

The Representation of the Frontier and the American Character in F. D. Bridges's *Journal of a Lady's Travels Round the World* (1883)

By Dr. Mouloud SIBER

Department of English

Mouloud MAMMERI University of Tizi-Ouzou, ALGERIA

Paper Proposal Accepted for Presentation at

2019 RMMLA Annual Convention

Panel: "Victorian Travelers"

El Paso, TX, October 10-12 2019

Relying on Frederick J. Turner's notion of the "frontier thesis", I intend to work on the representation of the frontier and the American character in F. D. Bridges's *Journal of a Lady's Travels Round the World* (1883) [sic]. My purpose is to study the manner in which this Victorian lady's stops in the US Pacific Coast and the Rocky Mountains area at a time when the occupation of last frontier was almost completed made her aware of the birth of the true American character which was different from that of early European settlers. In the short episodes she devotes to the Rocky Mountains frontier and the Pacific one, she highlights the true American traits which result from the contact of emigrants with the Western "wilderness", their need to develop it and their success in doing so thanks to their character. She contrasts this character to the Indians' or native Americans' and other people deemed inferior by colonialist ideology. She also describes how these early frontiersmen and women managed to open the new frontiers thanks to railways which Turner calls "lines of civilization". All in all, the author's colonialist attitude which she holds in her previous travels to Asia can explain her focus on the contrast between Indians and Americans.

Key words: Victorian travel writing, Bridges, American frontier, expansion, individualism, enterprise.

Bibliography

Bridges, F. D. *Journal of A Lady's Travels Round the World*. London: John Murray, 1883.

Turner, Frederick Jackson. *The Frontier in American History*. New York: Henry Hold and Company, 1920.