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MOULOUD MAMMERI UNIVERSITY OF TIZI-OUZOU
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قسم الإنجليزية

Item Number: ……………
Serial Number: ……………

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master in English

FIELD:English
SPECIALISM: Literature and Civilisation

Title

Malek Alloula's*The Colonial Harem* (1986): Colonial Gaze and Postcolonial Response

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Cohort:2019-2020

The Master domiciliation laboratory: …………………………………………………………..……….

The postcard is a naive “art” that rests, and operates, upon a false equivalency (namely, that illusion equals reality. It literally takes its desire for realities. Its desire is, first and foremost, those of the photographer, and among them the absolute necessity of the harem as imaginary figure and phantasmic site is well known.

MalekAlloula, The Colonial Harem

The act of representing others almost always involves violence to the subject of representation.

Edward Said, In the Shadow of the West

Dedication

Before dedicating my work to the dearest persons to me, I would like to pay a vibrant tribute to doctors and scientist from all over the world who fight fiercely to find a vaccine to Coronavirus pandemic.

To the memory of MalekAlloula and to the Algerian women who suffered from colonial oppression

I dedicate my memoir to my loving parents

To My sister and brothers

To All my adorable family

To My loving and supportive friends

And to you passionate readers

Acknowledgements

I would like first to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Mr. Bia^{Med} Ameziane for his guidance, assistance, and his suggestion of this theme.

I am also grateful to all my teachers. I wish to extend my special thanks to the members of the administration, the members of the library of the department of English especially Mrs.Meziani Latifa, and to Student Committee.

Special thanks go to my uncle Samir Refes and his wife ZanetaBoguslaw for their help during the writing of this dissertation.

Abstract

The present dissertation has provided a postcolonial study of MalekAlloula'sThe Colonial Harem (1986). The central focus of this work is Alloula's response to and deconstruction of the French colonial gaze and the myth of the harem and the Algerian women .To achieve my purpose, I have borrowed Edward Said Postcolonial criticism on Orientalism by making appeal to a set of approaches and theories combined with it. I have appropriated Roland Barthes' and Susan Sontag's deconstruction of photography, Laura Mulvey's psychoanalytic approach to the male gaze in visual culture, Frantz Fanon's approach to the veil, and Jacques Lacan's psychoanalysis. After I have analysed Alloula's work, I have come to two conclusions. The first conclusion is that Alloula writes back to the colonial discourse and returns the postcards to their sender with a reading that combines different theoretical tools. My second conclusion is that Alloula attaches the colonial gaze with the male gaze structured with unconscious structures to say that the distorted images of The Algerian women are only the result of male phantasms and desires and thus the French postcards do not reflect the true Algerian women.

Key words: Colonial Gaze, Male gaze, Colonial Discourse, Postcolonialism, Response, Psychoanalysis, Orientalism, Gender, Voyeurism

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I. General Introduction

Between the turn of the nineteenth century and World War one, postcards became mass media of communication and collectable objects for the first time in French history.[1] A significant portion of millions of postcards produced yearly in France displayed Algerian tourist sites and ethnic types.[2] In the 1980$_s$, Post-colonial scholarship set out to unmask the colonial agenda in these postcards by linking seemingly non-political Orientalist iconography to the French colonial project.[3]

Photo postcards have been instrumental in the reproduction and recirculation of colonial images ever since they became accessible commodities in the late 19thcentury. Images of the 'exotic' and 'ailleurs' are part and parcel of what made postcards of colonial Algeria appealing to contemporary French audiences, in particular white bourgeois women, who were keen to consume erotic images of AlgérieFrançaise.[4]

Populating their paintings with snake charmers, veiled women, and courtesans, Orientalist artists created and disseminated fantasy portrayal of the exotic 'East' for European viewers. Although earlier examples exist, Orientalism primarily refers to western (particularly English and French) paintings, architecture, and decorative arts of the 19th century that utilize scenes, settings, and motifs of a range of countries including Turkey, Egypt, India, China, and Algeria. Although some artists strove for realism, many others subsumed the individual cultures and practices of these countries into a generic vision of the Orient and as the historian Edward Said notes in his influential book, Orientalism (1978), "the Orient was almost a European invention…a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiment."[5] Said's argument traces how Europe manufactured an imaginary Orient through literary works and the social sciences that was intertwined and complicit with imperial colonial ambitions in the eighteenth century.[6] The manifestation of Orientalism in art is definitely not a

new phenomenon. Its roots can be traced back to the sixteenth century with the rise of diplomatic and ambassadorial delegations between East and West.[7] What really paved the way to the Orientalists was Napolean Bonaparte's compain in Egypt and Syria (1798_1801)[8]

The history of European colonialism in traditionally Muslim countries led to a complex and problematic centering of the covering and uncovering of Muslim women's bodies. Historically, the West has created a visual fantasy of the Muslim woman that involved the uncovering and exposing of the forbidden, veiled woman.[9] During the whole of the French colonial period (which can be demarcated by the period from the conquest of Algeria in 1830 down to the war of independence in 1954) 'classic' Orientalism was centred on erotic images of unveiling. This fiction, a projection of European masculine fantasies, which claimed to uncover and expose to the public gaze the inner secret of the forbidden and sacred, the Harem and Turkish bathes(hamam), reflected French colonial hegemony, an invasion and sexual conquest of the space that Muslim society held to be most forbidden (harem).[10]

For centuries, Europe has been both fascinated and repelled by the veil and the harem, symbols which on the one hand, prevented the observer from seeing and communicating with women and produced feelings of frustration and aggressive behaviour. On the other hand they provided men with a fantasy and dangled the promise of the exotic and erotic experiences with 'the beauty behind the veil' and the 'light of the harem'.[11] Denial of sight and experience led to an imagined harem space.[12] The very depiction of the Orient and its women, ''like the unveiling of an enigma, makes visible what is hidden.''[13] The most balant example of the fear of the other and the associated fantasy of penetration is French colonialism's obsession with women's veil in Algeria. As we learn from Fanon, "The Algerian woman, in the eyes of the observer, is unmistakeably 'she who hides behind a veil."[14]

With the advent of photography in 1839, the Orient could be photographed as well as painted.[15] Orientalist photography depicts the Middle East as exotic, erotic, and mysterious, constrained by religious beliefs, and as unable or unwilling to progress and change without outside, specifically European interventions.[16] As I have said earlier, in the 1980$_s$, Post-colonial theory emerged to question the Western Orientalist discourse made on the Orients.

One of the works which documents the issue at hand is the essay entitled *The Colonial Harem*, written by the Algerian writer, MalekAlloula, published in 1981 in France in its French version*: Le Harem Colonial: Images d'un Sous Erotisme*, then translated into English in 1986. The latter is devoted to postcards of Algerian women produced between 1900 and 1930. These artifacts of popular perfection, which he terms the fertilisers of the colonial vision[17], reinforced the system of imperial domination.[18]

The penetration and appropriation of the colony found its visual equivalent particularly in these images of Algerian women, veiled and inaccessible in public, who were increasingly unveiled by the foreign photographer, until their nudity, satisfied the voyeur and demonstrated their total submission[19], the photographer followed them into the invisible and mysterious world of the harem, captured them with hidden desire, and presented the product of his work as a commodity from the French audience.[20] The photo then provided the French with proof of the immodesty and backwardness of Algerian women, but they were also created as a stimulus for the viewer's sexual fantasies. They represented-as was only to be expected- mere projections of the Orient: projections that revealed more about the desires of Frenchmen than the reality of Algerian women's lives.[21] The French penetration of the harem is for Alloula a metaphor for the conquest of Algeria.[22] The act of unveiling became an iconic symbol of French domination because it symbolizes how French colonizers attempted to destroy Algerian women's identity, which linked these women to Algerian culture.[23]

The Review of Literature

a) Orientalist Photography

Photography made on the Orientals and the Orient by Western photographers, especially Europeans, has been the target of much studies and critics. Many scholars studied with a critical eye the depiction and representation of the Oriental women in photographies taken by Europeans especially that of the nineteenth century. Many of them proved that the Orientalist photography was the mirror of the Orientalist discourse the West had about the East. Among them we can cite Ali Behdad and Luke Gartlan, who in their edited book *Photography's Orientalism: New Essay on Colonial Representation*, wrote a set of essays wherein they studied the photography of the Orientals of the nineteenth century claiming that the Middle East was the source of inspiration and vision that served as a crucial site for the early practice of photography. They maintained that photography was a key to the evolution and maintenance of Europe's Orientalist vision of the Middle East.

The same idea is found in Michelle L. Woodward's *Orientalism in Nineteenth Century Photography.* Woodward stated that nineteenth century photographic activity in the Orient spanned a wide range of different genres as it did in other parts of the world. She added that there were the well known fictional Orientalist clichés which were often created in the studio including erotic harem scenes and models posed as traditional musicians, craftsmen, or merchants and landscape scenes which meant to reinforce stereotypes of undeveloped society.

In his thesis entitled *The Imagery of Women in Nineteenth Century Orientalist Photography*, Nimet Elif Vargi mentioned that one of the major figures of Orientalist photography was woman. According to him, the West established a system of representation where women were racialised and sexualised. He also, as Michelle Woodward did, stressed on the photography

studio arguing that it hold a crucial impact on the production of portraits of women in both the Orient and Europe. He said:

> These studios were used like a theatrical stage in order to show the women in various postures, gestures and poses. The Eastern women who appear with veils in the streets displayed unveiled, naked, visible, and at the same time by means of commercial photography they became approachable and accessible.

The same idea is pointed by Hazel Simon in her article: *Orientalsim and Representation of Muslim Women as Sexual Objects* where she discussed the art works of Eugène Delacroix and Jean-Leon Gerome. She claimed that Muslim women were subjected to much devaluation as she was represented amongst other things such as sexual beings and objects of desire meant to be appropriated and dominated.

b) The Colonial Harem

MalekAlloula's *The Colonial Harem* has attracted the attention and interest of a wide range of scholars. We may begin by citing Christraud M. Geary in his review of the *Colonial Harem* who wrote that we needed to listen to voices such as Alloula's to remind ourselves that these images must be understood in the context of domination, and that they constituted a relevant contribution to the colonial discourse. He also pointed that Alloula's book was an important one, a cutting critique, and a work of art in its own right. UlaAbu_Luchod wrote that Alloula's insight regarding the equivalence of the colonial gaze and photographer's gaze raised interesting questions for those who were beginning to suspect the photographer's "objective" gaze is not an innocent as we like to think. He also added that Alloula linked the "voyeurism" of the photographer and tourist with the soldier's and colonist's opening up of the country. Luchod's statement goes along with Rebecca J .DeRoo who wrote in her article: *Colonial Collecting: Women and Algerian CartesPostales* that Alloula arranged the images into a narrative so that the models were progressively unveiled by using the metaphors of penetration

and possession to compare the unveiling of women with the French colonial conquest of Algeria.

Besides of receiving positive points and compliments, MalekAlloula's*the Colonial Harem* has received considerable critics about his lacks and weaknesses. Among them, we can site Annie E. Combes and Steve Edwards who wrote in their book reviews that for Alloula, colonization was produced as a unique narrative of sexual violence enacted the "body" of the Algerian nation. The way he worked within the language of metaphor to expose the power relations such figures of speech reaffirmed and reproduced, was both the strength and the weakness of his analysis. Combes and Edwards added that Alloula's aim was to exorcise the photographs of the Algerian women taken by French. However, in doing so, he had to silence them and that their presence was required only at the level of phantasm. Consequently, while Alloula's work was an essential and important contribution to the literature dealing with his first objective which was to reveal the nature and meaning of the colonial gaze, he clearly approached his second which was to subvert the stereotypes attached to women. They also argued that what they should call the 'absence' in Alloula's text was certainly the avoidance of any reference to the historical conditions in which these images were produced[35].The translation of The Colonial Harem from French to English according to Barbara Harlow created new conditions of observation for the postcards which were absent in the French version by adding their historical context.

Issue and Working Hypothesis

Although considerable studies and researches have been directed to the colonial and male gaze in MalekAlloula's*The Colonial Harem* and his response to the colonial distorted discourse made on Algerian women, no study has been conducted to the Colonial Harem following Edward Said's postcolonial criticism of Orientalism combined with a set of theories

and approaches which belong to different fields including that of photography, deconstruction, and psychoanalysis.

In spite of the importance of Alloula's work in terms of rehabilitation of the dignity of Algeria and Algerian women, no study has been undertaken, as far as we know, in Algeria on Malek Alloula's *The Colonial Harem*. In our opinion, even though Alloula's *The Colonial Harem* has participated in the breaking of the distorted Western vision on Algeria and her women, the lack of critical response or assessment by Algerian students and scholars to Alloula's achievement is surprising.

The aim of this work is first and foremost to investigate and measure how successful Malek Alloua was in his enterprise by considering his response to the Western discourse about the East and Algeria. Meanwhile, I shall shed light on the different theoretical approaches Alloula adopted while responding to the Colonial gaze. Another aim is to elevate Alloula's voice, make his work accessible to Algerian scholars, and make his work known in the academic universe of his home country, Algeria.

End notes

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Methodological outline

This research paper will be divided into two chapters. The first one will be devoted to the historical context in which the photographs were taken which coincides with European travel writings about the Orient. The second chapter will be divided into two sections. The first section will be about the study of the colonial gaze in the postcards to shed light on the discourse displayed on them. The second section will elucidate Alloula's response to the distorted images of the Algerian women which are actually the mirror of the colonial and male gaze with reference to Edward Said's Orientalism. I shall also appropriate a set of approaches Alloula adopted in his decomposition of the colonial gaze such as that of Frantz Fanon's Unveilled Algeria, Roland Barthes's and Susan Sontag's approach to photography, and Laura Mulvey's theory on the male gaze in visual arts.

Methods and Material

Methods

In order to investigate the problematic thus posed, I found it suitable to borrow Postcolonial theory as formulated by Edward Said in his book: *Orientalism* (1978) in which he deconstructed the Western perception of the Orient. Throughout my study, I shall make appeal to other theorists such as Roland Barthes' and Susan Sontag's approach to photography, Laura Mulvey's psychoanalytic approach to male gaze in visual arts, and Frantz Fanon's approach to the veil. Sometimes, I will have to make reference to Jacques Lacan's psychoanalysis.

As a literary and cultural critic and social commentator, Edward Said is a highly significant figure in contemporary intellectual life. His oeuvre is impressive in terms of both scope and importance, and he has exercised a significant influence in the field of cultural and postcolonial studies. His writings on Orientalism and related phenomena have provided the

inspiration for a large number of new studies. Said has increasingly come to analyse the complex and vital relationship between literature, politics, and culture. This analysis has taken three main forms in his work; however, I shall consider only the first one. First, two of his most important books, *Orientalism*(1978) and *Culture and Imperialism*(1998), consider the relationship between the West and the East in the colonial and postcolonial contexts.[36]This first main area of his work deals with the political implication of western colonialism and imperialism and the west's domination and representation of the East and, more generally, non-European world. *Orientalism*, first published in 1978, examines the development of Western conceptions and representations of the Orient from Classical times and Middle Ages to the present[37].

Orientalism often involves seeing Arabs and Middle Easterners in general as exotic, uncivilized, and backward. [38]Said argues that the discourse Europe creates for the Orient is legitimised by some institutions, scholarships, vocabulary, imagery, and colonial bureaucracies.[39] According to Said, the Orientalist 'creates' the Orient through his writing. In the process, he helps in the creation of a series of stereotypical images, according to which Europe (the West, the 'self ') is seen as being essentially rational, developed, humane,superior, virtuous, normal and masculine, while the Orient (the East, the 'other') (a sort of surrogate version of the West or the 'self ') is seen as being irrational, backward, despotic, inferior, depraved, aberrant and feminine sexually.[40]

Said's work Orientalism opened up the possibility for others to go further than Said had in exploring the gender and sexuality of Orientalist discourse itself. Orientalism has engendered feminist scholarship and debate in Middle East studies as Said neglected the issue of gender in the representation of Orientalist women in his essay. Similarly, popular gendered stereotypes circulated such as the sexually promiscuous exotic Oriental female. The exoticised Oriental female, often depicted nude or partially-clothed in hundreds of Western works of art during the

colonial period, was presented as an immodest, active creature of sexual pleasure who held the key to a myriad of mysterious erotic delights[41]. In *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism,*MeydaYegenoglu investigated the intersection between postcolonial and feminist fascination with the veiled women of the Orient. Linking representations of cultural and sexual difference, she shows the Oriental women to have functioned as the veiled interior of western identity. Yegenoglu claimed that besides of being a political, economic, and cultural phenomenon, colonialism was also structured by unconscious process which is rarely discussed. In this case understanding the sexualized nature of Orientalism requires an examination of its unconscious structure[42]. Hazel Simons in his essay *Orientalism and Representation of Muslim Women as "Sexual Objects"* went along with MeydaYegonglu and referred to her work stating that Europe's knowledge of the East was constructed in order to gain control over it and that it reflected the site of Europe's unconscious "where dreams, images, desires, fantasies, and fears reside".[42]

First, as far as the veil is concerned, an essay in particular proved to be a pioneer: Fanon's '*Algeria Unveiled'. Algeria Unveiled* is the first chapter of his book: *A dying Colonialism* first published in 1959 in French and then translated to English in 1965. Algeria Unveiled in this context has a theoretical value and therefore can be suitable to discuss the issue of the veil and unveiling in Alloula's criticism of colonial discourse. Fanon began his writing by introducing the veil as a traditional and national clothing belonging to the Maghreb including Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and Libya. He, then, stated that for the tourist and the foreigner, the veil demarcated both Algerian society and its feminine component.[43]The central focus of Fanon's Algeria Unveiled is to unmask the project France had to unveil Algeria and the way the veil became the symbol of resistance.

Fanon argued that the colonial administration defined a precise political doctrine which is as follow: "if we want to destroy the structure of the Algerian society, its capacity for

resistance, we must first of all conquer the women; we must go and find them behind the veil where they hide themselves and in the houses where the men keep them out of sight." It is in fact the situation of women that was accordingly taken as the theme of action. Converting the women, winning them over the foreign values, wrenching her free from her status, was at the same time achieving a real power over the man and attaining a practical, effective means of destructing Algerian culture. Fanon added that what haunted colonialism during the whole colonial period including that wherein he wrote his book was a total domestication of Algerian society by means of unveiled women. Unveiling this woman was revealing her beauty; baring her secret, breaking her resistance, making her available for adventure. Hiding the face was also disguising a secret; creating a world of mystery, of the hidden. In a confused way, the European experienced his relation with the Algerian woman at a highly complex level. There was in it the will to bring this woman within his reach, to make her a possible object of possession.[44]

The idea above makes it clear that psychoanalysis is worth mentioning. During its hundred-year existence, Psychoanalysis has grown from modest central European beginning into a worldwide therapeutic and cultural presence. Sigmund Freud is one of the half dozen thinkers whose ideas have shaped the twentieth century, and whose influence seems likely to continue into the present.[45]Psychoanalysis is defined as a set of psychological theories and therapeutic methods which have their origin in the work and theories of Freud. The primary assumption of psychoanalysis is the belief that all people possess unconscious thoughts, feelings, desires, and memories.[46]Freud's analysis of the male unconsciousness is crucial for any understanding of the myriad ways in which the female form has been used as a mould into which meaning have been poured by a male-dominated culture.[47]

Second, in the visual arts field, an essay in particular proved to be pioneering and game-changing: the British film theorist's Laura Mulvey 1989 "*Visual and other Pleasures*". Mulvey utilised ideas developed by Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan to explore how films were

constructed. Mulvey extended her research to explore how cinema expressed and nourished a specifically male point of view. She was the first to theorize the existence of a specific "male gaze". In substance, the male gaze depicts women and the world from a masculine heterosexual perspective that presents and represents women as sexual objects for the pleasure of the male viewer. According to Mulvey, the male gaze in films is construed from three perspectives: that of the man behind the camera, (camera-man and film director); that of the male characters within the film's cinematic representations; and finally that of the spectator gazing at the image. The three different perspectives of the male gaze then unite to cement an extremely powerful social construct which derives from, and propagates, patriarchal ideologies and discourses. Mulvey was the first one to propose to see that sexual inequality, or the asymmetry of social and political power between men and women, is a controlling social force in the cinematic representations of the sexes. Stated very simply, the "male gaze" rules how women should look, and their role in life. It routinely hypersexualises women's bodies in a way that empowers the male viewer and objectifies the woman.[48]

Laura Mulvey focused on three important concepts: Fetishism, castration, and narcissism. To understand the paradoxes of fetishism, it is essential to go back to Freud. Fetishism, Freud first pointed out, involves displacing the sight of women's imaginary castration onto a variety of reassuring but often surprising objects, shoes, corsets, rubber gloves, belts, knickers and soon which serve as signs for the lost penis but have no direct connection with it. For the fetishist, the sign itself becomes the source of fantasy and in every case the sign is the sign of the phallus. It is man's narcissistic fear of losing his own phallus, his most precious possession, which causes shock at the sight of the female genitals and the subsequent fetishistic attempt to disguise or divert attention from them.[49]She added that a world which resolved on a phallic axis constructed its fears and fantasies in its own phallic image. In the drama of the male castration complex, as Freud discovered, women are no more than puppets; their significance

lies first and foremost in their lack of a penis symbolizing the castration which man fears.[50]Mulvey believed that while women are the target of endless parade of pornographic fantasies, jokes, and day-dreams, they are only a closed loop dialogue with itself, as Freud conveys is the sign of a male castration anxiety.[51]

Another approach I found suitable and worth to combine with Postcolonial response to the colonial discourse is Susan Sontag's essay *On Photography*. *On Photography* is a collection of essays in which Sontag deconstructed the stereotypes of photography embedded within ordinary consciousness and redefined the relationship between photography, reality, history and time. Sontag questioned the flawed perception of this medium as an objective means of capturing experience: citing that a photographer's work 'gives rise to the same, often dark, deals between truth and art', as painting or literature. Photography is surreal by nature, and this surrealism is manifested in its very attempt to create a duplicate of the world; a reality of the 'second degree', which, whilst limited, is even more striking.[52]Sontag dealt with the dual nature of photography: as both a predatory attempt to appropriate another person's reality and as a position of consicuous non-interference; as the person who documents the event is ultimately unable to influence its outcome. The contemporary obsession with photography turns the public into 'tourists and voyeurists', with implications for both our private and public lives.[53]Sontag believed that photographs could abet desire in the most direct, utilitarian way as when someone collects photographs of anonymous examples of the desirable as an aid to masturbation.[54] Sontag argued that the photograph was a supertourist, an extension of the anthropologist, visiting natives and bringing back news of their exotic beings and strange gear and that the photograph was always trying to colonize new experiences or find new ways to look at familiar subjects to fight against boredom.[55]

Intrinsically, Sontag stressed on the fact that photography has the unappealing reputation of being the most realistic, therefore facil, of the mimetic arts.[56]In fact, most of those photographers were ex-painters who were influenced by surrealism which lies at the heart of the photographic enterprise: in the very depiction of a duplicate world.[57]

Third, Roland Barthes engagement with photography revolves around the desire to develop a new kind of sight, a sensitive one, which penetrates the visible world deeper than our ordinary ways of looking.[58] relation to time, albeit a view that was misinterpreted or simply ignored in philosophical discussions of photography.[59]Barthes essential study explores the nature of photography through the search for its 'genuis'.[60].In the first part of the work, Barthes introduced the three concepts of the operator, spectator, and the spectrum.[61]Barthes said

> I observed that a photograph can be the object of three practices (or of three emotions, or three intentions): to do, to undergo, to look. The operator is the photographer, the spectator is ourselves, all of us who glance through collections of photographs in magazines and newspapers, in books, albums, archives…And the person or thing photographed is the target, the referent, a kind of little simulacrum, an eidolon emitted by the object, which I should like to call the spectrum of the photograph[62]

Barthes claimed that when he was photographed and felt himself observed by the lens, everything changed.[63] "I constitute myself in the process of posing", he also added that he instantaneously made another body for himself, transformed himself into an image. Besides this transformation was an active one as he felt that the photograph created his body or mortified it.[64]Photography transformed subject into object, and even, we might say into a museum object.[65]

The overall project of Barthes' *Camera Lucida* is to determine a new mode of observation and, ultimately, a new consciousness by way of Photography. His efforts aim to fashion an altogether customised framework—one that is distinct from already-determined accounts of images and representation—in which one can 'classify' photography, so as to get at its essence, or *noeme*. Barthes said that he wanted, 'a History of Looking', and in doing so,

he attempted to account for the fundamental roles of emotion and subjectivity in the experience of and accounting for Photography. The essential nature—or *eidos*— of this subjective experience of photography is defined by an irreducible singularity of the photographic image, as an index indicating, '*that-has-been*.' [66]

In his efforts to divorce photography from realms of analysis that deny or obscure its essence, Barthes ultimately formulatesd a new science of photography—an original framework in which photography steps beyond the shackles of classification and such terms as 'art,' 'technique,' etc. and, thus, draws upon an 'absolute subjectivity'—one that exceeds the normal boundaries of the everyday by moving the activity of viewing from a transparent relationship of meaning and expression to a level in which meaning seems to be there without the presence of subjectivity. It is as if the photograph brings out the unconscious; it also represents the unconscious, while at the same time, it denies all of these relations of meaning. The photograph allows for the *sight* of self, not as a mirror but as an access point into a definition of identity—identity associated with consciousness, thus housing a whole; for it is in the photograph 'where being coincides with self,' a, 'true being, not resemblance.' (Barthes uses the term 'air' for the expression of truth.) The photographer, a mediator, supplies the transparent soul its clear shadow, revealing its value and not its mere identity; the photographer, 'makes permanent the truth'.[67]

In this essay which expresses a cultural critique, Alloula goes beyond the abstractions of cultural studies and, in his peculiar associative, poetic language, analysed postcards from the colonial photography studios in Algeria in the 1920$_s$. These postcards-often sent as greetings from French soldiers-depicted half-naked women in stereotypical harem poses. *The Colonial Harem* is to this day a classic essay in the critical tradition of Orientalism in the school of Edward Said, in which Alloula interpreted the colonial Photographic gesture in the light of

Roland Barthes' theories on photography with reference to the psychoanalytical category of Fantasmas which-like the harem itself-at once attracts and repels the European observer[68].

Material

Bibliography of MalekAlloula

MalekAlloula was born in Oran in 1937. He was a graduate of the EcoleNormaleSupérieure and studied literature in Algiers and at the Sorbonne in Paris, where he wrote a doctoral thesis on Diderot and the eighteenth century. He directed the foundation in honour of his brother, AbdelkaderAlloula, one of the leading intellectuals of his country, who was killed by Islamists in 1994. Alloula was a publisher's editor in Paris since 1967. MalekAlloula wrote poetries and proses as well as essays on poetics and philosophy in French language. In 1966 in "Souffles", the journal dedicated to cultural criticism, MalekAlloula spoke out against the appropriation of poetry in the service of the Algerian Revolution following the liberation from France in 1962.[69]

Summary of MalekAlloula's*The Colonial Harem* (1986)

The Colonial Harem was first published in French language in 1981 under the title: Le Harem Colonial. Images d'un sous érotisme then translated into English in 1986 by Myrna and WladGodzich. Malek Alloula's *The Colonial Harem* examines photo postcards of Algerian women taken by French photographers in the first three years of the twentieth century. Though the photographs that Alloula examined were stages, they were captioned as if they documented life in Algeria. For example, a photograph of two women viewed through a barred window is labelled "Moorish women at home." Three separate images of a single woman, in the same outfit, are captioned as if there were three different women, from three different places: "Young

Bedouin Woman," "Young Woman from the South," "Young Kabyl Woman." A woman shown in a jewelled and tasselled headpiece, her elaborate dress opened to show her breasts, is captioned "Moorish Woman in Housedress." The image does not reveal Algerian woman but the colonial photographer's fantasies about her.[70]

Alloula uses so called 'harem postcards' to highlight the Western view of the Orientals. Large numbers of photos of naked Maghreb women were brought onto the European market by photographers like the Swiss Jean Geyser between 1900 and 1930. The women in the photos have no names. The postcards have impersonal captions like 'women from the Maghreb',' Women from the South', 'Women from Algiers'. A dozen of them at most have names like 'the beautiful Fatma'. The Oriental woman remain general; a surface on which an image is projected.[71]

The models and the backdrop against which they were photographed (often an image of nature) appear typified and simplified in these studios photographs. Alloula provided evidence that the models used in these photographs are not actually real harem women. Most of them were in fact victims of war, orphans, and prostitutes who were required to pose for the photographers' lens. The author did not focus on the biographies of the models or their reasons for posing for the camera; instead he directed his criticism against the West. He analysed the view of the voyeur, who was not moved by ethnographic considerations, but by a passion for money and power. The postcards were sent as evidence of the exotic; they were trophies, the spoils of war. In terms of morals, a system of double standards was prevalent: it was acceptable for the women of the 'departments' (in other words, the colonies) to strip off, while photos of naked French women from the mother country were strictly forbidden.[72]

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II. Results

The conducting of this research on MalekAlloula's*TheColonial Harem (1986)*: *Colonial Gaze and postcolonial Response*allowed me to come to some provisional findings.I understood that the postcards French photographersmade about Algerian women and the harem represented the Western fantasies and phantasms about the Orient. The study of Thehistorical context in which the photographs were taken was also relevant to my understanding of such perceptions and descriptions of the Algerian women. In addition, I found out that photography served as a weapon to conquer and dominate Algeria and as a tool to justify their colonization and violence.

Furthermore, I come to conclude that Alloula's work is in fact a response or awriting back to the French distorted and biased representations of the Algerian women. In fact,the problematic I have raised in this research work centers around finding out the way Alloula responded to the colonial gaze by following a set of approaches and theories including Edward Said, Franz Fanon, Roland Barthes, Susan Sontag, and Laura Mulvey, to come to the conclusion that the women represented in the postcards are only a manufacture of the French desire and project to destroy the Algerian culture and control Algeria.

In the light of what had been said so far, I come to the conclusion that MalekAlloula's*The Colonial Harem (1986)*is a Postcolonial work which is aresponse and a writing back to French perception of Algeria and the Algerian women in particular. I have also concluded that the writer appropriated different theoretical approaches to deconstruct and demolish the Western myth about the Orient and its women, and the harem.

III. Discussion

Chapter One: Historical Context of the Postcards

In this chapter, I shall discuss the historical context wherein the postcards known as 'scenes and types'MalekAlloula took as materials in his essay *The Colonial Harem (1986)*were produced. In fact, I found it necessary to study the latter which coincides with the period of European conquest of and first contact with the Orient and the Orientals in order to understand the reasons behind French representation of the Algerian women as exotic and erotic. This chapter will be divided into two parts. The first one will be about Europe's conquest of and first contact with the "Orient" and the "Orients". The second will be devoted to the manifestation of Orientalism in art during the 19thcentury.

Europe's first conquest and first contact with the "Orient" and the "Orients"

The growth of European imperialism in the last decades of the nineteenth century, corresponding with the spread of steam travel, was in many ways a precursor of the globalization of our own era. The domination of the globe by the imperial powers was built on new networks that shipped men and information around the world with unprecedented rapidity. And the great steamships also carried a relatively new breed of traveller, the tourist, around whom a whole host of new industries arose. Among them was that prime symptom of capitalist tourism, the picture postcard. Invented in Austria in the 1860s, the postcard was authorized in France from 1872 and became very popular after the Exposition Universelle of 1889 with cards of the Eiffel Tower; French production rose steadily thereafter, reaching 8 million in 1899, 60 million in 1902 and 123 million in 1910. The years 1900–1925 are sometimes known as the 'golden age' of the postcard thanks to cheap new techniques of

reproduction that made the picture postcard a perfect symbol of what Walter Benjamin calls 'the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction'.[1] In the early 1900s the sheer 'repeatability' of the postcard made it a choice object for collection by the new middle classes. Facilitating such collections, the world of the early picture postcards was extremely ordered, each card having its place as one of a numbered series produced by a particular photographic studio. Such cards also set out, in their own humble way, to organize and classify the world, and French postcards were generally divided into the categories of 'Scènes' (urban or rural) and 'Types'.[2]

Although Europe's geopolitical interest in the Middle East dates back at least to the days of crusades in the eleventh century, starting in the late seventeenth century European travellers to the Middle East produced a substantial body of literature about the region, describing its geography, people, languages and cultures, which facilitated the rise of modern Orientalism both as an academic discipline and as a discourse of power. Indeed, modern Orientalism would have not been possible without travel literature, for, to understand and write about the Orient, Europeans had to first explore the region as travellers.[3]

As French travellers of the seventeenth century took to the seas in increasing numbers, to make their fortune, to spread their faith, to defend the crown, or to represent and be of service of the king in the Levant, they wrote. Some of the well known travellers of that century who shipped to the Orient are Jean Baptiste Tavernier, Laurent d'Arvieux, and Antoine Galland, the antiquarian and renewed translator of the Arabian Nights: each of these travellers, within the same fifty years, treats roughly the same basic trajectory , that is, the sea voyage between Marseille, then and now France's "gateway to the Orient", and the transit point or point of destination, Constantinople, a symbolic centre of Levantine power and the major hub of East-West contact. That area coincides roughly with those areas of the

Mediterranean ruled by the Ottoman Empire, and thereby includes the Barbary republics of Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli.[4]

The Maghreb is an ill-defined space on the southern shores of the Mediterranean that is sometimes seen to stretch from Mauritania to Libya but more often identified with three countries-Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia-marked by France's incremental colonial expansion and presence in North Africa from 1830 until 1962. In the Islamic world, means the "West", the place where the sun sets. If we shift to a European perspective, the Maghreb was seen as part of the Orient, the "East", even of much it was to the west of Italy. Western travellers to the Maghreb came to inscribe it within an Orientalising frame that distributed power asymmetrically and justified it culturally true, nearly all Western travelogues from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries served to reinforce, or at least mirror, the broader discursive strategies of French Empire.[5]These travellers who encountered the'Orient' and the Maghreb in particular including Algeria left a wealth of literature in form of travel accounts and holiday guides, which included the description of places, representations of the local people, their culture and their religion.[6]

The colonial discourse as written in Lahouari Addi's essay entitled *Colonial Mythology: Algeria in the French Imagination (2009)* was not built solely around economic interests but turned on Symbols mined deep in the imagination and in the general culture of the ordinary citizen of metropolitan France. He also states that the colonialist rhetoric forged myths evoking national pride, the glory of belonging to French civilization, the humanism of Western culture, the superiority of Christianity over Islam, etc. Moreover, Colonialist rhetoric constructed an ethnocentric set of myths claiming that autochthonous populations have no culture and civilization. In addition, Colonization, rather than being the domination of one country by another, was an extension of civilization to regions inhabited by primitive or semi-primitive peoples who ultimately will get great advantages from being colonized.[7]

Algeria in French imagination was a faraway exotic colony, nurtured by stories, personal reports, military correspondence and travel, describing either a hostile country, enemy populations, an inhuman climate and geography, or else a quaint Version of indigenous daily life, elements of fantasy, camels, the desert, etc.[8]Most of these writings, namely in the second half of the nineteenth century, were in fact racist and included stereotypes of the majority of Muslim population, especially Muslim women, and Islam confirming then the orientalist discourse prevalent in most of travel literature on the Orient.[9]The nature and direction of movement between West and East set the terms of the relationship. In the seventeenth century, the French were traveling in increasing numbers into the Orient and contacts multiplied as the French government sought to systematize trading relations. Merchants, soldiers, collectors, diplomats, and linguists wrote letters home; they produced translations, bought up old manuscripts, collected rare coins, imported goods, invented stories, compiled histories of the Ottoman Empire, and wrote up accounts of their travels.[10]

Before European travellers returned to paint word pictures for their contemporaries, Arabia was an unknown land. Unknown, it could be imagined, invented ,and it was the burning sands, noble sheik-s, following white robes, barbarous cruelty, Muslim fanaticism, veiled eroticis[11], and as MalekAlloula wrote in the first chapter: The Orient as Stereotype and Phantasm of his book *The Colonial Harem*

> Arrayed in the brilliant colours of exoticism and exuding a full-blown yet uncertain sensuality, The Orient where unfathomable mysteries dwell and cruel and barbaric scenes are staged, has fascinated and disturbed Europe for a long time. It has been its glittering imaginary but also its mirage. Orientalism, both pictorial and literary, has made its contribution to the definition of the variegated elements of the sweet dream in which the West has been wallowing for more than four centuries. It has set the stage for the deployment of phantasms.[12]

In fact, the Orientalist artists or writers dealt with a civilization characterized by a forced lack of representation. Easily and even unwillingly, they could fill this lack of a figurative tradition with their figural imagery or -in a minor measure- with their narrative

imagination.[13] As a matter of fact the French imagination of Algeria was no different. At the end of the nineteenth century and in the first three decades of the twentieth century, the production and reproduction of stereotyped images in colonial Algeria can be seen clearly in a genre of picture postcards known as "Scenes and types" (scène et types) which Alloula studied. "Typical" Algerians are depicted in standardized contexts. We have generic reproductions of certain kinds of people (Arabs, Berbers, Jews, M'Zabis ,"Negroes", Bedouins, Nomades, Touaregs, Ouled Nails), depicted in certain kinds of environments(in front of gourbi-s,"under the tent"), participating in certain kinds of activities (fantasies, making couscous), and participating in a limited set of occupations.[14]

These textual constructions of the Orient and the Maghreb by Europeans created horizon of expectation for later traveller who had to, as Alli Behdad argues, consume the already defined signs of exoticism. The latter offered the reader the prospect of a pleasurable encounter with an exotic that was preserved and made available. The discourse of the guided book as Behdad claimes attests to the commercial stage of orientalist knowledge in which methods of encountering and observing the other are systematically packaged in a book to be used in the field by every traveller.[15]

The visual image of colonial territory is central element of any nineteenth century travel narrative(at least of those travel narratives that indeed included travel to the colonized lands), as visual knowledge produced by the experience of movement through colonial space. In addition to the sights observed during the voyage, the image of the traveller becomes another maker of authenticity and a point of reference for the intended reader.[16]Since European colonization of the East, stereotypical depictions of their perceived orient as exotically backward and Muslim women as submissive and lecherous have been appearing as major themes in western visual discourses.[17]

The Oriental (Algerian) women, the harem, sexuality, and Islam are one of the major focus of visual and textual travel writings Europe (France) developed when they encountered the East (Algeria) for the first time. Europe perception of sexuality in Islam as Billie Mennan writes in his essay: *Desexualizing the Orient: The Harem in English Travel Writing by Women, 1763-1914*, is presented as monolithic. In European imagination, it is argued that the Orient has always been associated with sensuality. From first encounter with Islam, one of the most enduring topoi of the Orient has been that of a locus of lasciviousness. Islam has been misconceived and misrepresented as an apostasy, promoting a promiscuity which only befits its believers. The Oriental women and the harem have held a special fascination in the occidental men's imaginary. If the landscape of the imaginary Orient was sexually charged, the harem or women's quarters, was the ultimate abode of lasciviousness and vice. The advent of modern imperialist enhanced old, established attitudes, yet gave them new meaning. Political and economic domination developed together with an academic discipline and cultural make up famously described by Edward Said as 'Orientalism' which among its other aspects, focused on the trend toward the feminisation and sexualisation of the Middle East.[18]

European travel writings and literatures reported about the "Orient" and the "Orients" whether in written or visual form shaped the way the West perceives the East during that crucial period of time which characterises European first contact of and with Algeria and Algerians especially women who are the focus of the study. The latter, in fact, played a crucial role in shaping the way the conquered region and its people have been represented and constructed as exotic and uncivilised in need of being enlightened by the West.

Orientalist Art Movement of the 19thcentury

Although the roots of orientalist's manifestation in art especially paintings date back to the middle ages, Orientalism in art reached its peak in the 19th century.

In 1930, as France was celebrating with great enthusiasm the first century of the colonization of Algeria and as the Algiers Fine Arts Museum was being opened. Jean Alazard, its creator, drew a first account of the impact of the colonization of Algeria on French art. According to him, the “Algerian experience”, from Delacroix to Renoir, would have given a new impulse to French orientalism.[19]

For centuries, Western artists have turned to North Africa and the Middle East as a source of inspiration and wonder. The “Orient”, a descriptor coined in the nineteenth century, was understood as a cultural and geographical concept inextricably linked to Islam and defined by Turkey, the Levant, Egypt and North Africa. The relationship between Europe and the Orient developed gradually. The crusades of the Middle Ages had ignited European interest in the Orient, an interest that was reactivated following the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Empire in 1453 and that would develop over the course of the century. The Orientalist genre in European art was really born in the eighteenth century thanks to diplomatic exchanges between the Ottoman Empire and European powers.[20]

Ambassadors to Constantinople brought with them artists to record diplomatic encounters and paint portraits of Ottoman notables, and the Sultans themselves commissioned European painters to paint their portraits. Interest in the Orient grew after Napoleon Bonaparte’s conquering Egypt in 1798 and the subsequent British seizure of power in 1801. Napoleon’s campaigns of 1798-1801 in Egypt and Levant were in fact watershed in the encounter between the West and the “Orient,” which were not only heightened political and commercial aspirations to establish hegemony over territories, but also inspired an explosion of literature, “science,” and art of this “foreign” world that reflected a distorted view of the unfamiliar terrain and its peoples based on European preconceptions amidst the development of scientific racism in the nineteenth century such as the emerging field of ethnology.[21]

French colonisation of North Africa in the nineteenth century augmented European presence in the East, and this was shortly succeeded by the opening of Turkey as a destination following the end of Graeco-Ottoman conflict. This expansion prompted a new "grand-tour". Many artists, Eugène Delacroix amongst them, only undertook this voyage once; therefore, they had to collect enough sketches, photographs and artefacts to recreate Eastern scenes in their studios. Some artists could not afford the trip at all, and so created imagined impressions based on the observation of artist travellers and writers. Indeed, French painters, whether Romanticist, Realist or Impressionist, depicted the "Orient" as a world that was everything France (as it envisioned itself – a champion of Western culture and progress) was not, relying more on imagination than fact.[22]

From the Renaissance through to the eighteenth century, Orientalist elements featured in art, architecture and even fashion. Prompted by a post- Revolution surge in "Egyptomania", the nineteenth century in France saw the apogee of the genre. In no other period was the output of Orientalist art so great, so diverse, or in such high demand. Many artists sought a new departure for their work and were captivated by the novelty, mystery and otherness of the East.[23]

There are three primary reasons that the East was such an appealing subject to the western artist and audience. First, the vibrancy of culture and landscape was a shock to the senses. Artists' diaries reveal their fascination with the intensity of sunlight and the captivating colours and atmosphere of city streets; Georges Claorin described it as a "dream of life", and it was one that mesmerised the European audience. Second, though Islamic culture differed vastly from the predominantly Christian Europe, visitors to the Orient nevertheless felt that they were returning to their historical and biblical roots. Numerous

painters, especially British ones, used their art as a vehicle to recount Biblical stories in an authentic setting. Third, many individuals saw Orientalism as a means of indulging in visions free from the constraints of western modernism and conservatism; revelling in a rejection of industrialisation in favour of the East's raw authenticity.[24]

The harem genre was the most popular of genres, though closely allied with it were scenes of the slave market.[25] Two mutually reinforcing myths about the harem were constantly evoked. One version of the harem was the opulent quarters of the Turkish palace where a plethora of female concubines and slaves anxiously awaited the return of their master-husband, the Sultan. The second was of a prison in a Muslim household where women were subject to their husband's absolute control against their will.[26]European Orientalists often painted the harem as a site of debauchery to evoke the falsity of Islam, understood as the anti-religion of Christianity. They conflated what they deemed the "backwards" customs of polygamy and segregation of women with Islam itself. One may also know that even though the Quran allowed the husband to have a maximum of four legal wives and an unlimited number of concubines, only the elite had the financial means to possess a great number of women.

Additionally, in contrast to the seclusion portrayed in Orientalist paintings, many women in rural North Africa worked outside their homes as an additional source of family income and did not always wear the veil as it might impede their manual labour. However, the banality of the harem in Orientalist art gave the false impression that these illusory spaces were real and prevalent.As Edward Said notes, the popularity of the genre drew upon the idea of the Orient as "a place where one could look for sexual experience unobtainable in the West". Men were not allowed into harems, and so artists, including Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, drew upon their own fantasies and hearsay accounts in conjunction with European models to create these images.[27]As a best example to illustrate this idea, Ingres who even

though never travelled to the East, he used the harem setting to conjure an erotic ideal in his voluptuous odalisques. Beyond their implicit eroticism, harem scenes evoked a sense of cultivated beauty and pampered isolation to which many westerners aspired. Indeed, it reveals how Orientalism created what Edward Said calls "an imaginative geography" of the region.[28].Edward Said noted that later in the nineteenth century, in the works of Delacroix and literally dozens of other French and British painters, the Oriental genre tableau carried representation into visual expression and a life of its own sensuality, promise, terror, sublimity, idyllic pleasure, and intense energy.[29]

The sense of the male gaze penetrating the forbidden realm of the harem wa inspired by later art historians like Todd Potterfield as reflecting the Western desire to conquer the land and realm of the 'other'.[30]Some of the first nineteenth-century Orientalist paintings were indeed intended as propaganda in support of French imperialism, depicting the East as a place of backwardness, lawlessness, or barbarism enlightened and tamed by French rule. While many Europeans relied on published travelogues and officially sanctioned literature like the *Description de l'Egypte*for their impressions of the near East, many artists, including Delacroix, Jean-Léon Gérome (1824-1904), ThéodoreChassériau (1819-1856),etc, made one or more journeys to the region. Genre paintings, the prevalent form of Orientalist art in the nineteenth century, were greatly influenced by artists' direct experience of everyday life in Near Eastern cities and settlements.[31]

As an overall, the nineteenth century saw an important rise of Orientalism in Western art. European artists including painters and even photographers who travelled to the East and specifically to Algeria during the French conquest were attracted and fascinated by the exoticism and otherness of the place and its people the Orient promised to them. Two themes were the major attractions of European artists: the Algerian women, and the harem. Both of

them were so repealing that Europeans phantasised on them, therefore eroticicised. In other words, art was a means of European representation of Algeria.

To sum up what had been said in this first chapter of the discussion part, the postcards MalekAlloula studied in *The Colonial Harem (1986)* were pictured in the period of and before European (France) conquest of the East and Algeria in particular. The way the Algerian women and the harem were photographed and represented by French in their reports: travel writings and art, is same to the way other easterners had been conceived by other European powers including Britain; that is exotic, mysterious, and erotic. Travel writings and art including postcards were actually the mirror of European agenda to conquer and dominate Algeria which served as a justification to colonisation in the name of civilisation and enlightenment.

End notes

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Chapter two:MalekAlloula's Response to the Colonial Gaze

The postcard is also one of the illustrated form of colonialist discourse.

(MalekAlloula, The Colonial Harem)

My concern in this chapter is to study the way MalekAlloula in his essay *The Colonial Harem (1986)*responds to the colonial gaze present in the postcards and demolishes the Western myth and distorted vision of the Algerian women.I shall also shed light on the theoretical tools he appropriates to deconstruct and demolish the Western (French) perception of the Oriental (Algerian) women and the harem. Most of the theoretical tools he uses to respond to the colonial gaze belong to Postcolonial, deconstruction, and psychoanalysis scholarship including that ofEdward Said's postcolonial response to*Orientalism*, Roland Barthes's and Susan Sontag's deconstruction of photography, Laura Mulvey's psychoanalytic criticism of the male gaze bias in visual art, and Jaques Lacan's psychoanalysis. My aim in this chapter is then to illuminate, and as Alloula stresses, to reveal the colonial ideology which these postcards hold back, and to expose what is repressed on them; that is man's sexual phantasm.. This chapter will be divided into two sections. The first one will be about the colonial gaze wherein I will explain the meaning of the colonial gaze by referring to Alloula'swork . The second one will be about MalekAlloula's response to the colonial gaze and to the tools he appropriates to achieve his purpose.

Part one: The Colonial Gaze

When colonial powers considered their subject peoples, they often employed what could be called the "*colonial gaze*"; that is, they saw the colonies through eyes that were blurred by misinformation, misconceptions, and stereotypes. Since the 1950s, scholars such as Edward Said have cast this in terms of imperialist viewing "the other", arguing that colonial power construct conceptualizations of subject peoples that serve the interest of those who

rule.[1]Alloula maintains that Orientalism contributed to the deployment of phantasms and that there could not be phantasms without sex. In fact, Colonial domination forged an intrinsic relationship with it through modalities of sustained scrutiny and intervention. These dimensions are constitutive of a "gaze" that frequently found its object in women and their status. In postcolonial theory, the gaze has meant an unequally constituted right to scrutinize, to represent what is gazed at, and to intervene and alter the object of the gaze.[2]Surely, imperialism and gender were closely linked in a number of ways. In fact women in subject lands often did not conform to the gender construct of the dominant imperial culture. This unconformity was used to explain the 'uncivilized' nature of their society.[3]

Consistently, colonial ideologies in the nineteenth century established its own European superiority via forming "cultural hegemony" which was the concept of Antonio Gramshi that suggests a "common sense", a cultural universe where the dominant ideology is practiced and spread through political, moral, cultural values. As such, the Orient is inferiorised from different status such as gender, civilization (power) and racism in respect to Occident as the Western culture established structure of discourses upon the Orient to define it within binary oppositions in contrast to itself. Yet it can be understood within a larger tradition of white man who travelled to other countries or created an armchair imaginary fantasy world and its imagery.[4]In this context Alloula opens his first chapter with the following statement:

> Arrayed in the brilliant colours of exoticism and exuding a full blown yet uncertain sensuality, the Orient, where unfathomable mysteries dwell and cruel and barbaric scenes are staged, have fascinated and disturbed Europe for a long time. It has been its glittering imaginary but also its mirage.[4]

From the quotation above, it is clear that the exoticism of the Orient gave rise to a wide range of stereotypical images. These images operate within the binary opposition of civilization/nature (barbarism-despotism), white/other and male/female establishing the

woman in them as exotic different and other to both painter and the viewer.[4]And in the case of this research: the photographer.[5]

As far as eroticism is concerned, the erotic-sadistic masculine fantasies which are executed through paintings, was used to run away from the ordinary and routine daily life of modern society[5]. Indeed, they find a way to escape their moral taboos that limit them in relation to Christianity.[6] Oriental artists used sexual, immoral, racial components as they wish in their compositions by painting all their imagination within an Oriental setting and proms as an adventure and controller of the picturesque.[7]There are some significant ideological power dynamics that were practised via different agencies. One of them is the ideological power of man over woman that regenerates patriarchal societies' dominant masculine practices again by using sexist approach. The other ideological power is the white man's control over the Oriental and superiority to establish the discourse to generate the concept of the inferior races which are named as "other".[8] These ideological discourses that are mentioned previously in relation to Orientalist paintings are also to be found in photography and postcards and as Alloula states: "The postcard is also one of the illustrated forms of colonialist discourse, its chatty and self satisfied imagery." He adds that the postcard was a ventriloquial art, even and especially when it pretended to mirror the exotic, was nothing but one of the forms of aesthetic justification of colonial violence and that statue was constitutive to colonial postcards.[9]

Early photographer of the Middle East was not "natural" or "objective" representations. Rather, they reproduced, and consequently reinforced, certain Orientalist stereotypes about the Middle East; its "backwardness" people and "exotic" culture, stereotypes that provided the ideological rational for colonizing the region.[10]

Concerning the photographer's gaze, it is represented by the camera's eye and leaves its clear mark on the structure and content of the photograph.[11] Photo subject matter, composition, vantage point (angle or point of view), sharpness and depth of focus, colour balance, framing and other elements of style are partly the result of viewing choices made by the photograph.[12] The native woman and her body becomes then the spectacle space where the promise of the colonial land can be explored.[13] Photography was in fact instrumental in representing, collecting, picturing and observing the colonial terrain, where the indigenous terrain became an object of representational knowledge and the site for reproducing colonial relationship of power.[14]

Accordingly, as Alloula mentions in his essay, a central figure emerges which is the very embodiment of the obsession: the harem, to which a simple allusion to it is enough to open wide the floodgate of hallucination. He stresses the fact that the harem was a central figure of Orientalism by stating that it became a brothel and the last avatar but also the historical truth of an Orientalism, the presuppositions of which were no longer masked by the postcard. The West's image of the secluded and polygamous Oriental woman created myths, rumours and stereotypes of a long standing fascination. The vision of the harem as a sexualized realm of deviancy, cruelty and excess has animated some of the West's best known examples of dominant Orientalsim.[15] The sexualised display of the Oriental female body was a central standing of Western Orientalism, fully developed and well known by the second half of the nineteenth century.[16]

Edward Said's theory of Orientalism is not enough to be adopted in this context as it lacks an insight into gender. For, it received a vocal criticism which came from various postcolonial and feminist scholars concerning the latter which was anevidence that Orientalism was concerned only with man's singular experience of the Orient.[17]In her book *Colonial Fantasies: Towards Feminist Reading of Orientalism(1988)*, the Associate Professor

in Department of Sociology, at the Middle East Technical University, Ankara, MeydaYegenogly investigates the intersection between post-colonial and feminist criticism, focusing on the Western fascination with the veiled women of the Orient. She examines the veil as a site of fantasy and of naturalist ideologies and discourses of gender identity, analyzing travel literature, anthropological and literary texts to reveal the hegemonic, colonial identity of the desire to penetrate the veiled surface of 'otherness'. Representations of cultural and sexual differences are shown to be inextricably linked, and the figure of the Oriental woman to have functioned as the veiled interior of Western identity.[18]Yegenoglu states

> My aim is to call into question the usefulness of simply adding the gender "variable" to the accounts of Orientalism. It is the contention of this book that if we are to engage the complex significations which constitute Orientalism we need to examine closely how the discursive constitution of otherness is achieved simultaneously through sexual as well as cultural modes of differentiation. A more sexualized reading of Orientalism reveals that the representations of sexual difference cannot be treated as its subdomain; it is fundamental in the formation of a colonial subject position.[19]

From the quotation above, it is clear that gender is an important concept that should be incorporated to Orientalism to further develop and explain Edward Said's study of Western misrepresentation of the East and to the Oriental woman in particular. Yegenoglu goes further and states that the understanding of the sexualized nature of Orientalism requires an examination of its unconscious structure.[20] She also adds that besides of being an economic, a political,and cultural phenomenon, colonialism is also structured by unconscious process and as she writes: "In addressing the question of sexual difference, it needs to be recognized that fantasy and desire, as unconscious process, play a fundamental role in the colonial relation that is established with the colonized."[20]

It is obvious from the above paragraph that Yegenoglu approaches Orientalism in relation to gender with a psychoanalysis approach. In fact, her principal mode of critique in rethinking Said's orientalism, in relation to the veil, is psychoanalysis of the Lacanian variety. According to her, the veil is a kind of prototypical Orientalist fantasy as imagined by

theWestern male observers, it fetishizes the “Oriental” woman even as it renders the gazes invisible, even and especially to himself. In this way, the use of the veil in Orientalist discourse may be seen as equivalent to the fantasm of the liberal, autonomous Western subject it-(or him-) self, it is, moreover an integral part of the “discursive dynamics that secure a sovereign subject for the West” as well.[21]

As a conclusion of this first part of the second chapter, we may say that the postcards of Algerian women made by French in Algeria during French colonization of the latter were only the mirror of the colonial gaze which served as a justification to colonialism and violence. The colonial gaze in its turn hides another gaze which is the Orientalist one which represents the Orientals and women in this context as exotic, erotic, and lascivious. Again the Orientalist gaze also mirrors another gaze which is the male gaze structured by desires and phantasms. As a whole the colonial gaze is attached to the Orientalist and male gaze.

Part two: MalekAlloula’s Response to the Colonial Gaze

Barbara Harlow in her introductory part of the translated version (English) of *The Colonial Harem*states that MalekAlloula points out one of the modes of the deformation of the image of the Algerian woman and the harem which are the photographer’s studio and native models who re-enact exotic rituals in costumes provided by the picture-taking impresario. The postcard in the context of *The Colonial Harem,* no longer represent Algeria and Algerian woman but her inaccessibility behind the veil in the forbidden harem.[22]She writes

> The postcards present thirty years of French colonial presence in Algeria and illustrate its distorting effects on Algerian society. In the end, the French conquest of Algeria, begun in 1830 and depicted in certain of its aspects on these postcards, was less a conquest than a deformation of the social order. Through a demystifying reorganization of the photos, Alloula points out one of the modes of that deformation: the photographer's studio and the native models that re-enact exotic rituals in costumes provided by the picture-taking impresario. The postcards, in the context of The Colonial Harem, no longer represent Algeria and the Algerian woman but rather the Frenchman's phantasm of the Oriental female and her inaccessibility behind the veil in the forbidden harem.[23]

In the first chapter of *The Colonial Harem* entitled *The Orient as Stereotype and Phantasm*, Alloula stresses on the fact that the postcard which covers all the colonial space represents the Orientalist's poetry, glory, and also their pseudo knowledge of the colony. It is in fact the symbol of the territorial spread of the colonist and at the same time a seductive appeal to the spirit of adventure and pioneering. In other words, it is the fertilizer of the colonial vision about the Orient and the Orientals (Algeria and Algerian woman), a distorted vision which represent degraded and degrading man's phantasm of the harem by means of photography.[24]

Intrinsically, Orientalism focuses on what could be called 'colonial discourse'- the variety of textual forms which the west produced and codified knowledge about non-metropolitan areas and cultures, especially those under the colonial control.[25] The European vision of the Orients was in fact largely fictitious, filled with dark, sensuous bodies and lascivious, fanatical rulers.[26]As far as women are concerned, Said neglected the sexualized and gendered side of Orientalism which many scholars including Meydayegenoglu criticised and contributed to it to further expand his theory by including the concept of gender and sexuality related to women including the codification of their bodies.Alloula criticizes the way in which Orientalist erotic postcards assaulted Algerian society, paralleling and to a measured degree, sustaining the colonialist assault of the French. It shows how the veil, seen by many as a symbol of impregnability and integrity of the colonized, was gradually and deliberately stripped off in photography and how Algeria was pacified, eroticized, and appropriated, emulating in the realm of sexuality it sack by the colonizers.[27]

Correspondently, in the heterogeneous field of Orientalism, Europe's collective day dream of the East, a particularly prominent part has been played by the image of the veiled women. The central importance of the veil in European representations the Oriental society derives not only from its role as the most public and visible signifier of radical sexual

segregation, but also as the key marker of the essential inferiority of Islamic societies. The image of the veil, both in texts, paintings and photographs, is strategically placed to signify a much wider field of religious, social and cultural practices which include the harem, polygamy, which is seen as a repressive political order based on the subjugation of women, Oriental despotism, sadism and lasciviousness.[28]

In the chapter entitled *Women from the Outside*: *Obstacle and Transparency,* Alloula maintains that the veil the Algerian women wore represents one of the obstacles the French photographer encounters. Indeed, the fact that she is covered is a kind of a refusal to expose herself to the photographer who, therefore, undergoes an experience of disappointment and rejection. Alloula writes that the Algerian woman was the concrete negation of his desire and thus brought to the photographer confirmation of a triple rejection: the rejection of his desire, of the practice of his "art", and his place in a milieu that is not his own. In this way, the exoticism the Orient promised to the photograph who thinks it is easy to handle is actually not. In this case, the photographer responds to women who denied him from accomplishing his work by means of a double violence; he will unveil the veiled and give figural representation of the forbidden[29](the harem)

To further develop and explain the idea above, I shall use one of the images of the Algerian woman captioned: "Femmekabyle se couvrant de son haik", "Kabyl woman covering herself with the haik".

Figure 1

In this postcard we can see this woman as Alloula writes: "drawing the veil aside with both hands in a gesture of inaugural invitation that the photographer staged first for himself, and second for the viewer." Alloula explains that the pose the woman holds is only a schematic distortion entreprised which other women are destined to follow until "the Algérienne will no longer have anything to hide". the woman in fact becomes a model under the photographer's commands.[30]Unveiling this woman as Frantz fanon states is revealing her beauty; it is baring her secret, breaking her resistance, making her available for adventure. Hiding the face is also disguising a secret; it is also creating a world of mystery, of the hidden. In a confused way, the European experiences his relation with the Algerian woman at a highly complex level. There is in it the will to bring this woman within his reach, to make her a possible object of possession.[31]

The photographer's obsession with unveiling the Algerian woman reminds of the French administration's policy and agenda to unveil the Algerian women in order to control the man as well and in return destroy the Algerian culture and any form of resistance including that of the veil which represented one of the means by which the Algerian women resisted to colonialism. This issue is well discussed in Frantz Fanon's *Unveiled Algeria* of his

book *A dying Colonialism* (1965). This woman who sees without being seen as Fanon highlights frustrates the colonizer. There is no reciprocity. She does not yield herself, does not give herself, does not offer herself. The Algerian has an attitude toward the Algerian woman-which is on the whole clear. He does not see her. There is even a permanent intention not to perceive the feminine profile, not to pay attention to women. In the case of the Algerian, therefore, there is not, in the street or on a road, that behavior characterizing a sexual encounter that is described in terms of the glance, of the physical bearing, the muscular tension, the signs of disturbance to which the phenomenology of encounters has accustomed us. The European faced with an Algerian woman wants to see. He reacts in an aggressive way before this limitation of his perception. Frustration and aggressiveness, here too, evolve apace.[32]In fact as Alloula maintains, the society the photographer observed revealed to him his instinctual desire and that the exoticism he thought easy to be handled, suddenly disclosed to him a truth unbearable for his exercise of his craft.[33]

In the same chapter, the writer states that the veiled Algerian who represented the private space where there was no trespassing and therefore the photograph frustration, would become the pure port on an unveiling.[34]This frustration is turned into the photographer in the sign of his own negation.[35]The veiled woman prevents him from accomplishing his mission.[36]In this way, the photographer as Alloula claims would respond by means of a double violence; that is he would unveil the veiled woman and give her figural representation via his studio where he would satisfy his desire.[37] He explains that The photographers's metaphoric aim is to set into motion the gesture of drawing the veil; a gesture executed at his command, that would be followed by other models until they will have nothing to hide.[38]

The idea above may go along with Fanon's claim unveiled Algeria wherein he states that after each success, the authorities were strengthened in their conviction that the Algerian woman would support Western penetration into the native society. Every rejected veil

disclosed to the eyes of the colonialists horizons until then forbidden, and revealed to them, piece by piece, the flesh of Algeria laid bare. The occupier's aggressiveness, and hence his hopes, multiplied ten-fold each time a new face was uncovered. Every new Algerian woman unveiled announced to the occupier an Algerian society whose systems of defence were in the process of dislocation, open and breached. Every veil that fell, everybody that became liberated from the traditional embrace of the haik, every face that offered itself to the bold and impatient glance of the occupier, was a negative expression of the fact that Algeria was beginning to deny herself and was accepting the rape of the colonizer. Algerian society with every abandoned veil seemed to express its willingness to attend the master's school and to decide to change its habits under the occupier's direction and patronage.[39]

Furthermore, in the chapter entitled: *Women's Prison*, Alloula deals with the theme of women's imprisonment and confinement in her home. The latter causes the sensation of frustration and represent man's phantasm of the harem. He provides evidence that the models used in these photographs are not actually real harem women.[40] Most of them are in fact victims of war, orphans, and prostitutes who were required to pose for the photographers' lens.[41]Besides, thanks to the art of illusion, that is photography, to impersonate to the point of believability. The photographer chooses the furnitures including dress and jewelleries which represent the indispensible finishing touch to make the photography as true and representative as possible.[42]AhmedTaleb in his *Lettre Ouverte à Albert Camus, Lettres de Prison* follows the same idea and maintains that the models were simultaneously the epiphany of the Algerian woman absent in the photo and her imaginary takeover and that since it filled this absence, the postcard sat its own criteria of truthfulness for the representation of the Algerian women and for the discourse that could be held about them.[43]

In the same chapter, MalekAlloula acknowledges Roland Barthes and states that the model presents two distinct and closely related advantages: she is accessible and credible. He

adds a third one: profitable[44]. He goes on with his response to the colonial gaze by deconstructing the photography following Roland Barthes' model of his book ***Camera Lucida (1981)***, that is the three components of a photography: the iconic message and the caption, the third one as Alloula claims can be manifested through the sender's comment wherein the discourse displayed on the Algerian woman is hidden. He writes

> It is hidden in at least three ways. First and foremost, by the iconic message, that is, by the photographed subject as such, who must be acknowledged to possess an undeniable power of attraction (one always selects one postcard in preference to another). Second, by the caption, which is meant to be informative; the information it conveys is supposed to amount to "knowledge" and thus be disinterested. Finally, it may occasionally be hidden by the sender's comments with their pretensions to enlightened views.[45]

Alloula goes further and states that the photographer's desire, imaginary, and illusion not only does it manifest on women and their bodies but also in the setting; that is the studio where he disposes assorted objects which suggest the existence of a natural frame whose feigned "realism" is expected to provide a supplementary, yet by no means superfluous, touch authenticity.[46]In other words, the studio completes the illusion made on the models and as he writes: "it becomes the embodiment of the propitious site".[47]

Alloula cites Bourdieu's *theory of practice* by claiming that those connotative signs (women and studio) are symbolic. "Every photographer's studio becomes a versatile segment of urban or geographic landscape" Alloula writes, and "the model is a figure of the symbolic appropriation of the body (of the Algerian woman)" Alloula adds. In addition to Barthes and Bourdieu, the writer introduces also Jacques Lacan's concept of *voyeurism* displayed in the postcard which conveys sexual and erotic image of the Algerian woman. He does so by presenting a photography captioned *Young Moorish Women*. The photography in question provides a dramatic illustration of the sexual connotation of confinement that is over determined by the phantasm of the harem.[48]

figure2

Alloula analyses the picture stressing the fact that the latter is only the male desire and phantasm of the harem. He writes: “on the other side of the wall, a man is desperately clutching the bars that keep him from the object of his unequivocal yearning. The mask of suffering that is imprinted on it, leave no doubt his intention to be united with the prisoner, the woman in the harem.”[49] He adds that their gaze resolutely turned toward his other gaze that looked at them and might bear witness to their confinement and that the pose was conventional, hackneyed, and the décor was limited to the obvious signs on incarceration, namely a crisscross of metal bars firmly embedded in wall casings.[50]According to him, the picture reveals the photographer desire to penetrate the most forbidden site, that is the harem, and have access to the female world on the other side of the wall.[51]

In *Women’s Quarter*, Alloula discusses the mise-en-scène and false realism the photographer perpetuates while photographing Algerian women and the harem. He states that to demolish and deconstruct the mise-en-scène, one must uncover the original triad constituted by photography; that is his studio and his models. Alloula continuous his

deconstruction of the western myth about the Orient by comparing the camera operator, the photographer, with Alice of Lewis Carrol's*Alice Adventures in the Wonderful land* because the operator as he states: "has gone through the looking glass. But what he discovers, upon landing at the end of his leap, is only the reflection that elicits himself and elaborates. What he brings back from his expedition is but a harvest of stereotypes."[52]Thecounterfeitable realism requires a minimum of truthfulness. Otherwise, it would become a fantasy. However, truthfulness in details becomes exaggeration.[53]

The same idea is discussed in chapter entitled *Figures of the Harem: Dress and Jewellery*: Alloula argues that colonial postcard was above all an art of simulacrum and that the Algerian women represented on it was a simulacra and that because the exotic postcard was an art of signs and not of meanings, the few signs distributed including jewellery, rugs, pottery which were in fact true objects, the rest was only a staging.[54] As a matter of fact, this idea comes from Roland Barthes who maintains that a photograph could be the object of three practices (or of three emotions, or of three intentions): to do, to undergo, to look.The operator which represented ourseleves, all of us who glanced through collections of photography in magazines, newspapers, in books, albums, archives…And that the person or thing that was photographed was the target, the referent, a kind of a little simulacrum, any eidolon emitted by the object.[55]and as he says: "I should like to call the spectrum of the photograph, because this word retains, though its root, a relation to spectacle and adds to it that rather terrible thing which is there in every photograph: the return of the dead."[56]

In addition, Alloula points to the fact that as they were an act of simulacrum, the colonial postcard was a success in business which was not a surprising fact since it was directed to people in search of local colour. Besides this motivation, he points to another one which is of a sexual nature.[57]Alloula writes

> The commercial success of this simulacrum is not surprising since it is directed to the very people who stand at its inception: soldiers, colonizers, and visitors from the mother country in search of local colour. But the continued success of the simulacrum, through the infinite variation of its figures and its tireless power of attraction to the photographer, is a further indication that, beyond its flagrant sordidness, there are other motivations, of a sexual nature.[58]

In the following chapter: *Inside the Harem: the Rituals*, the writer introduces the concepts of "voyeur" and "voyeurism" and attaches them to the photographer claiming that photography nourished his voyeurism and that because the latter is the structure of desire, it had no limits. The only avenue of escape that the author of the postcard have is that of the pleasure of the other. That is, there will not be any difference between him and the intermediary or the procuror who takes pleasure in the pleasure of the other, whom he imagines taking his pleasure. In other words, the photographer is the variant of the voyeur. Accordingly, the feminist film theorist, Laura Mulvey deals with the theme of voyeurism in her essay: *Visual and Other Pleasures(1989)*in which she responded to the dominant male gaze in films and visual culture. She states that the cinema offered a number of possible pleasures. One is scopophilia; pleasure in looking. Indeed, There were circumstances in which looking itself was a source of pleasure, just as, in the reverse formation, there was pleasure in being looked at.Alloula claims that the authors of postcards suffered all from the same disease which was surely voyeurism.[59]

Mulvey cites Sigmund Freud who in his Three Essays on Sexuality as she writes, isolated scopophilia as one of the component instincts of sexuality which exist as drives quite independently of the erotogenic zones.[60]At this point Freudassociated scopophilia with taking other people as objects, subjecting them to a controlling and curious gaze. His particular examples centre on the voyeuristic activities of children, their desire to see and make sure of the private and forbidden (curiosity about other people's genital and bodily functions, about the presence or absence of the penis and, retrospectively, about the primal scene). Freud developed his theory of scopophilia further, attaching it initially to pregenitalauto-eroticism,

after which, by analogy, the pleasure of the look is transferred to others. There is a close working here of the relationship between the active instinct and its further development in a narcissistic form. Although the instinct is modified by other factors, in particular the constitution of the ego, it continues to exist as the erotic basis for pleasure in looking at another person as object. At the extreme, it can become fixated into a perversion, producing obsessive voyeurs whose only sexual satisfaction can come from watching, in an active controlling sense, an objectified other.[61]

The idea above is expressed in Susan Sontag's essay *On Photography1973* in which she compares the photographer to the voyeur. The photographer as she mentioned is an armed version of the solitary walker reconnoitring, stalking, and cruising the urban inferno, the voyeuristic stroller who discovers the city as a landscape of voluptuous extremes. Adept of the joys of watching, connoisseur of empathy, the flâneur finds the world 'picturesque. She adds that to photograph people is to violate them, by seeing them as they never see themselves, by having knowledge of them that they can never have; it turns people into objects that can be symbolically possessed. Just as a camera is a sublimation of the gun, to photograph someone is a subliminal murder - a soft murder, appropriate to a sad, frightened time.[62] That is, the camera has the same function as a gun which kills the target.

Susan Sontag in fact analysed Michel Powell's film *Peeping Tom* 1960 which is about a psychopath who kills women with a weapon concealed in his camera, while photographing he does not touch his subject, he wants their presence in form of images by showing them experiencing their own death which he screens at home for his solitary pleasure. She adds that the film assumedconnections between impotence and aggression, professionalyzed looking and cruelty; which pointed to the central fantasy connected with the camera.[63]

Alloula discusses the same idea claiming that the photographer, caught up in his own frenzy, could not stop to consider this paradox, busy as he was with attempting to make something more real than the real and developing an almost obsessive fetishism of the (sign's) object.[64]The woman then becomes the object of sexual imaginary. Therefore, it has the peculiar ability of fulfilling the scopic instinct (voyeurism) with- out neutralizing or canceling the sexual instinct in the process. It can even stimulate the latter.[65]

In the ninth chapter: *Oriental Sapphism*, Alloula introduces the theme of sapphism and mentions the sexual desires the western male have on the harem related to the latter. Before analysing this chapter, one should know the meaning of sapphism. Sapphism is in fact a term that refers to women who have romantic and sexual attraction to other women. What separates sapphism from lesbianism is inclusivity. Specifically, sapphism is an adjective that includes not only lesbians, but bisexual, pansexual, and homo/bi/pan-romantic asexual women, as well some non-binary transgender individuals.[66] Appropriately, Alloula affirms that sapphism with sexual imagination further eroticized the idea of the harem and contributed to the male voyeur as it underscored its polysexuality: male homosexuality, lesbianism, zoophilia and other vices.[67]

The writer further deepens the above idea with a psychoanalytic approach maintaining that the harem was not merely that and its extension to Western imaginary brings other elements into play. “it is an erotic universe in which there are no men. This lack of the phallus is eloquently symbolized by the two figures of the high lord, who can neither enjoy all the women nor satisfy them…and of the eunuchs,who are the absolute negation of the male principle.” From this quotation, one point may attract one’s attention: *the lack of the phallus*. Lack of the phallus as explained by Alloula, is one of the features of male phantasm which causes frustration which in its turn causes the fear of castration; a complex phantasm of the harem.[68]

In psychoanalytic terms, as Laura Mulvey writes, the female figure poses a deeper problem. She also connotes something that the look continually circles around but disavows: her lack of a penis, implying a threat of castration and hence unpleasure. Ultimately, the meaning of woman is sexual difference, the visually ascertainable absence of the penis, the material evidence on which is based the castration complex essential for the organisation of entrance to the symbolic order and the law of the father. Thus the woman as icon, displayed for the gaze and enjoyment of men, the active controllers of the look, always threatens to evoke the anxiety it originally signified. The male unconscious has two avenues of escape from this castration anxiety: preoccupation with the re-enactment of the original trauma (investigating the woman, demystifying her mystery), counterbalanced by the devaluation, punishment or saving of the guilty object (an avenue typified by the concerns of the film noir); or else complete disavowal of castration by the substitution of a fetish object or turning the represented figure itself into a fetish so that it becomes reassuring rather than dangerous (hence overvaluation, the cult of the female star).[69]

This second avenue, fetishistic scopophilia, builds up the physical beauty of the object, transforming it into something satisfying in itself. The first avenue, voyeurism, on the contrary, has associations with sadism: pleasure lies in ascertaining guilt (immediately associated with castration), asserting control and subjugating the guilty person through punishment or forgiveness. This sadistic side fits in well with narrative. Sadism demands a story, depends on making something happen, forcing a change in another person, a battle of will and strength, victory/defeat, all occurring in a linear time with a beginning and an end. Fetishistic scopophilia, on the other hand, can exist outside linear time as the erotic instinct is focused on the look alone.[70]

On that account, psychoanalysis has proven to be an important influence on contemporary critical theory. Much feminist analysis of the power of the gaze has drowned

on psychoanalytic theorizing of Lacan. Lacan's view of the gaze whichcan be helpful as a model for the potential effects of looking. Lacan speacks of gaze as something distinct from the eye of the beholder and as distinct from simple vision. For him, the gaze is something which slips and is always to some degree eluded in it. The gaze comes from the other who constitutes the self in that looking, but a gaze imagined not a gaze seen.[71]

In the same chapter, Alloula explains that the violence that the photographer perpetuated was the fact of exhibiting models with anonym identities becoming yet exemplification of their place and hence enhancing generalisation that all the Algerian women were like that images: lascivious and dedicated to the joy of sapphism and exhibitionism.[72]

We may come to deduce that MalekAlloula's response or writing back to the colonial gaze which is actually attached to Orientalist gaze and to the male gaze as well is established through a set of theories, paradigms, and approaches which belong to the field of psychoanalysis, feminism, deconstruction, and postcolonialism.

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IV. Conclusion

The present dissertation has attempted to study the colonial gaze and discourse as well as the aspect of Postcolonial response in Malek Alloula's*The Colonial Harem (1986)* by appropriating Edward Said's postcolonial response to the Orientalist discourse in his book *Orientalism* (1978) combined with other approaches and theoretical tools including that of photography and psychoanalysis. This study has come up with the conclusion that MalekAlloula is a postcolonial writer who wrote back to the French colonial distorted discourse made about Algeria and her women who were depicted in the French postcards known as "scenes and types" as erotic, exotic, and sexual objects.

This research has revealed that while responding to the French colonial gaze, Alloula opted for a set of theoretical tools and approaches including that of Edward Said's *Orientalism*, Roland Barthes' and Susan Sontag's approaches to photography in their respective works: *Camera Lucida* and *On photography,* and Laura Mulvey'spsychoanalytic approach to male gaze and films and visual culture in her book: *Visual and Other Pleasures*. All this was to claim that the colonial gaze is only the mirror of the Orientalist and male gaze full of desires, imaginations, dreams, and phantasms.

Alloula's aim behind his response to the colonial gaze was to deconstruct and return the postcards to their senders and demolish the Western hegemony and discourse towards the East. At the same time he also meant to send a message to say that those images of the Algerian women did not represent the reality, and thus the Algerian women, but rather, it represented the European male's vision about the Orient and Algeria; a vision full of desires, imaginations, dreams, and phantasms. Alloula also came to deduce that photography besides of being an art, was also a weapon which served to conquer and control the Orient and Algeria by means of misrepresentation of the natives to justify their colonisation under the name of civilization, enlightenment, and progress. To my point of view Malek Alloula

succeeded in demolishing the Western myth about the Orient and Algeria in particular and her women. In this sense photography failed in its mission to spread the Western hegemony upon Algeria.

My study opens other possibilities for further studies for students who want to deepen their research on MalekAlloula's*The Colonial Harem. I may suggest* Jacques Derrida's deconstructionist approach to binary oppositions between East and West, civilisation, barbarism. My second suggestion is Michel Foucault's discourse, power and knowledge as the postcards Alloula referred to mirror the Orientalist discourse the West has on the east and the knowledge which is exercised by power the former has on the later.

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