.

Among the mechanisms which fuel the stereotypical discourse with authority, mimicry seems to be central. As a concept in postcolonial studies, it has been defined by Homi K.Bhabha as "one of the most elusive and effective strategies of colonial power and knowledge."⁸⁸ In other words, mimicry according to Bhabha is a mode of colonial discourse which articulates the difference of the colonized and "fixes the colonial subject as 'partial' presence"⁸⁹. Yet, as a concept, mimicry is different from the stereotype, though both reinforce the power of the colonial enterprise. The stereotype is initially meant to discard the colonized and completely deny their difference by dehumanizing their identity, religion, culture... etc. Meanwhile, mimicry operates on a double vision of the colonized: it accepts their difference and acknowledges their integration to the colonizer's values; yet, it equally refuses them as similar by maintaining their image as inappropriate and inadequate. In short, the stereotype functions on the basis of the exclusion of the colonized while mimicry maneuvers as a double-edged sword which simultaneously admits and rejects colonial presence.

In colonial literature, mimicry stands for the representation of the colonial subject who tries to imitate the white man's manners, law, politics and culture. In this process of copying the colonizer's attitudes, the 'mimic' person suppresses his/her own cultural identity,

desperately seeking access to the same position of power as that of the colonizer. In Bhabha's point of view, mimicry as a strategy of colonial discourse used by the colonizer to "produce compliant subjects who reproduce its assumptions, values and habits"⁹⁰, betrays the colonizer's attempt to fix and control the indigenous cultures. It is this paradoxical attitude of recognition and disavowal of the colonized that might be identified as "the ambivalence of colonial discourse"⁹¹.

Parkman's and Dumas's works vigorously illustrate their ambivalent positions regarding the 'natives' and their culture, customs, beliefs and way of life in general. In their descriptions, both authors shift from belittling the cultures of the colonized to normalizing them. Encouraged by their will to prove the superiority of the white man, Parkman and Dumas emphatically criticize the traditions and attitudes of the 'native' people. In fact, their narratives disclose the ethnocentric frame of mind with which they treat and view these colored people. Yet, Parkman and Dumas do not fail to acknowledge their interest in some aspects and manners of the 'native' life.

In *The Oregon Trail*, Parkman "consistently demonstrates a fascination with distinguishing whites from Indians as well as with whites who live among and act like Indians"⁹². However, he occasionally admits the difference of the Indians, either in appearance or behavior and endeavors to accept them as "excellent friends"⁹³. Throughout his travelogue, Parkman provides clear examples of his ambivalence towards the Indians and conceptualizes their need to be transformed in order to resemble the white man. The following instance reveals the author's desire to maintain the view on the colonial subject as 'inferior'.

When arriving at Fort Laramie, Parkman encounters an Indian at the gateway who meets him "with something more cordial than the ordinary cold salute of an Indian"⁹⁴. Unlike "the insolent mob of Indians"⁹⁵ whom Parkman met while crossing the Platte, Paul was different.

He was “a *cosmopolitan* [who] spoke a jargon of French and another of English.”⁹⁶. Yet, for Parkman, speaking the English tongue and imitating the open-mindedness of the West are not sufficient for Paul to become a white man. In this sense, Bhabha argues that “colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of difference that is *almost the same, but not quite*.”⁹⁷. This definition clearly applies to Paul because despite his difference from the other people of his race, he still remains “a thorough Indian”⁹⁸, incapable of reaching the superiority and power of the colonizer.

This contradictory articulation of ‘acceptance and disavowal’ used by Parkman is meant to appropriate the Indians by reforming and regulating their position as ‘other’. In spite of his reputation as a half-breed, Paul’s inherent “fierce luster”⁹⁹ for the bloody wars of the Dahcotahs impedes him from resembling the whites. Instead, he ends up as a victim of a “flawed colonial mimesis”¹⁰⁰. Therefore, “the subject must be naturalized enough for the colonial machinery to be effective, but at the same time a safe cultural distance must be kept so as to maintain the stability of the colonizer’s identity”¹⁰¹. Parkman emphasizes the clear sense of difference between him and the Indians, and he is constantly anxious to establish the boundaries that separate his world from theirs. This attitude is, indeed, quite recurrent throughout the narrative, and Paul is not the only case through which the author highlights the contradictions which characterize his ambivalent mood toward the Indians.

In fact, Parkman appreciates much the Indians but not to the extent of accepting them as equal. Despite his fascination by their warlike character, their physical strength and their graceful manners, they still remained potential enemies, alien to his culture, color and race. In an article entitled “Patrician Among Savages: Francis Parkman’s ‘The Oregon Trail’”, James D.Hart asserts:

The Indians he appreciated most of all, because he was there to know them, but he did not view them in conventional romantic terms. To him, they were subjects to be assessed, and though he was often good-naturedly amused by them, they remained a *lower order of being*.¹⁰²

By making use of mimicry, Parkman creates a version of authorized otherness and elaborates a strategy that ensures the fixity of the colonized people's identity.

Similarly to Parkman, Dumas in his narrative assembles a set of descriptions which illustrate Bhabha's concept of mimicry. Throughout his journey, Dumas encountered a countless number of indigenous people. Yet, Arabs seem to hold a prominent place in his narrative and his growing interest and curiosity on the Oriental culture and systems reinforced his will to go deeply in his expeditions, in search of an understanding of the 'native' attitudes and reflections. When Dumas first landed in Tangier, he got acquainted with the janissary of Mr Florat, the "chancelier"¹⁰³. His name was El-Arbi-Bernat and he was Florat's bodyguard. Dumas quickly discerned him to be "extremely *disreputable*"¹⁰⁴ and like most Orientals, distrustful. Yet, the author instantly shifts from prejudicing the man he scarcely knew to advising the lady to take him as a guide in case she visits Morocco. Nonetheless, Dumas's paradoxical attitude toward El-Arabi-Bernat denotes his fear and anxiety of the indigenous which urges him to situate the janissary as foreign and unfamiliar. In this process of approval and dismissal of the 'native', Dumas carefully presents the latter as imitating the European ideas and culture, namely language. He asserts:

When the little craft drew nearer we recognized El-Arbi-Bernat, the janissary who had come aboard the night before, and as soon as he came within hailing distance, he explained to me in *halting Spanish* that M. Florat [...] had sent his own bodyguard. Proud and happy to be entrusted with this mission, El-Arbi-Bernat settled himself in our bow.¹⁰⁵

In this quotation, Dumas clearly sets El-Arbi-Bernat as a mimic person who tries to imitate the white man and espouse his culture by modeling himself in order to fit the norms established by the Europeans. By learning the Spanish language and accompanying the

traveler in his hunting expedition, El-Arbi-Bernat falls in the trap of mimicry whose main purpose is to dominate the colonized and truncate his identity and culture to nothingness. Furthermore, mimicry accentuates the power of the dominant culture as a way to convert the colonized and, at the same time, keeps the former's identity safe from being questioned by maintaining the otherness of the colonial subject.

The above mentioned illustration of how accurately Bhabha's concept of mimicry may be applied to Dumas's travelogue is not the only instance. The following one is another. Once in Goletta, Dumas was eager to visit Tunis. At first sight, he was stricken by the appearance of the Tunisian National Guard, whose uniforms were startling and quite puzzling. Dumas asserts that the Bey of Tunis "decided to have a militia *as much like ours* as possible"¹⁰⁶ and, willing to copy the French army, the Bey "imported from France twenty thousand pairs of red trousers and twenty thousand blue tunics, all made for men of average height"¹⁰⁷. Yet, the Bey obviously missed the fact that "nothing is more unpredictable than the rate of growth in hot climates"¹⁰⁸ and that height and weight differed from one person to another. Therefore, most of the uniforms did not fit the soldiers and only four thousand ones suited the average. Henceforth, the Bey's celebrated militia "looks extremely odd"¹⁰⁹. This account conveyed by Dumas vividly illustrates how colonial mimicry is performed. In his attempt to become the 'equal', the Bey of Tunis completely suppressed his own cultural customs and traditions and endorsed those of the colonizer. Being "a lover of progress"¹¹⁰, the Bey aimed hopelessly at resembling the white man and, to attain his goal, he adjusted his ideas, manners and culture to fit those which are considered to be the ideals of superiority. Yet, despite his adoption of the colonizer's assumptions and values, the Bey never succeeded to become like him. Instead, "the result is a 'blurred copy' of the colonizer."¹¹¹

Bhabha explains that colonial power uses mimicry as a strategy to create an identity for the colonized. This identity is constructed upon the attitudes, habits and customs of the

colonizer which reduces the colonial subject to a state of 'otherness' in order to keep it under its control and domination. The colonized therefore find themselves facing the dilemma of ambivalence which switches between being 'human and not wholly human'.

Parkman's and Dumas's works are not restricted to depicting 'native' culture and behavior as mimic. They extend their interest and concern to cover the 'native' political and social systems. Parkman is constantly ambivalent in his narrative about the Indian community. On the one hand, he stresses the primitiveness and barbarity of the dangerous Indians. On the other hand, he avows their virtues and likeliness to reach some level of Western civilization. In the beginning of his hazardous journey, when Parkman visits the Indian village of the Ogallallahs at Fort Laramie, he declares: "In this *democratic* community the chief never assumes superior state"¹¹². By claiming the community to be democratic, Parkman acknowledges the tribal system of the Indian populace in which all the members of the tribe are ranked equally. He adds: "as among us those of highest worth and breed are most simple in manner and attire"¹¹³. Parkman by this assertion attributes the Indians simplicity and bravery. He appropriates the Indian to the criteria of the white man and makes of him an equal. Yet, this recognition is not maintained for long, and the idea of the Indian as *much the same* is straightforwardly rejected. Parkman states:

In a community where, from immemorial time, no man has acknowledged any law but his own will, Mahto Tatanka, by the force of his dauntless resolution raised himself to power little short of *despotic*.¹¹⁴

The quotation, does not only qualify Indians as lawless but also denounces Mahto Tatanka's position as the head of the Ogallallah tribe. Parkman had previously referred to him as the aspiring leader whose "unrivalled charm"¹¹⁵ and "audacious will"¹¹⁶ have made of him a highly esteemed warrior. Parkman shifts from praising the Indians and their democracy to criticizing the power of their leader which he conceives as oppressive and tyrannical. According to Bhabha, this constant shift results in:

the splitting of colonial discourse so that two attitudes toward external reality persist; one takes reality into consideration while the other disavows it and replaces it by a product of desire that repeats, rearticulates 'reality' as mimicry¹¹⁷

It is exactly what happens to Parkman. He admits the Indians as equal to the white man but simultaneously denies this acceptance and assumes a discourse constructed on the basis of keeping the Indian as not only different, but *never* the same as the white man.

Similarly, Dumas in his travelogue displays a constant balance between the cognizance of the 'native' political systems and their denial. On the one hand, he emphasizes the tyranny and despotism which characterize Turkish rule in Algeria and denounces the injustices enacted by the oppressive rulers. He criticizes the cruelty of Mohamed-Bey, surnamed Bou-Chattabiah, who was the first ruler to govern the Regency of Algiers. He argues that the Bey was "a *madman* with a lust for blood who was given that title because he used to behead with his own hands all criminals condemned to death"¹¹⁸. Dumas therefore represents 'native' rule in Algeria as not only cruel but corrupt as well. He argues that Turkish rule encouraged tyranny and dishonesty by deposing those rulers who do not "correspond to their *despotic* principles"¹¹⁹. He asserts that "Brahim-Bey-Gritti came to power in his turn and was so beloved by his people that Turks deposed him lest he should become too influential."¹²⁰. This quotation therefore suggests that Turkish rule in Algeria promotes the spread of dictatorship and authoritarianism which sow the seeds of violence among its subjects.

On the other hand, however, Dumas acknowledges to a certain point the presence of some sort of democracy in Arab tribes. Important decisions concerning the different matters of the community are taken when councils are held. Dumas asserts:

In the old days, the Arab would have made his complaint before the Cadi on a market day, the Cadi would have *consulted the old men of the village*, they would have confirmed where the true boundary lay, the field would have been restored to its rightful owner.¹²¹

This quotation demonstrates that decisions are not made by one ruler but rather by consulting a group of elders who, by consent, would decide what judgment to pronounce.

Dumas's shift between the dualism of approval and disavowal in his narrative illustrates well his ambivalence and uncertainty concerning which attitude to adopt towards the 'natives'. Therefore, this strategy of mimicry becomes a threat since it unfolds the dilemma which faces the colonial discourse.

Homi K. Bhabha asserts that "mimicry is at once resemblance and menace"¹²².

According to him, mimicry is threatening because the ambivalence into which it results destabilizes the authority of colonial discourse. It also questions the absoluteness of the established colonial ideals and disrupts the colonial dominance over the behavior of the colonized. Henceforth, mimicry, for Bhabha, fails to secure the stability and integrity of the empire since it discloses the state of anxiety and displacement which the colonizer experiences once he comes to realize that the authority and power that he so long imposed on the colonized is shaken. Bill Ashcroft asserts: "Mimicry reveals the limitation in the authority of colonial discourse, almost as though colonial authority inevitably embodies the seeds of its own destruction."¹²³. The authors' ambivalence towards 'native' structures of government can also be explained by their desire to uphold the colonial administration. This foregrounds the floor to the third chapter which will focus on Parkman's and Dumas's support of imperialism by relying on Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism*.

Endnotes:

⁸⁸. Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 85.

⁸⁹. Ibid, 86.

⁹⁰. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 10.

⁹¹. Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 85

- ^{92.} Phillip G. Terrie, "The Other Within: Indianization on the Oregon Trail", in *The New England Quarterly*, Vol.64, No.3 (Sep.,1991) p 376, accessed on: January 9, 2017.
- ^{93.} Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E.Merrill, 1910), 86.
- ^{94.} Ibid, 186.
- ^{95.} Ibid, 169.
- ^{96.} Ibid, 187.
- ^{97.} Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 87.
- ^{98.} Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E.Merrill, 1910), 187.
- ^{99.} Ibid, 187.
- ^{100.} Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 87.
- ^{101.} "Of Mimicry and the Savage Aspects of Canadian colonialism"
<http://www.ptbk.org.pl/userfiles/file/januszkaiser.pdf> , accessed on May 17, 2017.
- ^{102.} James D. Hart, "Patricians Among Savages: Francis Parkman's *The Oregon Trail* ", in *The Georgia Review*, Vol.10, No1 (SPRING-1956), p72 , accessed on April 21, 2017.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/41396602> .
- ^{103.} Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia: Chilton Company-book Division 1959), 13.
- ^{104.} Ibid, 14.
- ^{105.} Ibid, 17.
- ^{106.} Ibid, 87.
- ^{107.} Ibid, 87.
- ^{108.} Ibid, 87,88.
- ^{109.} Ibid, 88.
- ^{110.} Ibid, 87.
- ^{111.} Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 125.

- ^{112.} Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E. Merrill, 1910), 170.
- ^{113.} Ibid, 221.
- ^{114.} Ibid, 218.
- ^{115.} Ibid, 220.
- ^{116.} Ibid, 220.
- ^{117.} Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 91.
- ^{118.} Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia: Chilton Company-book Division 1959), 160.
- ^{119.} Siber.M and Riche.B, “Native Mis/Rule and ‘Oriental Despotism’ in Alexandre Dumas’s *Adventures in Algeria* (1846) and Rudyard Kipling’s *From Sea to Sea: Letters of Travel* (1889), in *Asian Journal of Humanity, Art and Literature* 1,9-14 (Asian Business Consortium, 2014), 73.
- ^{120.} Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia: Chilton Company-book Division 1959), 161.
- ^{121.} Ibid, 188.
- ^{122.} Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 86.
- ^{123.} Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 125.

Chapter Three: Parkman, Dumas and the American-French Ideologies.

Imperialism as a phenomenon is probably as old as human existence itself. From immemorial time, there has been a constant struggle for domination and control among humans. “In its most general sense”, Ashcroft asserts that

Imperialism refers to the formation of an empire, and, as such, has been an aspect of all periods of history in which one nation has extended its domination over one or several neighboring nations.¹²⁴

Yet, with the rise of the Industrial Revolution, the competition for the acquisition of wealth and the increasing desire for rule gave rise to great imperial nations like Britain, Spain, Italy and France and the United States. The race for raw materials and markets for selling manufactured goods has driven these powers to look for an expansion and accumulation of territories. However, the search for resources and the economic interests were not the only motives for Imperial expansion. According to Edward Said, Imperialism goes beyond economic and material profit since it enables “decent men and women to accept the notion that territories and their native peoples should be subjugated”¹²⁵. Western powers, therefore, justified their domination and hold over other countries through the cultural dimension of Imperialism which promotes the superiority of the West and its duty to rule over the non-West. Such assumptions and ideas are widely reflected in literature and exhibited in several authors’ works. Edward Said asserts:

Most of the late nineteenth century novels, travel narratives and works of exploration have been based on the interest in the colonial world. They serve for confirming and *celebrating* colonial world and empire.¹²⁶

Parkman and Dumas are no exceptions in the ideological support of empire in their writing. They are two authors who not only wrote about the epoch of Imperialism and worldwide expansion but lived in the midst of it as well. Both authors are in favor of their respective nations’ imperial policies and both celebrate their countries’ triumphs. Because each of France and the United States has adopted discrepant strategies during the process of

the building of their empires, the authors elaborate on these strategies in their works. In a discussion of the tensions between the empire and the colony, D. K. Fieldhouse argues that

the basis of imperial authority was the mental attitude of the colonist. His acceptance of subordination-whether through a positive sense of common interest with the parent state, or through inability to conceive of any alternative-made empire durable.¹²⁷

Fieldhouse's point here is that the continuity of the empire depended on both sides: the ruler and the ruled. Edward Said also provides a general overview of the ideologies employed by the United States and France so as to secure their domains.

Both Parkman and Dumas embody their nations' colonial policies in their travelogues. Throughout his narrative, Parkman makes reference to the "great Western movement"¹²⁸ which was happening during that period. In the introduction to *The Oregon Trail*, Clarence Walton Vail asserts that in 1843, three years before Parkman set out on his journey to the Rocky Mountains, the United States Senate ensued a law which provided the occupation of the Oregon territory by the American citizens¹²⁹. In the first chapter of his travelogue, entitled 'The Frontier', Parkman describes the starting point of his journey, as he was witnessing the Westward pioneers of the Westward movement. He writes:

The hotels were crowded, and the gunsmiths and saddlers were kept constantly at work in providing arms and equipments for the different parties of travelers. Almost everyday steamboats were leaving the levee and passing up the Missouri, crowded on with passengers *on their way to the frontier*¹³⁰

This quotation states the huge number of emigrants that were on their way to occupy the remaining unsettled area of the United States. In fact, the great Westward movement was an important episode in American history. In the process of nationalizing the West, Frederick Jackson Turner points out: "this expansion westward with its new opportunities, its continuous touch with the simplicity of primitive society, furnish the forces dominating the American character."¹³¹ Turner emphasizes the great role played by the frontier in shaping the national identity and redefining the American character since it stood for "the meeting point between savagery and civilization"¹³². According to him, the main idea of the frontier

was to win the wilderness and adapt it into the complexity of city life. Turner's interpretation suggests that the frontier embodies the uniqueness of the American character and intellect, its coarseness, acuteness and inquisitiveness¹³³. In this perspective, Edward Said sheds light on the perception of the American ideology of expansion as being different from the other empires. He asserts:

In the American view of the past, the United States was not a classical imperial power, but a righter of wrongs around the world, in pursuit of tyranny, in defense of freedom no matter the place or cost.¹³⁴

As an aspiring historian, Parkman in his narrative pays much attention to the important process that was taking place on the national scale. His keen observations in his travelogue on the "constantly shifting frontier"¹³⁵ served as a reinforcement of the notion of American uniqueness. Parkman's accounts on his experience on "the Great American Desert"¹³⁶ denotes his support of the United States' expansionist policy, promoting individualism and opportunity which constitute the traits of the frontier.

Dumas, in his turn, praises France and its imperial ideology in North Africa. In the very beginning of the travelogue, he illustrates one of France's crucial strategies of imperial domination, namely the pretended French civilizing mission. When it first conquered Algeria, France was eager to settle in this spectacular land which promised an inexhaustible reserve of treasures and resources. To satisfy its curiosity, the French colonial enterprise rushed up to send a large number of its elites on expeditions for the purpose of knowing better its new colony. As a matter of fact, Dumas was among France's missionaries in Algeria who was assigned a "mission littéraire"¹³⁷ which "devait célébrer les victoires de l'armée d'Afrique et les beautés du pays afin d'inciter les aspirants colons à aller y s'installer"¹³⁸ (literary mission, which had as a duty to celebrate the victories of the army in Africa and the beauties of the country so as to incite the aspiring settlers to go and settle down there). Dumas, therefore, earnestly set out for Algeria for the purpose of delivering an account

of his nation's achievements in that part of Africa. In this light, Bill Ashcroft provides an explanation of missions, as an important colonial strategy. He asserts:

Missions and their role to exemplify once again how colonized peoples should appropriate and subvert colonial institutions and bend them to their own ends even under the most unpromising conditions.¹³⁹

In the case of France, the "Civilizing Mission"¹⁴⁰ was one of the most dominant ideological motives which were used to justify its presence in the Maghreb. Thinking itself to be superior, France believed it its duty to spread light and civilization to the so-called remote and dark corners of the world, namely Africa. As a devoted missionary and nationalistic explorer, Dumas proudly glorifies France's achievements. He boasts:

For five hundred years, there has been this constant ebb and flow, this closely matched conflict like Jacob's struggle with the angel in Genesis, or the ancient wars between Rome and Carthage. It may be that through the centuries, England has prevailed by material force, France by spiritual *strength*, by her power to inspire all who love beauty and truth. If the flaming torch so long borne aloft by France were ever finally extinguished, a long cry of agony and despair would arise from the whole darkened world.¹⁴¹

This quotation reflects Dumas's desire to celebrate the French empire by embracing France's reasoning about white the man's natural ability and skill to rule and subjugate the non-white to its control. According to Edward Said, the attitudes and ideas of the early European thinkers have strongly accentuated the position of European culture, which maintains the idea that "Europeans should rule, non-Europeans be ruled"¹⁴². It is worth noticing that, all through his narrative, Dumas compares the deeds of the French colonial enterprise to those of the British one, for the purpose of emphasizing and glorifying his nation's achievements. He keeps talking about the rivalry between the two empires in order to show France's great power and hegemony in North Africa. The following instance clarifies well Dumas's attitude:

Between England and ourselves there are six words which epitomize all our history: Crécy, Poitiers, Agincourt, Aboukir, Trafalgar and Waterloo, each of them a defeat from which it seemed our country could never recover, a wound to drain the nation's very lifeblood. Yet, *France has never failed to rise again*, with new strength flowing through her veins; every time England has come to our shores as a conquering invader we have repulsed her in the end.¹⁴³

It is clear from the above quote that Dumas brings together Britain and France in order to prove the latter's good reputation and acknowledge its persistence and determination to win. Concerning France's policy of 'Civilizing Mission', Edward Said argues that its main aim is to create colonies for the prestige of the mother country. For him, this mission is justified by the noble intentions of the empire as well as the necessity to establish these colonies for the benefit of the natives ¹⁴⁴. Dumas in his travelogue supports the assumption of the empire's "good-will mission"¹⁴⁵ and "high spirited"¹⁴⁶ objectives aiming to achieve the necessary improvements in the conditions of the colonies and their inhabitants.

The American expansionist ideology adopted during the great Westward movement was more about the Americanization of the Western frontier and the adaptation of wilderness. The main foundations of this ideology were based upon the ideals of the "Manifest Destiny"¹⁴⁷. As a phrase, the Manifest Destiny was first coined by the journalist and diplomat, John. L. O'Sullivan, who was a devout nationalist. In his essay, "The Great Nation of Futurity", he makes appeals to the Americans to take up their predestined responsibility in leading the world towards equality, justice and universal freedom. According to O'Sullivan, America, as the nation of nations, is "destined to manifest to mankind the excellence of divine principles"¹⁴⁸.

In his travelogue, Parkman reflects, to a certain extent, the impact of the Manifest Destiny on the US-Mexican War and the Western expansion. O'Sullivan's ideas had an enormous effect on the course of events during the war. His dismissal of Mexico's claims for Texas conveyed his nationalistic stand concerning the dissension and "his rhetoric of manifest destiny had fired the imaginations of many in the Congress"¹⁴⁹. Parkman's journey to Oregon coincided with the outbreak of the US-Mexican war which was considered as a very important incident in American history. From its very emergence, the notion of the Manifest Destiny was zealously welcomed by the American citizens. Parkman with his racial attitudes

towards the Mexicans whom he came across during his journey, reflect his point of view about the war. He recurrently portrays them as “squalid”¹⁵⁰, “slavish-looking”¹⁵¹ and “swarthy ignoble Mexicans”¹⁵². Such descriptions therefore reveal the author’s partaking in the defense of the United States’ claims and signal his “active engagement with the rhetorics of the manifest destiny.”¹⁵³. Towards the end of the travelogue, Parkman praises the victories of the US troops. He asserts:

The Americans, *rusting like tigers* upon the enemy, bounded over the breastwork. Four hundred Mexicans were slain upon the spot and the rest fled, scattering over the plain like sheep¹⁵⁴

This description clearly denotes Parkman’s viewpoint about the US-Mexican war and his devotion towards the ideals of the Manifest Destiny. Like most of frontier travel writers, Parkman was among those who “constructed their narratives in ways that bought into the idea of expansionist doctrine as inextricable from US identity”¹⁵⁵.

The Westward expansion highly promoted the feeling of nationalism, and the movement was seen as an experiment of freedom and liberty. Parkman’s enthusiastic endorsement of the United States’ first foreign war, therefore, was manifested in his narrative where he celebrates the soldiers of the volunteering troops who “were extremely good-looking men, superior beyond measure to the ordinary rank and file of an army.”¹⁵⁶. He believes in their nobility, virtuousness and “heroic qualities”¹⁵⁷, affirming that “no one can deny the intrepid bravery of these men, their intelligence and the bold frankness of their character, free from all that is mean and sordid”¹⁵⁸. Yet, Parkman insists on the land conquest as being a national concern and argues that “the bravery of the Missourians is not exclusively their own, the whole American nation is as fearless as they”¹⁵⁹. Edward Said argues that the American leadership is always differentiated from that of other imperial nations, by scholars who claim its power to be exceptional and unrivalled¹⁶⁰. Indeed, he quotes Richard J. Barnet who asserts:

The United States, *uniquely blessed* with surpassing riches and an *exceptional* history, stands above the international system, not within it. Supreme among the nations, she stands ready to be the bearer of law.¹⁶¹

Similarly to Parkman, Dumas in his travelogue consolidates the imperial ideology that France exercised over its colonies in Africa. The Maghreb countries constituted a very important part of the French empire. Therefore, in order to make them an integral part of its huge enterprise, France was confused concerning which policy to adopt so as to ensure its hold over these territories. Yet, aiming to adapt the natives and welcome them to the best of all civilizations with “the personal style of being French in a great assimilationist enterprise”¹⁶², the policy of assimilation seemed to be the right option. Like most of colonial powers, France made it seem that it has settled in overseas territories in order to take freedom and liberty and by no means to dominate or control. It showed itself to be sympathetic and honest in order to persuade the natives and spread its influence to win their confidence. Edward Said argues that “France’s empire [...] was energized by ‘prestige’. Its various domains acquired (and sometimes lost) over three centuries were presided over by its irradiating ‘genius’.”¹⁶³. Said suggests that France has ruled over its territories with an organized administrative framework.

In his travelogue, Dumas vividly illustrates France’s assimilationist ideology in North Africa. Before bidding farewell to Tunis, Dumas went to visit the tomb of St Louis, the French King, who was “loved far beyond the borders of his own kingdom for his perfect chivalry and saintliness”¹⁶⁴. To commemorate this decent and his deeds, a school bearing his name was built by Abbé Bourgade who “in his leisure moments he dreamed of extending this foothold of Western civilization in Africa”¹⁶⁵. Dumas endeavors to praise France’s efforts to improve and develop the educational system of its colonies in her good-will project of progress. He asserts:

On his request, fifteen sisters of the Order of Saint Joseph were sent from France to help him. These devout women succeeded in founding a sanctuary, a girls’ school and

a hospital in memory of Saint Louis. The abbé's next project was a College for Boys, which he managed to establish when the King of France sent him 1.000 francs, a gift that later became an annual donation. Now, the college has more than two hundred students who are equally conversant with French, Italian and Arabic, their studies covering a wide range of subjects, including chemistry, physics and line-drawing.¹⁶⁶

This quotation denotes Dumas's commitment to the empire and his patriotism regarding his nation's attempts to establish a "form of administration as being the best one for securing liberty and equality between the peoples, whatever their color."¹⁶⁷ By this set of "lyrical descriptions of France's colonial achievements, its establishment of peace and prosperity, the various schools and hospitals benefitting the natives"¹⁶⁸, Dumas wants to pay tribute to French missionaries who do their best to serve the 'natives' in their attempt to achieve the mother country's honorable projects. France's assimilationist ideology aimed to expand not only the territorial domination but the cultural one as well. It has been considered as applicable everywhere, as a way to ensure the spread and continuity of Western values. By building schools to 'native' children, France wants to acculturate them and erase all their cultural traits and implement the Western ones. This policy, in fact, offers the empire an opportunity to instill and incorporate colonial rule and bind the colonized as an eternal subordinate ¹⁶⁹. However, France's assimilationist ideology did not meet much success as it proved to cause "a certain danger in arbitrarily treating the colonies as an extension of the metropolis."¹⁷⁰ Therefore it was harshly criticized since it turned out to be ineffective and primarily unachievable due to the wide gap between the European mentality and that of the colonized. Only a small elite of these societies could be assimilated. The masses proved to be an obstacle since their customs and ideals could hardly be changed by the French civilization¹⁷¹. Consequently, it was to be changed with a more effective strategy in order to solve the problems it has engendered upon the French empire. Under the new policy, the small class of elites formed by the French school were operating as intermediaries between the colonial administration and their fellow countrymen.

In his travelogue, Dumas powerfully illustrates this new strategy employed by the

French empire in order to maintain its hold and control over North Africa. During the reception that was held in honor of El Mokrani, “a very important personage among the Arabs”¹⁷², Dumas describes the formality. He asserts:

The ceremony began with the customary kissing of hands. By a fortunate chance, the Mohammedan year had ended almost at the same time as our own, and the Marshal had the additional pleasure of being able to respond to his guests’ new year greetings with similar good wishes to them. Then the chief mufti, a venerable man of eighty, spoke *on behalf of the peoples of Algeria*, assuring the Marshal of their good will and their prayers that God would make France even more happy and prosperous, if that were possible.¹⁷³

This quote expressively illustrates France’s policy of association which operates on the basis of collaboration between the colonial administration and the indigenous people. The mufti whom Dumas speaks about is appointed as the spokesman of his compatriots to express their sympathetic wishes for the mother country. The author’s description is meant to promote his nation’s newly adopted approach which supposedly works for the interest and benefit of the native, aiming to “protect him against his own imprudence”¹⁷⁴. By such a “forked tongue”¹⁷⁵, France wanted to gain the trust of the colonized and establish a system of dictum whose overall profit was considerably fruitful. According to Edward Said, the French imperial ideology provided that:

natives and their lands were not to be treated as entities that could be made French but as possessions the immutable characteristics of which required separation and subservience.¹⁷⁶

Therefore, it goes without saying that France’s policy was not as innocent as it pretended to be. Its main aim was to divide the colonized societies into ‘departments’ and create a system wherein the colonial subject cooperates with the colonizer and engages, unconsciously, in a process of self-subjugation and destruction. Yet, to hide its opportunistic and bureaucratic objectives, France established a system of ‘Indirect Rule’ in which the native people choose a representative of their own who helps the European to fight against tyranny and corruption¹⁷⁷.

In his narrative, Dumas praises this stratagem of his nation’s imperial enterprise. He states:

‘Justice’, the Marshal went on, ‘is administered by those of your own people whom you yourselves have chosen to fulfill the high office of judges. They act *under our supervision and direction*.¹⁷⁸

This quotation highlights the core of French colonial policy whose main claim is that ‘native’ people are unable to rule themselves and, consequently they ‘beseech’ France to guide and civilize them.

It is discernible from what has been said in this chapter that both Parkman and Dumas are actively engaged in support of their nations’ imperial ideologies. Therefore, their objectivity is influenced and their patriotism is clearly reflected in their works. Their implication is motivated by a strong feeling of nationalism that was widespread during the nineteenth century. The worldwide expansion and ‘scramble’ for power has driven them to praise and celebrate their respective countries’ achievements. Edward Said argues that “literature makes reference to itself [...] and therefore creates [...] ‘structures of feeling’ that support, elaborate and consolidate the practice of empire”¹⁷⁹.

Yet, there still remains one major difference between Parkman and Dumas which I deemed necessary to be mentioned. While Dumas was sent on a mission to account for his nation’s progress and incite his countrymen to contribute to the growth of the empire, Parkman went deliberately and by his own will on an adventurous expedition towards the Rocky Mountains. I came to the conclusion that Dumas was bound to fulfill his duty as a missionary and therefore was to abide to French restrictions namely those concerning the journey’s expenses. In contrast, Parkman was completely free to penetrate in the vast wilderness, in search for material for his work as a writer on American history. Later on, the author’s hazardous experiences on the Oregon Trail came to be crystallized to become one of the author’s greatest achievements.

Endnotes:

¹²⁴ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 111.

¹²⁵ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 10.

- ^{126.} Ibid, 187.
- ^{127.} D. K. Fieldhouse, *The Colonial Empires: A Comparative Survey from Eighteenth Century*, quoted in Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 11.
- ^{128.} Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E.Merrill, 1910), 23.
- ^{129.} Clarence Walton Vail, introduction to *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E.Merrill, 1910),17.
- ^{130.} Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E.Merrill, 1910), 23.
- ^{131.} Frederick Jackson Turner, The Significance of the Frontier in American History, *A Nineteenth Century American Reader*, ed. M. Thomas Inge (Washington D.C.: USIA, 1987), p 81.
- ^{132.} Ibid, 81.
- ^{133.} Ibid, 84.
- ^{134.} Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 5.
- ^{135.} Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E.Merrill, 1910), 149.
- ^{136.} Ibid, 105.
- ^{137.} Gaston Palisser, “Alexandre Dumas et L’Algérie”, online: http://alger-roi.fr/Alger/litterature/pdf/28_dumas_algerianiste113.pdf , accessed on: 11 April 2017.
- ^{138.} Ibid.
- ^{139.} Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), 129.
- ^{140.} Smail Hadj Ali, “La <<mission civilisatrice>>: une insoutenable plaisanterie, Algeria-Watch. www.algeria-watch.org/fr/article/hist/colonialisme/missioncivilisatrice.htm .
- ^{141.} Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia: Chilton Company-book Division 1959), 11.
- ^{142.} Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 100.
- ^{143.} Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia: Chilton Company-book Division 1959), 17.
- ^{144.} Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 108.
- ^{145.} Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia:

Chilton Company-book Division 1959), 1.

^{146.} Ibid, 2.

^{147.} John L. O’Sullivan, Annexation, in “United States Magazine and Democratic Review”, 17 no.1 (July-August 1845), 2.

^{148.} John L. O’Sullivan, “Modern Composition Depends”, *A Nineteenth Century American Reader*, ed. M. Thomas Inge (Washington D.C.: USIA, 1987), p 8.

^{149.} Nicholas Lawrence, “Francis Parkman’s *The Oregon Trail* and the US-Mexican War: Appropriations of Counter-Imperial Dissent”, in *Western American Literature*, Vol.43, No.4 (Winter 2009), p377, accessed on: 6 March 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable43022674> .

^{150.} Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E.Merrill, 1910), 190.

^{151.} Ibid, 24.

^{152.} Ibid, 26.

^{153.} Nicholas Lawrence, “Francis Parkman’s *The Oregon Trail* and the US-Mexican War: Appropriations of Counter-Imperial Dissent”, in *Western American Literature*, Vol.43, No.4 (Winter 2009), p379, accessed on: 6 March 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable43022674> .

^{154.} Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E.Merrill, 1910), 492.

^{155.} Nicholas Lawrence, “Francis Parkman’s *The Oregon Trail* and the US-Mexican War: Appropriations of Counter-Imperial Dissent”, in *Western American Literature*, Vol.43, No.4 (Winter 2009), p372, accessed on: 6 March 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable43022674> .

^{156.} Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: Charles E.Merrill, 1910), 493.

^{157.} Ibid, 496.

^{158.} Ibid, 495-6.

^{159.} Ibid, 495.

^{160.} Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 285.

^{161.} Richard T. Barnet, quoted in Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994),286.

^{162.} Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 169.

- ¹⁶³. Ibid, 169.
- ¹⁶⁴. Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia: Chilton Company-book Division 1959),126
- ¹⁶⁵. Ibid, 141.
- ¹⁶⁶. Ibid, 141
- ¹⁶⁷. Henri Labouret, “France’s Colonial Policy in Africa, in Journal of the Royal African Society, Vol39, No.154 (Jan.,1940), p 25 . <http://jstor.org/stable/717912> , accessed on 4 June 2017.
- ¹⁶⁸. Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 180
- ¹⁶⁹. Mouloud Siber, Bouteldja Riche, “The Aesthetic of Natives’ Dress and Undress: Colonial Stereotype and Mimicry in Paul Gauguin’s and William Somerset Maugham’s Cultural Forms”, *Revue des pratiques langagières* , 2013, 42.
- ¹⁷⁰. Henri Labouret, “France’s Colonial Policy in Africa, in Journal of the Royal African Society, Vol39, No.154 (Jan.,1940), p 25. <http://jstor.org/stable/717912> , accessed on 4 June 2017.
- ¹⁷¹. Ibid.
- ¹⁷². Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia: Chilton Company-book Division 1959), 195.
- ¹⁷³. Ibid, 195.
- ¹⁷⁴. Henri Labouret, “France’s Colonial Policy in Africa, in Journal of the Royal African Society, Vol39, No.154 (Jan.,1940), p 28. <http://jstor.org/stable/717912> , accessed on 4 June 2017.
- ¹⁷⁵. Homi K.Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 85.
- ¹⁷⁶. Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 170.
- ¹⁷⁷. Henri Labouret, “France’s Colonial Policy in Africa”, in Journal of the Royal African Society, Vol39, No.154 (Jan., 1940), p 27. <http://jstor.org/stable/717912> , accessed on 4 June 2017.
- ¹⁷⁸. Alexandre Dumas, *Adventures in Algeria*, Trans Alma Elizabeth Murch (Philadelphia: Chilton Company-book Division 1959), 196.
- ¹⁷⁹. Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 14.

IV. Conclusion

This dissertation has attempted to study the colonial discourse in Alexandre Dumas's *Adventures in Algeria* (1848) and Francis Parkman's *The Oregon Trail* (1849). This study has come up with some conclusions concerning the two works and their authors. Dumas's and Parkman's travelogues have proved to be striking examples of how travel literature reinforces the misconceptions and prejudiced images about the non-Western countries. Their descriptions of these lands as remote and exotic are meant to repudiate the colonized and place them and their inhabitants as inferior and backward races that need to be enlightened and civilized. The Western countries therefore have justified their conquest over other territories under the motif of superiority which endows them with rationality and reason to rule over the non-white. In fact, my study has revealed that both authors concur on denigrating and dehumanizing the indigenous people by depicting them as primitive, savage and dishonest. They reject all the aspects of native culture that are different from the Western one and consider them as debased and strange. Indeed, the colonial discourse does not set aim only at minimizing and discarding the colonized but extends its objectives to denying and bringing to disrepute their culture by disqualifying and discrediting it. My analysis has proved that both Dumas and Parkman portray Indian and Arab cultures as being mere manifestations of superstition. They center their descriptions on particular outlooks of native culture in order to justify the presence of their respective empires. In fact, this study did not just compare two books, but also compared two histories of colonial domination. It showed that American Indian and North African had been subjected to the same ideological representations in white discourse.

Dumas and Parkman agree on a series of points in their travelogues. They both share the viewpoint that 'native' people and their cultures are primitive and backward. They also

use the same colonialist and Orientalist tone in their descriptions. Yet, they differ in celebrating their nations' imperial ideologies. Dumas praises France's assimilationist policy and its achievements in North Africa. Parkman in his turn celebrates the great Westward movement and glorifies the United States' expansion. It is probably true that Dumas and Parkman converge in their ways of acclaiming and paying tribute to their empires but, it goes without saying that the purpose is the same. They both aim at celebrating the Western culture and justifying its control and dominance over other nations whom it locates as 'Other'. The two authors are convinced with the grandeur and greatness of the 'civilizing mission' whose main protagonist is the naturally superior and noble white man, divinely bestowed with virtues as freedom, individualism and sainthood which enable him to rule and dominate the non-white.

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