

**Travel Literatures and the Making of 'Orientalisms:'
Representations of Gender and Sexuality**

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ABSTRACT

Travel Literature and the Making of 'Orientalisms': Representations of Gender and Sexuality

Trent Newmeyer

This study is an exploratory investigation of the complex construction, heterogeneity, and multivocal nature of gendered and sexualised Orientalisms. The issues addressed regarding these Orientalisms centre on the role played by the author's/traveller's gendered and sexually-determined positions in the West, the contestatory nature of travelling and travel writing, and the impact of historical developments pertaining to the dismantling of empire and the rise of the 'sexual revolution' in the West. The main research question of this thesis is how these three factors (the gendered/sexualised position of the author/traveller, the conflictual nature of travelling, and the impacts of colonialism and the Western 'sexual revolution') affect and shape cultural productions of gender and sexuality in travel accounts on the Middle East and North Africa. A hermeneutical analysis of the representations of gender and sexuality in ten travel narratives, written by Western men and women (heterosexual and homosexual), on the Orient further extends the theoretical paradigms of colonial and postcolonial discourse studies and

allows for an improved understanding of the complex relations between the Orient and the Occident and of the various factors involved in the cultural construction of Orientalisms.

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INTRODUCTION

'A quixotic fellow,' said Benny. "What does this say about the Turkish character?"

Probably, nothing at all. Awful things have been said about the Turks. In the last century, travellers routinely referred to them as terrible, lazy, unspeakable, libidinous, unconscionable, and full of treachery. Nor were they said to be very smart. When it comes to intelligence, David Hogarth wrote in 1896, the Turk "ranks a rank a grade below his dog."

All nonsense, of course. Too much is made of national character. The Irish drink *too much*, Scots are frugal, and Swedes are dour. But are they? Are the Irish drunkards? Certainly none I know - and I know many. More accurate is this: *some* of the Irish drink *too much*. But even that would have to be qualified. *Some* of the Irish drink *too much sometimes*. But to say that is to say nothing. Some English drink *too much sometimes, too*. And some French. And some Germans. National types are a fiction for the reason that each of us is unique. We typify no one but ourselves - and sometimes, we don't even do that (Lawlor, 1993: 174).

This quotation from Eric Lawlor's *Looking for Osman* (1993) encapsulates some of the predominant contradictions that confront the traveller in the Orient. Benny's question reflects the ways in which the West has read off national character from specific incidents. The tendency to sum up a culture with a few choice labels is one that has structured Western thinking as Lawlor points out. But for the traveller, the person who has experienced the diversity within a culture, such generalisations are untenable, requiring such a degree of qualification as to render the statement tantamount to saying nothing. Benny's question prompts Lawlor to not only realise that past and present definitions of the Turkish character have been grossly inaccurate, but forces him to question the discourse of national character as it

relates to both the East and the West. Lawlor's final statement reflects the vantage point that structures the perceptions of the traveller, where concrete, immediate experiences never conform to existing commonplaces and can never stand in for the culture of a nation, just as one's individuality always falls short of the culturally constructed typologies of self.

Studies of colonial and postcolonial discourse have, with a few exceptions, generally been silent on the issue of gender and nearly mute on the issue of sexuality. Feminist and queer studies have also neglected to adequately address the colonial and postcolonial context when examining Western perceptions of, and actions in, the Orient.¹ This study seeks to bridge these exclusions and to delineate

¹ Studies of colonial and postcolonial discourses, such as Said's (1978), have generally avoided issues of gender. Following Said, theorists such as Kabbani (1980) have included an analysis of gendered Oriental images but neglected to examine the travel writings of Western women on the Orient. Kabbani's analysis also inadequately characterises homosexual relations between Occidental men/Oriental boys for she collapses such relations into a heterocentric, phallogocentric, static structure. Sexuality, specifically homosexuality, in colonial and postcolonial contexts has been rarely examined, or, if discussed, suffers from a heterocentric bias. More recent scholarship on colonialism and postcolonialism has investigated the gendered natures of Orientalisms and other colonial discourses (Hoodfar, 1995; Lewis, 1996; Lowe, 1991; McClintock, 1995; Melman, 1994; Mills, 1994) yet sexuality still is not critically examined or theorised in such studies. Feminist studies, such as Birkett (1989), that recover female travel writing as proto-feminist writings ignore their colonial and racial implications. By queer studies, I mean those studies of homosexual men and women who travelled to the Orient to seek refuge from repression in their own societies, yet these studies also ignore the colonial ramifications of this flight from repression. Studies, such as Firilayson (1993), analyse the biographical and literary aspects of gay men travelling to the Orient yet the reasons (power associated with being the coloniser, economic power) why these men went specifically to the Orient have been left unexamined.

and examine the various factors that are necessary and imperative in any consideration of the role colonial and postcolonial travel accounts play in (re)viewing and (re)defining the Orient.² In doing so, such an analysis must inevitably problematise that portrayal of Orientalism that has found its most powerful and articulate expression in Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978): namely, that Orientalism is a hegemonic discourse, one that speaks with an unified and unchallenged voice upon what representation of the Orient will be legitimated as constitutive of its essence in the Western mind. Upon the examination of representations of gender and sexuality in travel accounts of the Middle East and North Africa, Orientalism emerges, in this genre, not as a monolithic, unchanging and homogenous pronouncement on what the East is, but as a discourse that is informed by, and in turn informs, subject positions defined by constructions of gender and sexuality, resulting in a complex matrix of interpretation that is often contestatory, contradictory, and far from coherent at all points. This project's objective is to explore this 'complex matrix' and its implications for future directions of the study of Orientalism.

²Note: The word "Orient" refers to the area currently defined as the Middle East and North Africa. While today this term is most often used to describe Southeast and East Asia, the term has historically been used to refer to North Africa and the Middle East.

Said maintains that Orientalism was used to contrast the Orient from the Occident,³ that the Orient became positioned as the exact opposite of those attributes that defined the Occident. Said, however, predominantly concentrates on literary (fictional) texts -- those that form part of the official canon of Western literary culture -- which implicates his study in the arbitrary distinction between 'high' and 'popular' culture. Cultural products such as travel texts, television, romance novels, films, and so on, have generally been relegated to the realm of 'popular culture,' where their importance in and influence on Western cultural imagination has been trivialised. However, travel accounts, as I argue, have been instrumental in supplying the Western imagination with *constructions of the Other*. For this reason, my thesis resists the marginalisation of travel accounts by investigating them as important cultural products that play a crucial role in constructing a contestatory matrix of Orientalisms. The travel account offers a unique perspective on the nonconformities between the 'Mythic' (preconceived) and 'Experienced' Orient and how travelling affects one's view of both the host and home societies. The unique characteristics of the genre of travel narrative are especially fruitful in the articulation of constructions, deconstructions and

³Note: The "West" and/or "Occident" are terms used to refer to North America and Western Europe.

recreations of Orientalist images that trouble conventional representations of not only the Orient, but also problematise those discourses most crucial to the West's self-definition and assumed superiority.

The travel narrative is always a narrative of space and difference. It may not always offend the mind but it prods at it. It provokes new concepts, new ways of seeing and being, or at the very least, when the old ways of seeing and being have been stubbornly imported into foreign territory, subjects them to strain and fatigue (Robertson, et al, 1994: 2)

Travel accounts not only examine and critique Orientalist constructions in the face of the 'realities' that arise from the experience of travel, but, inevitably, in doing so, problematise the values of the 'home' society, whose defining features are validated and maintained by their being situated in contradistinction to those anxieties that render the Orient 'Other'.

The examination of travel accounts written by women and gay men demonstrate how their subject positions (as determined by the strictures governing economies of gender, sexuality, class, nationality *and* race) produced an elaborate and diverse array of Orientalisms. Women and gay men were involved in the colonial project, yet their roles in the cultural construction of Others are marked by plurality, contradiction and contestation. The writings of women and gay men were not only determined by the discursive aspects of Orientalisms, but in addition, the discourses of femininity, masculinity, and sexuality significantly impacted on the

content and form of statements they could, and could not, utter in a public domain, the reception of their travel texts in the West, and the audiences for whom they wrote. The inclusion of female and gay male authors does not entirely render Said's paradigm inapplicable to texts on the Orient, it does, however, problematise the ability of Said's framework to comprehend and interpret issues of gender and sexuality as voiced by female and male travellers, heterosexual and homosexual.

As I argue in Chapter 1, Said's framework is inadequate for discussing the gendered and sexualised aspects of Orientalism, for this framework sees the portrayal of difference between Orient and Occident exclusively related to one axis of difference -- the superiority of the West over the East. Implicit in this framework is the assumption that there is an "unified European/Western identity which is at the *origin* of history and has *shaped* this history through its *thought* and its *texts*" (Ahmad, 1992: 167). Orientalism, however, is not limited to the racial/geographical axis of difference. Differences of nationality, class, gender and sexuality also come to play in the relationships between Orient and Occident. An examination of the gendered and sexualised aspects of Orientalisms including the multi-determined positions of the author/traveller illustrates the disunified, multivocal construction of Orientalisms. I am not concerned with the discovery of any 'real Orient' nor am I

concerned with any notions of misrepresentation of the 'Orient.' My task here is to examine Western representations of 'Oriental' genders and sexualities as expressed in travel writing.

The functionings of travel and travel writing are also integral to this complex and diverse construction of Orientalisms. In Chapter 2, the conflict that emerges between what is expected of the Orient and what is experienced in the Orient is an integral basis of travelling and travel writing and opens up Orientalism to critique, revision, deconstruction and reconstruction. The examination of travel and travel writing uncovers new ways of theorising the relationships between Orient and Occident.

In order to adequately detail the heterogeneous construction of Orientalisms, I have argued in Chapter 3 for a critical, hermeneutical reading of travel texts that considers the specific biography of the traveller -- his/her nationality, race, gender, class and sexual identity -- and how this biography intersects and conflicts with the construction of Orientalisms. It is through the specific gendered and sexualised incidents encountered within a specific travel text that illustrates the heterogeneity and complexity of travel writing on the Orient.

The heterogeneity of travel accounts on the Orient is explored and outlined in the diverse and multivalent gendered and sexualised statements uttered in the travel texts analysed in Chapters 4 and 5. The historical differentiation of my texts explores the role historical forces -- particularly the dissolution of empire and the emergence of the Western 'sexual revolution' -- play in the variegated construction of Orientalisms. The postcolonial/'post-sexual revolution' travel texts do not escape the persistent confinements of Orientalist discourses, nor do they radically differ in their discussions of Oriental genders and sexualities. Like their colonial/'pre-sexual revolution' counterparts, postcolonial/'post-sexual revolution' travel accounts portray a wide array of sexual and gender constructions. In addition to this, however, these travel texts critically engage in a dialogue with the social, economic, gendered, and sexualised impacts of the West on the East and the impacts of the East on the West. The end of colonialism along with the 'sexual revolution' led to change in the structures and functionings of Orient/Occident relationships as well as to change within each of these entities.

The ultimate goal for my thesis is to highlight the lack of consistent Orientalist images of gender and sexuality in travel accounts; how this lack of consistency illustrates the contradictory, unstable and sometimes conflictual natures of Orientalism; how various Other discourses (femininity, masculinity and

homosexuality) may provoke Western travellers to create alternate discourses or allow counter hegemonic voices and ideas to speak within their text and to speak to different audiences in the West; how Said's exclusion of women authors and his neglect of the sexualised aspects of Orientalism leads him to conclude that Orientalism is a hegemonic discourse; and how the dynamics of travelling may also provoke people to explore their own (Western) constructions of sexuality and gender.

Chapter One

ORIENTALISM AND ITS THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Orientalism: an Introduction

Edward Said's groundbreaking *Orientalism* (1978) articulates that discourse by which the Orient has been defined, classified, studied and theorised by the West for the West. As Said initially defined it, Orientalism is

a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience. The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilisations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience (Said, 1978: 1-2).

Western academic institutions were a dominant force in constructing why and in what ways the Orient was an object of interest and scrutiny; the emerging discipline of Oriental and/or Islamic Studies worked with the political, social, military and economic institutions of imperialism to make the Orient an entity that needed to be, and could be, dominated (colonially and intellectually). The knowledge gained by travellers, anthropologists, sociologists, historians and philologists in the Orient was used by, and was a part of, the imperialist/colonialist project in the Orient. The Orient needed to be relegated to an inferior position in relation to the West so that colonial expansion into the Middle East and North Africa could be morally and

philosophically justified; the Orient, and hence the Oriental, could not be allowed to speak for itself, it had to be spoken for. The knowledge accumulated by academics of the Orient was crucial for the colonial project as it produced the Orient as an entity that "was not (and is not) a free subject of thought or action" (Said, 1978: 3). The Orient was not permitted to voice its opposition, its resistance, to the colonial project through the discourse of Orientalism. However, there was never a unified voice of Orientalism that spoke for, and represented, the Orient but a multitude of voices and positions within the discourse of Orientalism.¹

Orientalism's "Hybrid Perspective"

Orientalism, as defined by Said, is characterised by three different, yet interdependent, components: academic, imaginary, and imperial. Academic institutions that bear the title "Oriental," "Islamic" or "Middle Eastern" studies and academics who write, research, teach and theorise on the Orient are Orientalists. Institutions and academics that concentrate on the Orient speak for the Orient as authorities and are thus, Orientalist. Institutions and academics are the 'pre-

¹ The role of the Other has been theorised by many authors in various disciplines -- anthropologists such as Johannes Fabian (1983) and Bernard McGrane (1989) have discussed the functionings of the Other in relation to racial and anthropological discourses. Feminists have also argued that the Woman was the Other within Western society -- see Alice Jardine (1985) and Teresa de Lauretis (1987).

imperialist troops' that set up the situation for the 'imperialist troops.' As 'experts,' they legitimise not only the intellectual domination of a geographical area but also its imperial/colonial domination. As 'experts,' they are able to create and construct "a complex array of 'Oriental' ideas (Oriental despotism, Oriental splendour, cruelty, sensuality)" (Said, 1978: 4).

Related to the academic tradition, this imaginary² Orientalism involves a "style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction" made between the Occident and the Orient. While academics are included within this tradition, Said argues that writers, such as Aeschylus, Dante and Victor Hugo, are also involved in this construction of an imaginary Orientalism (Said, 1978: 3). This large group of writers assumed a basic, natural distinction between the Orient and Occident when they concocted theories, novels, and accounts (both social and political) on the Orient. Seeing the world in terms of binary oppositions has been a pattern in Western thought. Occident versus Orient. Coloniser versus colonised. Subject versus object. Active versus passive.

The third meaning of Orientalism is more historically and materially defined than the other two. Starting from the late eighteenth century, imperial Orientalism

² For a more detailed view of the complex relationship between colonialism and Western culture, see McClintock (1995), Thomas (1994), Williams and Chrisman (1994).

became the “corporate institution for dealing with the Orient -- dealing with it by making statements about it, authorising views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient” (Said, 1978: 3). Britain and France were the biggest imperial forces involved in the Orient and so also dominated the field of Orientalism. Said does not see this as a mere coincidence, however. Imperial powers used their knowledge over the Orient to gain imperial power over the Orient. Said qualifies his argument to include the United States, whose influence and interests in the Orient have substantially increased since World War II and as a result, have become increasingly involved in the production and dissemination of authoritative texts on the Orient. America in Orientalism, Said argues, borrowed greatly from the traditions of French and British Orientalism (Said, 1978: 284-285). Whereas in imaginary Orientalism the Orient was merely Europe’s Other, in imperial Orientalism the Orient became Europe’s Significant Other; the Orient now occupied the central role as Other to the Occident. Orientalism, before imperialism, had largely been confined to the aesthetic of the literary world, but had now become more influential and found in more spheres of Western thought. “The Orient is an integral part of European *material* civilisation and culture. Orientalism

expresses and represents that part culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles” (Said, 1978: 2). What had once been an imaginary institution, one based on ideas that the Orient was different, was now a ‘corporate’ institution based on ‘truths’ of the Orient’s difference and now intimately involved in the actual administration of the colonial projects in the Orient (Said, 1978: 3).

Orientalism’s Theoretical Perspective

Said expands his claim to the deep association between Orientalism and the colonial/imperial project in several ways. He begins with the argument that the Orient, and the Occident, are not “natural” but “man-made” entities. “Men make their own history, that what they can know is what they have made” (Said, 1978: 5). The Orient has its own “man-made” histories and traditions; Orientalism is the means by which the West has filtered notions of the Orient into Western society and thought. Said’s theoretical framework consists of a blending of Michel Foucault’s notion of discourse (1972) and Antonio Gramsci’s notion of cultural hegemony (1971) -- Orientalism according to Said is a hegemonic discourse. Said uses Foucault to demonstrate how Orientalism was able to manage and even produce the Orient;

how Orientalism acquired such "authoritative a position...that I believe no one writing, thinking, or acting on the Orient could do so without taking account of the limitations on thought and action imposed by Orientalism" (Said, 1978; 3).

Gramsci's notion of hegemony presented by Said is that "certain cultural forms predominate over others, just as certain ideas are more influential than others....It is hegemony, or rather the result of cultural hegemony at work, that gives Orientalism the durability and the strength I have been speaking about so far" (Said, 1978: 7). Hegemony though, as used by Said, is not used as an explanatory tool but merely a descriptive one. How and why do "certain cultural forms predominate over others?" How does cultural hegemony maintain its "durability and strength?" With Said, we are lead to believe that the West had interests in the Orient, and that in order to colonise this region, to tame and control it, knowledge (Orientalism) that portrayed Orientals as inferior had to be used as an agent of control.

Said's objective is to study the internal consistency by which Orientalism speaks, and has spoken, for the Orient. The uniqueness of Orientalism is that it became its own discipline. Orientalism developed ideas and concepts such as Oriental despotism, Oriental splendour, cruelty, sensuality and the Asiatic mode of production which Orientalists argued were inherent to the Orient and thus the

opposite of Western society. Said links the power of Orientalism to imperialism, but he also makes links to how Orientalism has gained strength and authority in the culture at large. Orientalism's history not only has to be excavated but the role of power in creating it also needs to be uncovered. Orientalism is not merely a Western fantasy of the Orient, but "an accepted grid for filtering through the Orient into Western consciousness, just as that investment multiplied -- indeed, made truly productive -- the statements proliferating out from Orientalism into the general culture" (Said, 1978: 6).

Orientalism's Influence on the Academy

Orientalism is nevertheless an important study, not only for the investigation of colonial and postcolonial discourses, but in the ways in which the Other has been generally theorised.

Said's major theoretical achievement, the creation of an object of analysis called 'colonial discourse,' has proved one of the most fruitful and significant areas of research in recent years. The concept of colonial discourse...has been extended to other categories such as 'minority discourse,' and is increasingly being used to describe certain power structures within the hierarchies of the West itself, particularly the relation of minorities to the dominant group (Young, 1990: 173).

Said's influence on scholarship has been enormous; not only did he enable "minority critics" to unearth power dynamics within the West, but he also

disseminated Foucault's theoretical paradigms within North American academic circles. *Orientalism* was "one of the seminal books that prompted a shift in interest of literary and cultural theoreticians from textuality to historicity, from the aesthetic to the political, and from individual receptions to collective responses to literary texts" (Behdad, 1994: 10). Said's critique of liberalism, within academia, engendered considerable debate among scholars; by showing that power and knowledge are intricately combined, Said demonstrated how "power relations produce through discourse a range of analytical objects which continue to impact on scholarship in a way that is largely unanticipated and unobserved....Said's work was significant in showing how discourses, values and patterns of knowledge actually constructed the 'facts' which scholars were attempting to study, apparently independently" (Turner, 1994: 4). Turner crowns Said as an "intellectual hero" for challenging not only the epistemological structures that govern academic thought, but also how what is known in larger social spheres is constructed. It was Said who pointed out that discourse is not solely limited to academia but affects all of society. Said's political involvement ranges from being a vocal critic of Western involvement in the Middle East to his election to the Palestinian National Council in 1977 to

critiquing the current peace accords and negotiations between the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Israel.

Despite being written in 1977, *Orientalism* still has an enormous impact on intellectual work today. Said's theoretical model has been used by others to theorise other colonial situations (for example, the Far East), even though Said warned that Orientalism was a specific relationship between the Orient and Occident only. Said's theoretical orientation has not remained static: he has not only explored different fields of investigation (Mideast politics and history, literary theory, musicology) but he has also become more open to the contributions of other minority critics. This is demonstrated in his well-known *Culture and Imperialism* (1993). However, his conception of Orientalism has not been relatively influenced by time nor other critical viewpoints. Said still maintains that the discourse of Orientalism still preserves "its internal consistency and rigorous procedures" (1995: 40). Said has stated that "in the relationship between the ruler and the ruled in the imperial or colonial or racial sense, race takes precedence over both class and gender...I have always felt that the problem of emphasis and relative importance took precedence over the need to establish one's feminist credentials." (quoted in Ahmad, 1994: 167). Orientalism, for Said at least, is essentially a discourse of race --

the racial inferiority of the Orient and more importantly, the racial superiority of the Occident. Said sees Orientalism as a hegemonic discourse despite the numerous reworkings of Orientalism and challenges to its theoretical and methodological underpinnings. These will be discussed later in this chapter.

Critiques of *Orientalism*

Critiques of *Orientalism* have ranged from “three hundred pages of twisted, obscure, incoherent, ill-informed, and badly written diatribe” to the anointing of Said as the prophet of the new discipline of postcolonial studies (Thomas, 1991: 4; Williams and Chrisman, 1994: 127). As Mani and Frankenberg (1985) have pointed out in their ‘critical review of reviews’ of *Orientalism*, most of the reviews criticise only one of Said’s three main, and interdependent, components: historical specificity, knowledge, and power:

By historical specificity we mean the alliance between Orientalism and imperialism in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth century....On the one hand Orientalism has informed and shaped the colonial enterprise. On the other hand, this attachment to institutional power has enabled its remarkable, continued and widespread persistence. This definition also stresses the status of Orientalism as a body of knowledge that claims to be superior to any knowledge that the Orientals might produce about themselves (Mani and Frankenberg, 1985: 180).

Mani and Frankenberg argue that most critiques of *Orientalism* are fundamentally flawed, for the reason that Said’s argument, to be properly comprehended and appreciated (and therefore properly critiqued), must be

examined in its totality, since the arbitrary extraction and examination of one component in isolation necessarily distorts Said's project and thereby undermines the validity of the critique. Orientalism, as argued in *Orientalism*, is fundamentally a discourse of Western knowledge superior to any knowledge produced by Orientals themselves intimately associated with colonialism. The commentary that *Orientalism* has engendered is enormous,³ and I have therefore selected for discussion those critiques that challenge Said's theoretical, and subsequent methodological,⁴ approach but that also observe the conditions that Mani and Frankenberg see as necessary for a proper critique.

Theoretical Critiques

Said's theoretical orientation is culled from many sources: humanism, post-structuralism and Marxism.⁵ The uneasy relationship amongst these perspectives,

³ There are over 60 reviews and critiques of *Orientalism* in English that I have found. Most of these reviews were published between 1979 and 1980.

⁴ I use the term methodological in reference to those elements that Said chose to exclude, namely women authors and the sexualised dimensions of *Orientalism*.

⁵ My discussion is limited to Said's use of humanism in *Orientalism*. I am not concerned with contemporary debates surrounding the meanings of humanism. Humanism, as read in Said's text, is a knowledge unaffected and uncontrolled by political, social and racial regulations. My critique centres on Said's contradictory use of humanism. At certain points, Said argues that a 'real' Orient exists -- it has simply been misrepresented by Orientalism. However, he also argues that no 'real' Orient exists which contradicts other statements in his text.

and Said's combined use of them, has often led to challenges of his theoretical framework. For instance, Said's combination of Foucault's discourse theory with Gramsci's notion of cultural hegemony results in the concept of hegemonic discourse which effectively excludes any possibility for counter discourses or hegemonies to exist or develop (Porter, 1994). The central problem with Said's theory, and each of the critiques below take up an aspect of this problem, is his denial of subjectivity. More precisely, although Said acknowledges the role of the subjective author in the construction of Orientalism, he does not permit an author to play a role in the *de*construction, contestation or reconstruction of Orientalism. Subjectivity is somehow only granted to those involved in the maintenance and construction of Orientalism's hegemony. Said cannot recognise alternatives to Orientalism, and thus sees Orientalism as an unwavering hegemony, because his use of discourse theory obscures and silences counter-hegemonic voices found within Orientalism.

Other critics, such as James Clifford, have pointed to the somewhat contradictory combination of humanism and post-structuralism. Said does run into difficulties attempting to delineate a 'Foucauldian humanism,' a concept whose two terms seem in many ways to be mutually opposed. One of the things that humanism argues is that a text or author can, reasonably, move above politics and

ideology, i.e., that authors are free subjects of thought and action. Foucault and the post-structuralists argue that it is impossible for a text or author to escape the discursive constraints placed upon him/her. Said, as a humanist, argues that a less political/powerful knowledge can be obtained through the cultural hermeneutics of Auerbach, Curtius and Geertz (Said, 1978: 258-260, 326). "The more one is able to leave one's cultural home, the more easily is one able to judge it, and the whole world as well, with the spiritual detachment, and generosity necessary for true vision" (Said, 1978: 259). Yet Said, as a Foucauldian, says elsewhere "How does one *represent* other cultures? What is *another* culture? Is the notion of a distinct culture (or race, or religion, or civilisation) a useful one, or does it always get involved in self-congratulation (when one discusses one's own) or hostility and aggression (when one discusses the 'other')" (Said, 1978: 325). Said, on the one hand, argues that true knowledge can be achieved, that there is some 'real' Orient that can be understood, measured and theorised, yet on the other hand he sees the study of other cultures as intimately linked to power. This lack of clarity has led to confusion on the part of the critics, what is Said's concept of culture and knowledge? Can pure and free knowledge of the Other be obtained? Discourse theory presupposes the impossibility of detaching oneself from a discursive formation yet

humanist scholarship argues that this detachment is possible and true representation can result (Eagleton, 1983: 199-210).

James Clifford has praised Said's contribution to the study of culture in *Orientalism* while judiciously highlighting the difficulty, and perhaps impossibility, of combining humanist idealism with post-structuralist scepticism.⁶ For example, Clifford has pointed to Said's confusing conception of the 'Orient.' In places, Said recurrently argues that an Orientalist text, author or tradition misrepresents some facet of a 'real Orient,'⁷ while elsewhere, Said refutes the existence of any 'real Orient:' "One cannot combine within the same analytic totality both personal statements and discursive statements, even though they may be lexically identical. Said's experiment seems to show, to this reader at least, that when the analysis of authors and traditions is intermixed with the analysis of discursive formations the effect is a mutual weakening" (Clifford, 1980: 217). It is this confusion, perchance incompatibility, between a humanist understanding of the 'real' and a post-

⁶ Clifford's critique offers a unique challenge to Said's theoretical paradigm in *Orientalism*. Although the critique was written in 1980, Clifford makes convincing points on the seemingly contradictory combination of humanism and post-structuralism.

⁷ Said is not clear on what he considers the 'real Orient,' but he suggests one could study the Orient inhabited by "individual Arabs with narratable life histories" rather than theorising the Arab race, civilisation or history (Said, 1978: 229).

structuralist understanding of the 'representation of the real' that Clifford finds problematic in *Orientalism*.

Clifford also reveals how Said's "hybrid perspective" -- by which he means Said's theoretical paradigm -- diverges considerably from Foucault because Said, while he asserts the discursive power of Orientalism, holds authors as subjects culpable for their texts.⁸ Clifford argues that

discourse analysis is always, in a sense, unfair to authors. It is interested not in what *they* have to say or feel as subjects, but is concerned merely with statements as related to other statements in a field....Foucault, at least, seldom appears unfair to authors because he never appeals to any individual intentionality or subjectivity. 'Hybrid perspectives' like Said's have considerably more difficulty in escaping reductionism (1980: 218).

Said believes that individual writers do play a role in the construction of discourse.

Said gives the example of Edward Lane's *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, a text that became the 'holy book' of Orientalism, constantly cited by travellers, Oriental scholars and literary authors as an authoritative text.

Accordingly, Said argues that an individual text or author can play an important role in the development of a discourse which pointedly distances him from a post-structuralist understanding of discourse, or at least from Said's use of Foucault.

"Unlike Michel Foucault, to whose work I am greatly indebted, I do believe in the

⁸ All theory is hybrid, but for Clifford, Said's specific combination of Foucauldian discourse theory and humanism is a particularly doomed theoretical combination.

determining imprint of individual writers upon the otherwise anonymous collective body of texts constituting a discursive formation like Orientalism” (Said, 1978: 23). Said, while he believes in the “determining imprint of individual writers,” fails to consider that this imprint might also run contrary to Orientalist notions and ideals. If Said grants the author subjectivity to create Orientalist works, how can he not concede to, or at least allow for the possibility of, the abilities of an author to critique, rework and deconstruct Orientalism?

Said’s “hybrid perspective” has also encountered criticism from those who argue against his combination of Foucauldian discourse theory and Gramsci’s notion of cultural hegemony. Dennis Porter has been one of many critics that has questioned Said’s *mélange* of these two theoretical perspectives -- Orientalism as a hegemonic discourse. Porter (1994) sees this combination as not necessarily contradictory, but nonetheless problematic. While Said’s theoretical stance proclaims the impossibility of alternatives to Orientalism,⁹ Porter identifies, within Said’s analysis, three possible counter-discourses:

⁹ Said, however, does argue for “contemporary alternatives to Orientalism” and “to ask how one can study other cultures and other peoples from a libertarian, or a nonrepressive and nonmanipulative perspective.” (Said, 1978: 24). Said explicitly states that it is not his purpose in *Orientalism* to seek alternatives yet his suggestion demonstrates that he does believe in some ‘real’ humanist understanding of other cultures and peoples.

First, the very heterogeneity of the corpus of texts among which Said discovers hegemonic unity raises the question of the specificity of the literary instance within the superstructure....Second, Said does not seem to envisage the possibility that more directly counter-hegemonic writings or an alternative canon may exist within the Western tradition. Third, the feasibility of a textual dialogue between Western and non-Western cultures needs to be considered, a dialogue that would cause subject/object relations to alternate, so that we might read ourselves as the others of our others and replace the notion of a place of truth with that knowledge which is always relative and provisional (Porter, 1994 :153).

Porter argues that there is no need to search for alternatives outside Orientalism, for within the Orientalist tradition itself, contrary to Said's assertion in *Orientalism*, there already exists a counter-tradition.

It is at this point that Porter not only finds fault with Said's "hybrid perspective" but also with discourse theory in general. Porter maintains that it is the specific employment of discourse theory by Said, and discourse theory as a whole, that blinds him to possible alternatives within the texts and tradition he analyses in *Orientalism*. Outlining Raymond Williams' conception of hegemony, Porter problematises Said's perspective and reveals the disagreeable implications of Said's deployment of discourse theory: "In Williams' words again: 'It [hegemony] has continually to be renewed, recreated, defended, and altered, challenged by pressures not all its own.' ...Because Said is understandably eager to confront Western hegemonic discourse head on, he ignores Raymond Williams' warning that the reality of the cultural process must always include 'the efforts and contributions

of those who are in one way or another outside or at the edge of specific hegemony” (Porter, 1994: 152). It is the purposes of this thesis to investigate those who are on the “outside or at the edge” of the hegemony of Orientalism.

Porter finds the lack of distinction in discourse theory between different kinds and types of texts seriously questionable. He maintains that there is a “qualitative distinction” between texts that “are of sufficient complexity to throw ideological practices into relief and raise questions about their own fictionalising process” and “those that offer no internal resistance to the ideologies they reproduce” (Porter, 1994: 153). It is this distinction between types of text based on their “resistance” to ideological configurations that allows Porter to claim that counter-hegemonic voices appeared within Orientalism (in different forms over different historical periods). Said’s concern is to expose the workings of Orientalism as an institution but not to examine the diverse and complex positions held within that institution.

Related to Porter’s critique, Ali Behdad (1994) also contends that alternative voices and ideologies were elements of Orientalism; however, he sees this not as counter-hegemony or alternative discourses but as a function of Orientalism.

Behdad takes exception with Said’s construction of Orientalism as a hegemonic discourse. “Said’s monolithic notion of Orientalism as a purely reductive and biased

discourse of power leaves no room for the possibility of differences among the various modes of Orientalist representation and in the field of its power relations” (Behdad, 1994: 11). Behdad, unlike Porter, finds fault in Said’s utilisation of cultural hegemony theory rather than his use of discourse theory. For Behdad, the “strategic irregularities, historical discontinuities, and discursive heterogeneity” are characteristics of Orientalism, and of discourse in general, and Said’s representation of Orientalism as a hegemonic discourse uncritically reproduces the binary logic between Occident and Orient on which Orientalism is based. In other words, while there is a discourse of hegemony, a hegemonic discourse cannot exist.

However, Behdad’s acknowledgement of the heterogeneity of Orientalism does not mean that alternative traditions to Orientalism developed. Following Foucault’s theorisation, Behdad postulates that there were “epistemological breaks” in Orientalist representation and thought. During these breaks, representations that did not conform to the “accepted grid” of Orientalism emerged, yet as Behdad contends, Orientalism was able to incorporate these different and deviating representations into its discursive practice. Thus, any notion of difference that might have been expressed within individual texts, specifically travel texts,¹⁰ was

¹⁰ Behdad’s notion of the “belated traveller” and his/her travel text will be further elaborated on in Chapter 2.

subsequently subsumed into the discourse of Orientalism. Behdad, however, fails to adequately address how and why difference was subsumed into Orientalism, nor does he offer any explanation as to why these 'deviant' representations came about in the first place.

The theoretical challenges to *Orientalism* have concentrated on the various theoretical combinations that Said employs in his theoretical paradigm -- be it the fusion of humanism and discourse theory or cultural hegemony and discourse theory. While the criticism discussed above locates the methodological problems of *Orientalism* in different theoretical domains, there exists a commonality between these critiques, that being the contention that Said's characterisation of Orientalism as a monolithic, hegemonic discourse is extremely questionable. As Homi Bhabha states, "there is always, in Said, the suggestion that colonial power and discourse are possessed entirely by the coloniser, which is an historical and theoretical simplification" (1983: 200). Orientalism, as well as other colonial and postcolonial discourses, has been analysed, reanalysed and contested since *Orientalism*; however, before I discuss a more recent reconception¹¹ of Orientalism, I would first like to

¹¹ Colonial discourse has been theorised from many different positions, most notable are Bhabha's (1983) psychoanalytic perspective, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's (1988) use of the deconstruction method, Chandra Mohanty's (1984) feminist framework and Aijaz Ahmad's (1992, 1994) form of

consider the critiques relating to gender and sexual issues. Sexuality and gender are two concepts that Said consciously avoided in his investigation.¹² Originally, my desire was to simply include a gender and sexual analysis in an Saidian framework, and it was at this point, that I realised how unadaptable his framework was to explain gender and sexual relations, as told through travel narratives.

Gender, Sexuality and *Orientalism*

Said has often been critiqued for ignoring the sexualised and gendered dimensions of *Orientalism* (Boone, 1995; Mills, 1991; McClintock, 1995; Hastings, 1992). For instance, Said argues that *Orientalism* was “*exclusively* a male province” (Said, 1978: 207), thereby disregarding the numerous accounts of women who travelled to the Middle East and wrote of their experiences. By making such a move, Said himself contributes to the hegemony that defines the *Orientalism* he is elucidating. Said’s exclusion of the Western female voices within *Orientalism*, is in fact comparable to *Orientalism*’s exclusion of the voices of Orientals. Preceding a discussion of the several gender and sexual critiques of *Orientalism*, I will briefly

Marxism. I will, however, take Lisa Lowe’s (1991) reconception of *Orientalism* as my critical starting point which will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

¹² “Why the Orient seems still to suggest not only fecundity but sexual promise (and threat), untiring sensuality, unlimited desire, deep generative energies, is something on which one could speculate: it is not the province of my analysis here, alas, despite its frequently noted appearance” (Said, 1978: 188).

outline two works that, while they include a sexual and gender analysis of Orientalism, do not challenge Said's theoretical construction of Orientalism as a hegemonic discourse. Sexuality and gender are two sites of investigation left untheorised in *Orientalism*.

Rana Kabbani has included a sexual and gender analysis in her study of Orientalism. Her objective is to examine the "dominant misrepresentations" of the Orient in travel texts while focusing in on the "insistent claim that the East was a place of lascivious sensuality" (Kabbani, 1986: 6). While she acknowledges that travel texts "reflect the personal idiosyncrasies of individual travellers," she concludes that practically all¹³ travel texts on the Orient were "inextricably tied to Western hegemony" (Kabbani, 1986: 138).

One troubling aspect of Kabbani's theorisation of Orientalism is that she links the homosexual pursuit of Oriental men/boys together with the heterosexual pursuit of Oriental women, without taking into account the increasing medicalisation, moralisation and criminalisation of homosexuality in the West as described by Foucault (1978) and Weeks (1977). By disregarding the legal and

¹³ Kabbani, like Said, praises the rare traveller and scholar for his/her non-Orientalist texts on the Orient, yet neither Kabbani, nor Said, theorise as to why or how these non-Orientalist texts came about.

social constraints placed on homosexual behaviour, she fails to consider that there might be a difference in motivations between heterosexual and homosexual men and thus, she fails to factor this into her analysis. She also uncritically assumes that sexual relationships between Western and Oriental men merely replicated heterosexual relationships -- that they were based on the "active/passive" notion of male-male sexual relations, i.e., the Western male as the active partner (power) in anal sexual activity while the Oriental male is passive (lack of power). Her framework is wholly inadequate for theorising sexual relations in the Middle East. The social significance of homosexual relations was markedly different than heterosexual relations; Kabbani positions a static power grid of sexual relations between Western males and Oriental males and she assigns power on the basis of one's sexual position. Sexual positioning, with the exception of sexual assault, does not necessarily translate into some sort of physical, sexual, material or theoretical power. Also, the focus on "active/passive" sexual positions places a primary importance on anal sexual activity; this "active/passive" notion is completely inadequate for analysing sexual relations that involve oral sex and masturbation.

Analyses of Orientalism -- most notably Said's and Kabbani's -- have also problematically excluded women travellers, writers, artists and other cultural producers. Women who travelled to the Orient and wrote of their experiences have

been virtually ignored by both Said and Kabbani. Out of 900 citations, Said only cites 7 women authors (Hastings, 1992: 132). Kabbani argues that Western women in the Orient were merely "token travellers"¹⁴ and thus, does not include their travel texts in her analysis. Judy Mabro (1991) includes passages from travel texts on the Orient written by both men and women (over 20 women authors), and while her analysis is less theoretically inclined than Said's or Kabbani's, she borrows partially from the "hegemonic discourse" hypothesis. However, the way she has grouped, classified and discussed the various, and often contradictory, perceptions of Middle Eastern women by Western travellers demonstrates the heterogeneity of gendered Orientalist images, although nowhere does she acknowledge this. Mabro and Kabbani merely replicate Said's approach to the study of Orientalism and while both authors give evidence that various travellers to the Middle East developed 'alternative' understandings of the Orient, neither do they acknowledge this nor do they give reason as to how this was possible. The neglect of the sexualised aspects of Orientalism, the heterocentric discussion of homosexual relations between Western men and Oriental men/boys and the exclusion of women authors results in

¹⁴ Sara Mills points out that Fussell (1980) also categorically refused to consider women travel writers in his text on literary travel for they were "not sufficiently concerned either with travel or writing itself" (Mills, 1991: 3).

the assumption of a "unified European/Western identity which is at the *origin* of history and has *shaped* this history through its *thought* and its *texts*" (Ahmad, 1992: 167). In addition it leaves many sites of investigation open and unstudied.

Post-Orientalism Developments

The predominance of Said's paradigm of colonial/Oriental discourse is evident in many writings on colonial and postcolonial discourses.¹⁵ Academics have employed his theoretical model in order to analyse and reveal colonial and postcolonial relations involving various nation-states and geographical locales. However, as Thomas (1994: 26) points out, Orientalism was based on the Orient's 'special relationship' with the West, and Thomas argues that this relationship was particularly antagonistic on the part of the West. Thomas finds it incredibly problematic to utilise a theoretical paradigm that was constructed for a specific relationship -- between the Occident and the Orient -- as a general theory of colonial discourse. The relationships between the ruled and the ruler, in the colonial sense, were incredibly diverse, and for Thomas, not exclusively antagonistic. To subsume all colonial relationships, even the present-day examples of Palestine and Northern Ireland to name a few, into a grand narrative of 'colonialism' suppresses the

¹⁵ See my section on *Orientalism's* Influence on the Academy above.

complexity and dynamic of various colonialisms. For example, France's relationships with its colonies in North Africa differed considerably. Algeria was seen a 'new' province of France and thus, was under the control of the Interior Ministry whereas Tunisia and Morocco were protectorates and governed by the Foreign Ministry. Tunisia and Morocco achieved independence relatively 'smoothly' compared the independence war with Algeria which lasted six years and countless lives were lost (Zartman, 1971). Thomas faults postcolonial theorists for misusing and misemploying Orientalism as a generalisable theory for all colonial and postcolonial relations and situations.

Colonial and postcolonial discourse theories, while having some relation to Said's Orientalism, have also gone past Said -- theoretically, politically and historically. The study of Orientalism and other colonial and postcolonial relationships has dramatically diverged and numerous authors have 'distanced' their works from Said's theoretical framework, yet *Orientalism* was, and still is, so influential that no one writing on colonialism and/or postcolonialism can avoid positioning themselves in relation to Said's text. As mentioned previously, Said has been critiqued for overlooking the gendered and sexualised aspects of Orientalism. Said's project in *Orientalism* drew profoundly from his own life-experience.

My own experiences of these matters are in part what made me write this book. *The life of an Arab Palestinian in the West, particularly in America*, is disheartening. There exists here an almost unanimous consensus that politically *he* does not exist, and when it is allowed that *he* does, it is either as a nuisance or as an Oriental. The web of racism, cultural stereotypes, political imperialism, dehumanising ideology holding in the Arab or the Muslim is very strong indeed, and it is this web which ever Palestinian has come to feel as *his* uniquely punishing destiny (my emphasis, Said, 1978: 27).

It should be stated that it was not yet common practice in the late 70s to use gender-neutral language; however, Said's emphasis on race as *the* crucial "punishing destiny" demonstrates for him, a Palestinian man, the overwhelmingly and "dehumanising" nature of Orientalism. As a Palestinian, Said is disheartened and affected by the racism and cultural stereotypes associated with Orientalism, yet as a man, he is unaffected by the sexism and gendered stereotypes (both in the Occident and Orient). "Male theorists of imperialism and postcolonialism have seldom felt moved to explore the gendered dynamics of the subject [empire]...the crucial but concealed relation between gender and imperialism has, until very recently, been unacknowledged or shrugged off as a *fait accompli* of nature" (McClintock, 1995: 5-6). It was only when women (Lewis, 1996; Lowe, 1991; Mabro, 1991) started to examine Orientalism (the discourse and the book) and other colonial and postcolonial discourses that women were included in the study of colonialism and postcolonialism -- gender was now entangled in colonial and postcolonial

theorisations and investigations. It was at this point that the study of Orientalism metamorphosed into the study of Orientalisms. With this enlargement of Said's original scope, theorists of Orientalisms have now argued for a

study [that] treats Orientalism as one means whereby French and British cultures exercised colonial domination through constituting sites and objects as 'Oriental'....Yet, as much as I wish to underscore the insistence of these power relations, my intervention resists totalising Orientalism as a monolithic, developmental discourse that uniformly constructs the Orient as the Other of the Occident. Therefore I do not construct a master narrative or a singular history of Orientalism, whether of influence or of comparison. Rather, I argue for a conception of Orientalism as heterogeneous and contradictory; to this end I observe, on the one hand, that Orientalism consists of an uneven matrix of Orientalist situations across different cultural and historical sites, and on the other, that each of these Orientalisms is internally complex and unstable. My textual readings give particular attention to those junctures at which narratives of gender, racial, national, and class differences complicate and interrupt the narrative of Orientalism, as well as to the points at which Orientalism is refunctioned and rearticulated against itself (Lowe, 1991: 4-5).

To the above, I would add that textual readings of Orientalist texts pay attention to "those junctures" at which the narrative of sexual difference "complicates" and intersects with the narratives of Orientalism. Sexuality, and in particular homosexuality, has generally been absent from these enlarged investigations of Orientalisms. Boone (1995) has examined Orientalisms in novels of homosexual men who travelled to the Orient yet his study was limited to 'literary' works, not travel accounts or other products of popular culture. For along with the inclusion of gender (and class and nationality), the widening of the study of Orientalisms has also incorporated works of popular culture -- television, film, photography, paintings, and

so on -- in its analyses. My project is both located in this tradition that understands Orientalism in terms of its plurality, but that also makes this process more complex by integrating representations of gender and sexuality in travel texts written by men and women, heterosexual and homosexual.

Gendered and Sexualised Revisions of *Orientalism*

Sara Mills (1991) has pinpointed the difficulty that arises when one considers analysing the relationships between gender and colonial and postcolonial discourses. Does one describe only the “dominant reading”¹⁶ of the texts involved, as Said and Kabbani have done? Or does one contemplate the “elements in the texts that are in potential conflict” (Mills, 1991: 51)? Mills argues that one should not choose one method over the other and so decides to include both in her analyses. Her aim is an analysis of women’s travel writing that examines “whether they conform to the Orientalist pattern, or whether there are more, and potentially more numerous, counter-hegemonic and multiply determined voices overlooked by Said” (Mills, 1991: 58).

¹⁶ “What I mean by dominant reading is those elements of the which are fore-grounded as the self-evident meaning of the text and which form a cohesive reading, especially with reference to other discursive structures that are circulating in the society of the time” (Mills, 1991: 51).

The critical reworkings of *Orientalism* by Mills, Reina Lewis (1996) and Billie Melman (1992) while different in their subjects of investigation,¹⁷ maintain a common contention with regards to Said's theorisation of Orientalism. All three authors critique Said for his hegemonic figuration of the West. They argue that only through his exclusion of women authors has Said been able to conclude that Orientalism is an "internally consistent" hegemonic discourse. However, the three also scrutinise feminist readings of women writers and artists that set out to recover these writings as proto-feminist while completely disregarding how women were implicated within the colonial project and tradition.

Central to their argument is that Western women travelling in the Orient occupied different spaces and positions than their male counterparts, and so had to negotiate between the discourses of Orientalism *and* femininity. Mills argues the reception¹⁸ of women's travel accounts was sufficiently different than that of men's, that women travel writers had to write within/from the discourse of femininity and

¹⁷ Mills discusses the reception and production of women's travel writing within the colonial context; Lewis concentrates on women and their 'multimedia' (literature, art, photography) involvement in Orientalism; Melman examines the various themes found in women's writing on the Orient.

¹⁸ Important to note is how various texts were received by the Western public; it is also important to take into account the intended audience of these various texts and how this affected the production of travel texts on the Orient. This will be further discussed in Chapter 2.

that, while women's travel accounts were quite popular, their legitimacy was not that of men's. Mills argues that this conception of women's travel writing was not entirely restraining, since it enabled a "form of writing whose contours both disclose the nature of the dominant discourses and constitute a critique from its margins" (Mills, 1991: 23).

Sexual critiques of *Orientalism* have been written by two gay critics: Tom Hastings (1992) and Joseph Boone (1995). They both point out that while Said mentions that the Orient was a site of "sexual promise," he declines to consider it in his investigation. A number of the men Said cites were homosexual, or engaged in homosexual relations: Richard Burton, Lord Byron, T.E. Lawrence, E.M. Forster, William Beckford, Oscar Wilde, Somerset Maugham, and Edward Fitzgerald. I do not want to assert, however, that all of these men, from very different historical periods and socio-economic backgrounds, all adhered to a unified homosexual identity or behaviour. By not acknowledging the sexual identity and/or behaviour of many of the men he cites, Said perpetuates the "position that he condemns in Orientalism" (Hastings, 1992: 131); Said's argument is that Orientalism did not reflect the 'real Orient' but by regrettably declining any discussion of sexuality, he does not adequately reflect all the discursive aspects of Orientalism. Neither Boone nor Hastings argue that homosexual men were somehow non-Orientalist but that

“Orientalism was, then, not only a racist practice against foreign ‘others,’ it was also, for these Englishmen, a site of resistance against domestic oppression” (Hastings, 1992: 136). The Orient was projected as a site of sexual freedom, unbound by the constraints placed on homosexuality in England. Parminder Bakshi points out that “Against the context of social and religious intolerance, homosexuals invariably turned to places and ideas outside English society that accommodated love between men” (1990: 151). However, these “places and ideas” were not exclusively limited to the Orient -- numerous homosexuals, such as Wilde and Byron, sought refuge in France, Italy and Greece where homosexual relations were generally more tolerated (Bakshi, 1990: 152-153). The Orient was not the only site of sexual freedom for homosexual men.¹⁹

Said states that “each humanistic investigation must formulate the nature of that connection in the specific context of the study, the subject matter, and its historical circumstances” (Said, 1978: 15). Said, however, fails to do this adequately, since he does not take into account the sexualised and gendered natures of Orientalism. To acknowledge the differences within Orientalism, Said would severely compromise his portrayal of Orientalism as a hegemonic discourse and he

¹⁹ Aldrich (1993) examines the Mediterranean (Southern Europe) as a site of sexual freedom and fantasy for homosexual men.

would have to admit the significance of subjectivity in the creation of difference. Said does praise the odd scholar for his/her objective understanding of the Orient yet nowhere does he spell out how these scholars were able to do so.²⁰ Were they anomalies? By depicting Orientalism as a discourse based solely on the binary oppositions of East versus West (or Orient versus Occident), he fails to consider that Orientalism was also a site of difference for women and homosexual men and how this led to difference within the development of Orientalism.

Critical Trajectories

Sexuality, and its relations to gender, has generally been silenced in the study of Orientalism even though, as many colonial and postcolonial theorists have argued, it was a significant theme and pattern in Orientalist writing and thought. When it has been discussed, specifically by Kabbani and Said, the analysis suffers from a heterocentric, phallogocentric discussion of (homo)sexual relations and from a binary logic that is typical of Western thought -- a logic Said regards as part of the problem in Orientalism. Orientalism, essentially, is about "us" and "them." Yet the definitions of "us" and "them" are different based on the various gendered, class, racial, national, and sexualised positions of the author. I would also argue that

²⁰ Said finds Jacques Berque, Maxime Rodinson, Abdel Malek, and Roger Owen "perfectly capable of freeing themselves from the old ideological straitjacket [of Orientalism]" (Said, 1978: 326).

travelling and travel writing, as will be discussed in the next chapter, provide an unique opportunity to critique, deconstruct, and/or reconstruct Orientalisms. To collapse the relations between "us" and "them" solely into a racial/geographical axis, of West versus East, simplifies these relations and eliminates any notion of complexity or counter-hegemony. In saying this, I do not want to disregard the role that race and geography play in the creation of Orientalisms, but that these two concepts cannot fully explain the elaborate relationships between Occident and Orient.

The discovery of counter-hegemonic voices does not result in a complete rejection of Said's hypotheses and conclusions but rather places further complications and conditions on these claims -- in continuation with the alterations and revisions that have appeared since the publication of *Orientalism* in 1978. In recovering and exploring the voices of homosexuals and women, as spoken through travel texts, I do not want deny their relations to the colonial projects of Orientalism. I do believe there are connections between colonialism and Western culture but that these relationships involve other issues such as class, nationality, femininity, masculinity, and sexuality. To understand issues of gender and sexuality, as voiced through Western travel narratives on the Orient, and to investigate their counter-

hegemonic qualities is to better interpret and comprehend the intricacy of associations between Western culture and colonialism.

Chapter Two

MODES OF TRAVEL AND TRAVEL WRITING

'Something I Didn't Expect'

Travel: a figure for different modes of dwelling and displacement, for trajectories and identities, for story telling and theorising in a postcolonial world of global contacts. Travel: a range of practices for situating the self in a space or spaces grown too large, a form both of exploration and discipline. Theory: returned to its etymological roots, with a late twentieth-century difference. The Greek term *theorion*: a practice of travel and observation, a man sent by the polis to another city to witness a religious ceremony. 'Theory' is a product of displacement, comparison, a certain distance. To theorise, one leaves home. But like any act of travel, theory begins and ends somewhere (Clifford, 1989: 177).

My act of travel began nearly six years ago when I boarded a plane from Saskatoon to Winnipeg for the first leg of my journey. I was involved in a Canada World Youth exchange program between francophone Manitoba and Tunisia. Fourteen Canadians from across Canada were paired up with fourteen Tunisians; each pair would live with a family in two francophone communities in rural Manitoba. My counterpart, Chiheb, and I lived with a retired couple, the Talbots, in Notre Dame des Lourdes and worked in a nursing home as volunteers. My first few weeks could be described as cultural shock: I was stuck with a group of people I did not know, a rural way of life I disliked, and two languages I did not understand. As a result, the first few weeks I withdrew to my room directly after

supper to express my frustrations and fears in writing. My journal is replete with cultural stereotypes, misunderstandings and homesickness. "Why does my counterpart use water rather than toilet paper? Why do we have to eat dessert after every meal?" My preliminary assessment of the Tunisians (and the franco-Manitobans) corresponded to Said's conceptualisation of Orientalism.¹ They were distinctly different from me: they spoke a different language, ate different foods and engaged in 'strange' cultural practices. To quote from my journal at that time: "They [Tunisians] are also a very contemporary people, quite civilised. Something I didn't expect" (Saturday, September 8, 1990). But after a few weeks of working, eating and living together twenty-four hours a day, I began to realise that while there were differences, there were also commonalities between our cultures, and, more importantly, that one could come to understand their cultural practices to the extent that they were no longer alien.

My act of theorising began then as well. What did I expect of the Tunisians? Why was I surprised that they were civilised? I began to consciously question the stereotypes I held. Where did my expectations come from? For me, travelling in

¹ Said, however, only conceptualises differences between Occident and Orient, yet my experience illustrates that differences, constructed and/or real, exist within the entities of Occident and Orient. Who would have thought that a boy from Saskatchewan would feel so out of place in rural, francophone Manitoba?

Tunisia was an eye-opening experience. Not only did it show me how little I knew about the Middle East and North Africa but also how what little I did know was shaped and constructed by forces beyond my control. It also showed me how static my conception of culture was and how I had assumed that *my* culture was universal. Before leaving on my exchange, I had read John Boswell's *Christianity, Social Tolerance and Homosexuality* in which he states that "most Muslim cultures have treated homosexuality with indifference, if not admiration" and that Islam generally has a "positive attitude toward gay sexuality" (Boswell, 1980: 194-198). I had taken Boswell's claims as truth, yet my conceptions of homosexuality in the Orient were soon to be challenged and radically rewritten. I had expected Tunisia to be a gay paradise -- gays could live and act as they wanted to without the constraints of a homophobic culture, like Canada. All my expectations were dashed upon entry into the culture. There were really no gays in Tunisia to speak of, no gay bars or gay establishments. I was no doubt confused. Where was the place I had read about? I had to realise that the information I had been given, i.e., Boswell's text, had interpreted Middle Eastern sexualities using Western sexualities as a basis. While in Tunisia I saw much same-gender sexual activity, but in no way did it correspond to my knowledge and understanding of sexuality, including my own. Travel let me

see the world with different eyes. “The travel narrative is always a narrative of space and difference. It may not always broaden the mind but it prods at it. It provokes new concepts, new ways of seeing and being, or at the very least, when the old ways of seeing and being have been stubbornly imported into foreign territory, subjects them to strain and fatigue” (Robertson, et al, 1994: 2). ‘Travel, while it may begin with cultural misunderstandings and apprehension, opens up the *possibility* for new and diverse understandings of the world. Six years ago, my acts of travel and theorising commenced and while my act of physical travel ended shortly thereafter, the mental journey has yet to be completed.

My aim in this chapter is to unearth the plurality within the travel writing genre, how travel writing is influenced by the various forms it may take, how different kinds of travel help to produce different kinds of travellers who in turn produce different sorts of travel writing. I will focus on travel writing, the inscription of one’s (physical, social, cultural and mental) journey into written form. This chapter cannot be an exhaustive exploration of travel or travel writing; there are many interesting aspects of travel and travel writing that I would have liked to investigate, unfortunately this falls outside the scope of this thesis. ‘The genre of travel writing, if one can call it that, is an incredibly diverse field and comes in a

multitude of forms: letters, diaries, guidebooks, newspaper and magazine articles, and travel books. The metaphoric links between travel and theory (particularly postmodern theory), as the preliminary quotation suggests, will also be briefly contemplated.

Travel Accounts and Popular Culture

Travel accounts have, in the past, been relegated to an indeterminate role in academic classifications of genre: neither literary fictions nor scientific studies, they were largely ignored by critics and relegated to the realm of popular culture and commentary. For many Westerners, travel accounts “have traditionally been the vehicle by which our knowledge of things foreign has been mediated” (Porter, 1991: 3). Their role in articulating Orientalism within Western culture, as Said demonstrated, is nonetheless important. Easily readable and accessible to a great number of people (in comparison to academic writing or military and government reports), travel accounts became pivotal agents in the cultural production of Orientalism. Travel articles in newspaper and magazines played an essential role in the dissemination of knowledge of other cultures and societies. Authors such as Evelyn Waugh, Norman Douglas and D.H. Lawrence were hired by newspapers as correspondents to travel and to write of their experiences (Fussell, 1980). This

practice continues today as most weekend editions of newspapers contain travel sections teeming with articles on travel, although in the past fifty years they have taken on a tourist perspective . 'Travel accounts allow people to explore 'exotic,' distant lands through the senses of the traveller while not having to actually deal with other cultures face-to-face. According to Fussell (1980),

A travel book, at its purest, is addressed to those who do not plan to follow the traveller at all, but who require the exotic or comic anomalies, wonders, and scandals of the literary form *romance* which their own place or time cannot entirely supply. Travel books are a sub-species of memoir in which the autobiographical narrative arises from the speaker's encounter with distant or unfamiliar data, and in which the narrative - unlike that in a novel or a romance - claims literal validity by constant reference to actuality (203).

'Travel accounts, as Fussell points out, have elements of "literal validity;" their validity-claims blur the lines between fiction, autobiography and anthropology.

'Travel accounts simply do not conform to traditional academic classifications of literature. They, like mystery, science-fiction, romance and western novels, have been left out of the study of literature, until quite recently. 'Travel writing occupies an unsettled, unclassified role within the literary and academic establishments, and perhaps it is the unsettled position of travel writing that allows it certain freedoms.

De Certeau, who will be discussed later on, points out that those spaces/places between discursive constructions must be interrogated; travel writing as an

unclassifiable genre works between discursive constructions of what is literature and science. For this reason, travel books are interesting social and cultural tools; they allow the researcher some insights into the effects and influence of cultural ideas and theories, i.e., Orientalism, on the general public. Travel accounts offer a unique perspective for they chronicle the encounters between the 'Mythic Orient' and the 'Experienced Orient' experienced by the travellers themselves. Travel writers, as members of Western society, have already encountered representations of the Orient in the media -- other travel books, literature, television, radio, film, photography, etc. Before travelling to the Orient, they most likely had some idea of what the Orient was, what they expected to find there. But upon travelling to the Orient, the traveller might experience a very different Orient which conflicts with his/her previous conceptions. It is at this point that Orientalism is either confirmed or challenged.

Since travel writing occupies an unsettled role within the literary establishment, positions within the field of travel writing are also indeterminate. It is important to note how these texts were received by the Western public, what their political and cultural groundings were, and how certain texts gained prominence over others; it is also important to take into account *who* the intended

audience was for these texts. Collections of letters such as Gustave Flaubert's or Gertrude Bell's were never intended for publication, yet other travel texts such as Joe Orton's diary were specifically written with a view to posthumous publication (Lahr, 1986: 13). This is crucial for the intentions of the author, in regards to publication, limits what kinds of statements can be made, especially when it comes to public sexual statements. Orton could make such explicit statements on an eventual public landscape yet Flaubert could not.

Another important factor in the study of travel writing is the reception of a travel book and how this reception is influenced by the social, gendered and sexualised position of the author. Mills (1991) argues the reception of women's travel accounts was understandably different than that of men's, that women travel writers had to write within/from the discourse of femininity and that, while women's travel accounts were quite popular, their legitimacy was not that of men's. She also points out that Fussell (1980) categorically refused to consider women travel writers in his text on literary travel for they were "not sufficiently concerned either with travel or writing itself" (Mills, 1991: 3). Women's travel accounts were not only delegitimised by the buying public but also by critics and theorists of travel literature, they were seen as part of the general triviality of the feminine world. The travel

accounts of gay men also differed from heterosexual men's travel texts because of their overtly homosexual content, which was often disguised in cryptic terms, and their search for an escape from conventional sexual morality. "One striking element in the history of the travel book is indeed the apparent congeniality of this form for gay men and independent women.... This has something to do with the apparent escape from conventional limitations and boundaries: the trope of 'crossing the border' seems particularly suggestive" (Martin, 1983: 13). Travel offers the possibility of social, gender, sexual and existential relocation.

Authority and Dispersion: Travel versus Guide Books

A distinction must be made between tourist guidebooks and travel books. Guidebooks are often associated with the codified culture resulting from tourism, yet guidebooks² have existed since the mid-nineteenth century (Behdad, 1994). Guidebooks in particular aspire to make a journey as easy and relaxing as possible, to make the exotic familiar, yet there are those guidebooks designed for those who desire more contact with the unfamiliar, who seek to distance themselves from the

² Quentin's *Guide en Orient: Itinéraire Scientifique, Artistique et Pittoresque* (Paris: L. Maisson, 1844) and John Murray's *Hand-Book for Travellers in the Ionian Islands, Greece, Turkey, Asia Minor, and Constantinople* (London: John Murray, 1840) are two of the earliest examples of Orientalist tourist guidebooks.

tourist. The *Lonely Planet Series* focuses on a non-tourist journey, whereas mainstream guidebook companies such as *Fodor's* and *Frommer's* detail the essential landmarks and 'sights of interest' (read tourist spots). But in the writing of the anti-guidebook, the non-tourist journey itself becomes codified, structured and commodified. A primary difference between the guidebook and the travel book is that the guidebook is primarily a reference guide. The guidebook lists accommodations, restaurants, hours for tourist spots, addresses of embassies. Guidebooks are designed for those who intend future travel, whereas travel books allow the reader to travel along with the author without leaving one's home or nation.

Unlike the guidebook, the travel text is an autobiographical discourse that "constructs its own narrative around the general experience of its heroic traveller, expecting the reader to fill in the narrative gaps through a kind of identification with the narrator" (Behdad, 1994: 44). Behdad maintains that it is the authority of the subjective narrator that leads to the discursive strength of travel books, but that guidebooks are multi-positional and thus less authoritative than travel books. Behdad fails to consider that while the travel book achieves discursive authority through the interpretation of the author/traveller, the guidebook draws its authority

from a different source, the power to define and classify 'sights of interest.'

Guidebooks merely suggest possible places of interest and it is up to the reader to decide on which 'sights of interest' he/she wishes to see. But just as Behdad grants the reader of guidebooks the will of reason and interpretation, he denies it to readers of travel books.

The travelogue produces its first-person subject ('I') as the site of an act of interpretation -- 'making sense' of the Orient -- and as someone who is authorised to *make* meaning. The centrality and discursive authority of the first-person subject in turn imply exclusion, separating the Orientalist and his or her experience from the reader, whose desire or exoticism can be satisfied only as a displacement of or identification with the enunciative subject's desire, realised in his Oriental journey....The tourist guide, on the other hand, constructs the reading subject ('you') as a potential traveller and presupposes the realisation of its addressee's desire for the Orient (Behdad, 1994: 41).

Behdad fails to factor in the fact that many travel books were written with an audience in mind, usually a specific audience. It is up to this audience to make sense of the travel book, to agree with or dispute its portrayal of a specific culture, "to fill in the narrative gaps through a kind of identification with the narrator."

Located within the tradition most notably represented by Michel de Certeau,³ my aim is to unearth how travellers deciphered the Orient. Were they merely cultural dopes repeating and enshrining past constructions of the Orient?

³ For more on de Certeau's theoretical paradigm, see his *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Trans. Steven Rendall. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.

Was the discursive power of Orientalism so pervasive and onerous that the individual voices of travellers went unspoken? De Certeau's paradigm realises the power and totality of discourse, yet he seeks to excavate the subjective, the resistant, those movements and thoughts between, against, and outside discourse. I would propose that the authors of these texts, as travellers, immediately confront a culture that never perfectly corresponds with the Orientalist discourse that has previously mediated their conception⁴ of that culture, enabling them to perceive the 'constructedness' of dominant representations of the gendered and sexualised Orient and, from this unique vantage, to modify their conceptions. "Culture is contested, temporal, and emergent. Representation and explanation - both by insiders and outsiders - is implicated in this emergence" (Clifford, 1986: 19). However, it must be stressed that, while the contradiction that is engendered by experience confronting preconception enables critique, such revisions reinscribe new and different images that project the Orient as Other. However, these new

⁴ My conception is considerably close to Behdad's concept of belatedness. He argues that travels, in the mid- and late nineteenth century, of Orientalists was "marked by an anxiety of coming after what had come before" (Behdad: 1994: 13). These travellers, upon encountering an Orient that does not conform to their vision(s), critiqued Orientalist representations. However, Behdad maintains that this discursive slippage was historically limited to the nineteenth century. My point is that this is a characteristic of travel writing on the Orient, not related to a specific time period.

projections modify the diverse strands that constitute Orientalism, strands that are defined by gender, sexuality, class, affluence, etc.

Behdad's claim to the unified nature of the first-person narrator of the travel book, as opposed to the guide book, is also problematic. Silk (1990) contends that the "travel narrative actually highlights the fragmentation of the textual subject....In modern travel novels this [spatial] displacement is frequently so complete that the subject in question must rely on other voices in the text for self-expression" (Silk, 1990: 223). Behdad merely assumes that the structure of the travel book, with its first-person narrator who can "make" meaning, produces a unified author ("I") and text. Porter also critiques this line of thought regarding the unity of the subject, reasoning that travel texts are "shown to be fissured with doubt and contradiction, it will confirm how under certain conditions Orientalist discourse, far from being monolithic, allows counter-hegemonic voices to be heard within it" (Porter, 1994: 155). Orientalist travellers may construct their own versions of Oriental society, however, contradictions and multiple voices within the text allow for a *dis*unified subject and heterogeneous readings of the travel text. A common practice within the travel writing genre is to quote past travel accounts of the same society. More often than not, this quotation comes with a critique of the previous traveller. With

each traveller quoted, another voice and interpretation is added to the text. Travel accounts also involve contact with other people and cultural practices, otherwise they would only be geographical surveys. It is this encounter with other people, the quotation of their voices, that allows for a dispersed subject within the travel narrative. Behdad said that the reader of the travel narrative had "to fill in the narrative gaps through a kind of identification with the narrator" but as one reader differs from another so does his/her identification with the narrator and more importantly, so does his/her bridging of the "narrative gap."

The Evolution of Travel

In the twentieth-century, tourism and travel has become a vehicle for economic development and growth. The study of travel has generally concentrated on the economic, environment and cultural impact on the host nation, yet just as the study of the travel industry is a recent development, tourist travel as a cultural practice also has a relatively short-history. The development of the commercial jet-liner combined with a rise in family incomes and an increase in leisure time for the middle and working classes allowed for the rapid development of the tourist industry in the late twentieth-century (Greenblatt and Gagnon, 1983). However, travel existed before the modern advent of tourism. From the 1830s on, Europe was

covered with rail lines which made travel easier, quicker and less expensive. Travel agencies began to form and organise excursions; the Thomas Cook agency organised its first expedition to Pompeii in 1864 (Aldrich, 1993: 164). Travel had now been opened to those of the middle-class who had the financial ability, leisure time and inclination to go abroad. So while this development was not on the same scale as modern tourism, it was a part of the beginning of the travel industry.

Associated with the various developments in the travel industry, the type of traveller also changed. Prior to the fledgling nineteenth-century travel industry, travellers had to generally negotiate and plan their own journeys. Travel at that time, was generally limited to the upper classes; they had the financial resources, education and leisure time that allowed them to travel. With the development of the nineteenth-century travel industry and the construction of rail lines, travel became more of a possibility for a greater number of people. And with the arrival of the modern tourist industry, yet more people had the chance to travel outside their home societies.

Paul Fussell argues that each of the three time periods produced three very different types of travel and hence travellers.

Before tourism there was travel, and before travel there was exploration. Each is roughly assignable to its own age in modern history: exploration belongs to the Renaissance, travel to the bourgeois age, tourism to our proletarian moment....All three make journeys, but the explorer seeks the

undiscovered, the traveller that which has been discovered by the mind working in history, the tourist that which has been discovered by entrepreneurship and prepared for him by the arts of mass publicity. The genuine traveller is, or used to be, in the middle of between the two extremes. If the explorer moves toward the risks of the formless and the unknown, the tourist moves toward the security of pure cliché. It is between these two poles that the traveller mediates, retaining all he can of the excitement of the unpredictable attachment to exploration, and fusing that with the pleasure of 'knowing where one is' belonging to tourism (Fussell, 1980: 38-39).

Unlike Fussell, I do not want to strictly limit the type of traveller to a specific time period for I would argue that the type of traveller is also experientially, rather than wholly historically, based. Fussell proclaims that in our "proletarian moment," travel as he defines it cannot exist. I would argue that travel still exists, but the traveller must adequately distance him/herself from the tourist. The tourist developers have invaded, commodified and commercialised all cultures and all that is left is "pure cliché." Yet does the tourist industry define a whole culture? Is Montreal defined only by the tourist attractions of Old Montreal and Olympic Stadium? I would concur that the tourist industry does codify culture; one can 'see' Europe in seven days, one has 'been' to Egypt if one has seen the Pyramids. Tourism packages a culture so that it can be quickly, easily and safely ingested by tourists. However, what does the Tunisian woman do after she belly-dances in front of a wide-eyed group of tourists? My point is that outside of tourist constructions of a certain culture, versions of that culture exist, although there can

be discrepancies between the tourist and the native cultural presentations. Just as other versions of this culture exist, so does the possibility for the traveller to explore beyond the bounds of tourist constructions, to move into different cultural spheres. This is also one of the problematics that present-day travellers have to face: they must try to explore and understand a certain culture while at the same time, avoid the traps of tourist representations. The mediation that travellers must make, unlike Fussell's description, is now a self-conscious effort to distance themselves from tourists and tourism.

Greenblatt and Gagnon point out that despite the rapid growth of tourism since World War II, social scientists have paid little attention to the "collective or individual character or impacts of travel" (Greenblatt and Gagnon, 1983: 89). The authors examine travel from a sociology of leisure perspective. They find the study of travel productive for it represents trends in the "work-leisure" association but more importantly it allows for an analysis of the coping patterns and techniques of "human movement in physical and social space" (Greenblatt and Gagnon, 1983: 91). The authors coin the term "temporary strangers" to refer to travellers; they argue that travellers, as compared to migrants and refugees,⁵ have chosen⁶ to locate

⁵ It is important to note that while there are similarities between travellers, migrants and refugees, there are usually much more restrictions placed on migrants and refugees within the 'host' nation.

themselves in a territory that is culturally, physically and socially unfamiliar. When these "temporary strangers" encounter the unfamiliar, their social training and background fails them, yet they still must manage and negotiate the encounter with the foreign. Simple things such as ordering a coffee, hailing a taxi, exchanging money or asking directions, while not generally problematic in the home society, can become monumental tasks while travelling. The security of the self is thus questioned and in order for the traveller to successfully manage his/her trip, some form of environmental and identity management must occur.

There are ways in which this unfamiliarity can be managed. Icons such as the Eiffel Tower or Buckingham Palace serve as known-landmarks for the traveller; they find comfort in something they 'know' or have 'seen' before. Another factor in the identity management involved with travel is the "environmental bubble." The bubble is a bit of home away from home -- the uniform nature and design of tourist hotels and complexes complete with their modern facilities. Thus the hotel becomes a safe spot, a refuge, so that travellers who encounter the foreign outside the hotel, may come 'home' and relax from the strain of the unknown. With the

⁶ Martin (1983), Porter (1991) and Boone (1995) have shown that many gay male travellers did not choose to travel, but had to leave their country, England in particular, for legal reasons related to their sexuality. Norman Douglas had to leave England for he was found kissing a boy on the cheek and giving him candy. W.H. Auden could not return to England as his German lover was classified as a sexual degenerate at the border and refused entry (Fussell, 1980).

arrival of tourism, travellers as opposed to tourists have sought to differentiate themselves from tourists on the basis of this environmental bubble. "It is not that some persons (the virtuous traveller) seek novelty and the unfamiliar while others (the stay-at-homes and the tourist) shun them; rather, it is that unfamiliarity differs by type and degree and is sought and tolerated and taken pleasure in by different persons at different stages of the life cycle" (Greenblatt and Gagnon, 1983: 103). Both types, the traveller and the tourist, are in search of the unfamiliar, but what differentiates the two is the degree of unfamiliarity they seek.

Transgressing Boundaries

The search for the unfamiliar, for the unknown, for the unspoken is what links travel with theory. Travel, as the preliminary quotation suggests, has strong connections with theory. Indeed as the traveller seeks to cross physical, cultural and social frontiers, the theorist also attempts to traverse methodological, theoretical, and existential boundaries. Featherstone (1995) points out that theorists frequently use "metaphors of movement and marginality....Travel has often been regarded as aiding the decentring of habitual categories, a form of playing with cultural disorder, something which can also be found in postmodern theory" (126). Travel writing has been used to critique the "home" society, to critically engage

Western gender ideology and sexual morality, in much the same way as postmodern theory. Travel and travel writing allows for the possibility of seeing the world with different eyes; postmodern theory recognises and celebrates that the world is full of many different eyes.

Said in a post-*Orientalism* article writes “the image of traveller depends not on power, but on motion, on a willingness to go into different worlds, use different idioms, and understand a variety of disguises, masks, and rhetorics. Travellers must suspend the claim of customary routine in order to live in new rhythms and rituals...the traveller *crosses over*, traverses territory, and abandons fixed positions all the time. To do this with dedication and love as well as a realistic sense of the terrain is, I believe, a kind of academic freedom at its highest” (Said, 1994). Said, who had previously linked travellers as co-creators of Orientalism, now portrays the traveller as one who “traverses territory.” Postmodern theory urges that we critically analyse modern ways of believing and seeing. Travel, and theory, have allowed me to see the world differently, to constantly question my thoughts and ideas. My interest in travel narratives stems from my interest in travelling and in the representation of Other cultures, genders, and sexualities. Travellers are part of a culture and so have a lot of cultural and social baggage to carry. Yet I do believe that

some travellers are able to open up this baggage and critically examine it precisely because of their distance from their home culture.

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

My thesis involves a hermeneutical¹ analysis of selected travel accounts of the Orient. My intent is to examine the various constructions of gender and sexuality and how these constructions are often contradictory and internally inconsistent within individual texts and travel writing on the Orient in general. A brief discussion of hermeneutic analysis, along with a discussion of the importance of the text in the study of the social, will allow for a clearer understanding of the methodological approach I will employ. The method of choosing the selected texts, the reasoning behind the historical demarcation within my sample of travel texts, and a discussion of how sections of text will be selected and analysed will also be discussed.

I History of Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics, derived from the Greek *hermeneutikos* meaning 'related to explaining,' has a diverse historical and disciplinary background. For centuries, hermeneutics was part of the discipline of philology, which is the study of the

¹ Hermeneutics, as defined by Paul Ricoeur, is "the theory of the operation of understanding in its relation to the interpretation of texts" (1973:112). My use of hermeneutics is the interpretation of images of gender and sexuality in travel accounts on the Orient.

historical and comparative aspects of language. Hermeneutics was developed in response to the contradictory versions of the Bible. For centuries, the Bible and other Christian documents had been translated and copied by numerous, anonymous people. The result was distinctly different versions and interpretations; the hermeneutic analysis of Biblical texts was a search for the authentic version, as compared to the distorted ones. "Employing mostly philological methods, hermeneutics occupied itself with critical scrutiny of contending texts, with the re-possession of the authentic version - the 'true meaning' of the document - as its ultimate objective" (Bauman, 1978: 7). During the sixteenth century, hermeneutics took on a more prominent role as the Catholic and Protestant institutions debated which was *the* authentic version of the Bible.

At the end of the eighteenth century, hermeneutics radically changed its focus from a critique and authentication of texts to a critique and questioning of the production of historical and social knowledge (Bauman, 1978: 8). It was at this point that the budding social sciences began to take notice of the developments in hermeneutics. The emerging social sciences had taken on what is now known as a positivist approach, a 'natural science of the social.'

[Social] Science was seen as utterly legal-rational, therefore impersonal and democratic, activity. Discovery was a matter of genius or talent, but validation was founded on rules which could be applied by everybody who

mastered the publicly accessible skills, and which there avoided the differences arising from the personalities of scientists (Bauman, 1978: 13).

However, while this scientific approach to the study of the social excluded the subjectivity of the social scientist, it also had the effect of omitting the subjective meanings, motives and intentions of the social actor. Hermeneutic analysis developed only within the German² social sciences in response to this exclusion of the subjective.

Paul Ricoeur has critically reworked the German tradition of hermeneutics.

However, Ricoeur does not see the intention of the author (subjectivity) as the prime importance in an hermeneutical investigation. The intention of the text, which is partly composed of the author's intention, is the main object of investigation in an hermeneutical analysis.

The text becomes the focus of attention in a genuinely hermeneutic philosophy and since a text is the result of a particular configuration of language and meaning which, in combination, create a specific con-text within the text. What is actually said and how it is said in the text are both primary concerns of hermeneutic investigation (Rudnick, 1995: 143).

The intentions of the text, along with the intentions of the author, will be the focus of my analysis of travel accounts. This is sharply in contrast with discourse theory

² The most influential hermeneutical theorist in the nineteenth century was Wilhelm Dilthey, who greatly influenced later German theorists such as Max Weber, Martin Heidegger and Alfred Schutz (Rudnick, 1995).

and analysis which rejects any notion of textual and/or authorial intention. The recent re-discovery of hermeneutics as an analytical and methodological tool has been particularly fruitful for the purposes of this thesis. Giddens (1983) argues that the demise of the "orthodox consensus" (read positivism) in sociology has led to a search for other ways of knowing and interpreting. Hermeneutics, for Giddens, allows one to capture a certain social structure, while at the same time, examining agency and the social actor. Alongside the diminishing role of the "orthodox consensus" in sociology, the use of textual sources has also been currently re-discovered by social scientists.

The Text and Sociology

Dorothy Smith credits the development of ethnomethodology, particularly the work of Harold Garfinkel, for the incorporation of the text into the study of the social. Garfinkel contends that textual records cannot be used by sociologists as objective accounts, that they are not autonomous from their "organisational uses and contexts of their production and interpretation" (Smith, 1990: 211). Smith attempts to advance a textual method of inquiry for the social sciences, particularly sociology.

Texts are not seen as inert extra-temporal blobs of meaning, the fixity of which enables the reader to forget the actual back and forth work on the piece or pieces of paper in front of her that constitute the text as a body of meaning existing outside time and all at once....The text is analysed for its

characteristically textual form of participation in social relations. The interest is in the social organisation of those relations and in penetrating them, discovering them, opening them up from within, *through the text*. The text enters the laboratory, so to speak, carrying the threads and shreds of the relations it is organised by and organises. The text before the analyst, then, is not used as a specimen or sample, but as means of access, a direct line to the relations it organises (Smith, 1990: 3-4).

My thesis will come from a sociological perspective, for I want to examine Western perceptions of the Orient, specifically the cases of gender and sexuality, and I am using travel accounts to analyse these various, and often contradictory, representations. Travel accounts as texts will allow me "access" to these gendered and sexualised perceptions.

The use of biography and other narratives in the study of the social has been, and still is, an integral part of sociology. Michael Erben argues that biographies are "cultural documents...that present a discourse on the nature of the public and the private" (1993: 15). Travel accounts, as experiential narratives, also present a discourse on the "nature of the public and the private;" they also, as discussed in the previous chapter, chronicle the encounter between the 'Mythic' and 'Experienced' Orient. For this reason, travel books are useful methodological tools: they allow the researcher to 'measure' the effects and influence of cultural ideas and theories, i.e., Orientalism, on social beings. Within the tradition developed by de Certeau, I do not see social actors as passive consumers of discourse, but as users of

culture. De Certeau, like Foucault and Said, believes in a discursive framework, that there are a whole series of discursive restraints placed on knowledge and the body. However, de Certeau feels there are moments at which, social actors can use this framework for their *own* advantage -- resistance through subversion. How did travellers make sense of the Orient? Through the eyes of the discourse of Orientalism as Said argues, or as social agents that were able to 'understand' the Orient from a different perspective and subvert the constraints of the discourse of Orientalism?

'Sampling' Criteria

Since there are hundreds of travel books on the Orient, broaching an infinite spectrum of issues, I have decided to concentrate on those that, in a predominant way, speak to those constructs with which this study is concerned, i.e., sexuality and gender. I admit that my sample is not representative of travel writing on the Orient. Travel writing on the Orient is an enormously diverse field and I have chosen to concentrate on a sub-field of travel writing that attends to gender and sexuality constructions. My objective is not an genealogy of texts that create and define the travel writing tradition on the Orient, but rather a study of the intersection of

Western notions of sexuality and gender with experiential narratives of the Orient, and my selection of texts has been determined by this latter criterion.

I have, however, decided to differentiate my selection of texts on the following basis, the sexual and gender 'revolution' that took place in most Western countries in the 1960s and 1970s, i.e., 'second-wave' feminism and 'gay liberation.'³ The legal, political, economical and social positions of women began to expand substantially as well as the increasing social acceptance and decriminalisation of most homosexual relations (Cornell, 1992; Weeks, 1985). As the positions of Western women and gay men became more accepted and celebrated, their need and/or desire to express their estrangement from Western society no longer needed to be spoken on an Oriental landscape. Therefore those travel accounts written in the 'pre-sexual revolution' era of Western history (pre-1960s) will be compared to those in the 'post-sexual revolution' era. However, I do not want to argue that this was the only point in Western history where the position of women and gay men changed, yet the 'sexual revolution' was, I think, quite significant and thus deserves to be considered here as a 'cutting-off' point. In the previous chapter, the role of

³ I do not want, however, to give the idea that before these 'revolutions,' gender and sexual identities were somehow static throughout history. According to Foucault (1978), sexual liberation was a movement resistant to Victorian attitudes towards sexuality, but these attitudes were themselves historically defined and limited.

the intended audience and its affect on the nature of statements was discussed. For example, Flaubert's letters are strikingly similar to Orton's diaries in their explicit statements on sexuality; however, Flaubert never intended to publish his letters. The sexual statements of Orton are different from Flaubert's in that Orton was able to speak them in a public space. Flaubert, most likely, could not have published such unabashed sexual references during his lifetime; the 'sexual revolution' allowed private, sexual matters to be explicitly expressed on a public landscape.

The 'sexual revolution' also coincides with colonised Oriental nations achieving (or had already achieved in the late 1950s and early 1960s) independence from European control. Consequently the relationships between the traveller and the newly independent nation that he/she was travelling in changed significantly. Travellers did not have the same degree of 'power' as they might have enjoyed under colonial control. They could no longer rely on the colonial authorities to grant them access to 'restricted' areas, to 'protect' them from potentially hostile natives. Nationalism, especially in its expression of hostility toward the former colonising nations and nationals, was another cultural aspect that travellers had to negotiate. So, just as the positions of women and gay men were changing in the West so were the relations between the West and the Orient.

The demise of colonialism and the rise of the Western 'sexual revolution' while not causally related (but temporally connected) did, in combination, significantly change the context of travelling in the Orient and specifically the implications of sexual activity between Orientals and Occidentals. Schmitt (1992) points out that the implications of sexual activity between Occidental tourists and Orientals radically changed with the demise of colonial power and control. "Fucking Westerners, whether male or female, is seen as a well deserved revenge for suffered injustice and as an expression of physical and moral superiority over a decaying West" (Schmitt, 1992: 125). Sexual relations between tourists and natives now took on new political and social connotations that only arose with the demise of colonialism and the rise of nationalism.

The 'sexual revolution' also changed what could be uttered, sexually, in a Western context. Sexuality no longer needed to be disguised within discussions of Other nations and cultures; this fundamentally changed not only how sexuality could be voiced but what could be voiced. The 'post-sexual revolution' West with its public displays of sexuality and improving gender equality also became a site of sexual imaginings and explorations for the Orient. The increased availability of Western pornography in the Orient helped to construct the West as a site of sexual

decadence, a site where some Orientals could engage in practices illegal and/or tabooed at home. The ability to travel to the sexpots of the West though, was closely related to the substantial wealth of the Gulf nations. For those less-wealthy nations, sexual experience with Westerners was tied to the increasing number of tourists.

At the same time, however, the Orient, with the end of colonial control, was attempting to speak back, to correct the problems created by colonialism. The rise of nationalist movements, ideologies and governments radically changed the freedom and power of Westerners travelling in the Orient. Western travellers no longer had the power of the colonial machine to grant them unhampered access to areas and peoples. This diminishing of power as a colonial subject also affected the sexual freedom that Western travellers had enjoyed in colonial times, becoming considerably restricted and subject to punishment. These two events, the emergence of the 'sexual revolution' and the end of colonialism, considerably altered the ways in which travellers could discuss (and practice) sexuality and gender in the Orient. The end of colonialism changed the power dynamics in regard to relations between Orientals and Occidental travellers. The writing and speaking back against the Occident by the Orient, i.e., resistance, of postcolonial

nationalism not only changed how Occidentals and Orientals interacted but also how this interaction, through travel texts, could be discussed. Concurrently the 'sexual revolution' effectively changed the gender and sexual dynamics between Orient and Occident. The West no longer needed to project the Orient as its sexual Other (it is this Other than many homosexual men identified with). The more open and public discussion and display of sexuality and the improvements in gender equality (and the sexual freedom for some Western women associated with such equality) changed not only how the West dealt with sexuality and gender but also how the Orient saw and imagined the West. Sexual and gender relations, and relations in general, between Orientals and Occidentals (and their representation in travel texts) now took on fundamentally different social, political, gendered, sexualised and racial ramifications.

I have read over fifty travel books on the Middle East and North Africa.⁴ From this collection, I have selected ten travel texts written by men and women, homosexual and heterosexual, that sufficiently discuss sexuality and gender. With such a quantity of texts, it was difficult to narrow them down to a select few. Travel texts that did not mention gender and/or sexuality were eliminated outright. The

⁴ See the Appendix for the list of over 50 books.

remaining books were then examined for both the number, and type of, gender and sexual representations. From this remainder, I chose the ten I felt were the most illustrative of these representations and that were authored by men and women.

Listed below are the ten texts, separated into the two different historical groupings.

While some of the earlier travel texts were published long after being written, I have grouped them according to the historical period in which they were written, rather than published.

'Pre-Sexual Revolution' Sample

Bell, Gertrude. *The Letters of Gertrude Bell: Selected and Edited by Lady Bell*. London: Ernest Benn, 1927.

Flaubert, Gustave. *Flaubert in Egypt: A Sensibility on Tour*. Trans. and ed. Francis Steegmuller. Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1972.

Lawrence, T.E. *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. 1926. London: Penguin, 1962.

Thesiger, Wilfred. *Arabian Sands*. 1946. London: Readers Union Ltd, 1959.

Wharton, Edith. *In Morocco*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920.

'Post-Sexual Revolution' Sample

Busi, Aldo. *Sodomies in Elevenpoint*. 1988. Trans. Stuart Hood. Boston: Faber and Faber, 1992.

Kennedy, Sylvia. *See Ouarzazte and Die: Travels through Morocco*. London: Abacus, 1992.

Orton, Joe. *The Orton Diaries*. Ed. John Lahr. New York: Harper & Row, 1986.

Theroux, Peter. *Sandstorms: Days and Nights in Arabia*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990.

Walker, Dale. *Fool's Paradise*. Toronto: Random House, 1988.

Analysis of the Texts

The analysis and interpretation of the different texts will involve the application of several questions to these texts. I want to determine the nature of the discussions of gender and sexuality in travel accounts of the Orient and then determine whether these discussions support or contest Said's paradigm -- Orientalism as a hegemonic discourse.

How do these Western women and men portray Oriental sexuality and gender roles?

Are their portrayals consistent within the text?

Are there commonalities between the constructions within individual travel accounts and the selected travel accounts in general? Are there differences?

My analysis will involve a interpretational reading of the selected travel texts; the texts will be read and sections that discuss sexuality and/or gender will be marked off; a selection of the various passages will then be analysed within the individual text (are the same sexual and gendered images repeated throughout the text or contested?) and within the selection of texts (do different texts contain the same or different images?). The analysis will focus on the types of images produced within these travel texts and will illustrate the commonalties and dissimilarities between these images.

Content analysis “reduces the text...to quantifiable data by noting the incidence of certain features and comparing that frequency with something else,” (Allen, 1987: 10). However, I want to examine “what is actually said and how it is said in the text.” While my historical splitting of the sample will allow for a comparison of two historical periods, my aim is not to conclude, for example, that the pre-sexual revolution era of travel writing on the Orient was more preoccupied with gender and sexuality just because they were mentioned more frequently. The frequency of gendered and sexualised images is not the objective of this study, the substance and meaning of these images is. Hermeneutical analysis is exceptionally appropriate for this study in that it considers the intentions of the text and author. It also plays close attention to the text and goes beyond the “dominant reading”⁵ of the text. A hermeneutical analysis will allow me to demonstrate the diversity of sexualised and gendered images in travel accounts on the Middle East and North Africa.

⁵ See my previous discussion of Mills (1991) and the difference between a “dominant reading” and a close reading.

Chapter Four

VOICES FROM THE PAST

In engaging in this analysis, I have decided that each text will be discussed individually paying close attention to "what is said in the text and how it is said."

Although assembling a wide array of images within the genre of travel writing on the Orient would undoubtedly reveal the diversity and contradiction that exists within this genre, to examine the conflicts within individual texts speaks more vividly to the contention that the points of most interest are those which reveal a traveller attempting to mitigate his or her preconceived notions in the face of contradictory experiences. The texts will be discussed in chronological order, for ease, and I have placed the 'colonial' and 'pre-sexual revolution' (pre-1960s) texts in this chapter, leaving those 'postcolonial' and 'post-sexual revolution' (post-1960s) texts, and the particular issues they are confronted with, for the following chapter.

'Weaving an Aesthetic'

To commence, I offer the case of Gustave Flaubert. Flaubert visited Egypt in 1849-50 as a member of a government agricultural commission, yet his letters¹

¹ Flaubert's travel text is a collection of letters and travel notes. Upon his death, his manuscripts became the property of his niece, Mme. Groult, who radically censored them before their

show that he considered his 'mission' to be one of sexual exploration rather than agrarian cultivation -- indeed, he even saw these two 'missions' as complementary.²

By the nineteenth century, improved means of transportation combined with bourgeois affluence and expanded possibilities for 'exotic' travel resulting from Western encroachment into the Middle East, the Orient, for many Western men and women, had become a site of sexual exploration and fascination. As sexual relations were becoming increasingly psychoanalysed, and, in many cases, criminalised in the West,³ the Orient, along with other nations that "accommodated love between men," became one of several sites upon which desires for sexual freedom were projected and performed. While Said acknowledged that a great deal of the discourse that constituted Orientalism involved such issues, he demurred at including them within the scope of his examination. "Why the Orient seems still to

publication. The first, uncensored publication only appeared, in French, in 1965 (Steegmüller, 1972: 229).

² Flaubert's official charge was the "task of collecting, in the various ports and caravan centres, any information he [Flaubert] thought might interest the Chambers of Commerce" (quoted in Flaubert, 1972: 23). France still maintained a controlling interest in Egyptian political and economic affairs, despite the fall of Napoleon in the early 1800s. No doubt, Flaubert's official mission was to gather information that would help maintain French political and economic influence over Egypt. His private letters, however, speak little of this official commercial mission but undoubtedly his report to the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce was devoid of any mention of sexual activity.

³ A more detailed account of the increasing regulation of sexuality in the West, see Foucault (1978) and Weeks (1977).

suggest not only fecundity but sexual promise (and threat), untiring sensuality, unlimited desire, deep generative energies, is something on which one could speculate: it is not the province of my analysis here, alas, despite its frequently noted appearance" (Said, 1978: 103). Said's voiding of sexual matters is typified by Said's analysis of Flaubert's description of the famous dancer, Kuchuk Hanem, which, Said argues, produced *the* somatic model of the Oriental Other. Flaubert, however, produced two very different constructions of the Oriental woman -- the sexual, sensual woman and the unemotional, unsexual whore. Flaubert recognises that the construction of Hanem as a sensual woman was of his own doing, and upon meeting with her a second time, his understanding of her radically changes. The Orient was not only a site of heterosexual experience and fantasy for Flaubert but also a site of homosexual exploration and experience.

Kuchuk Hanem is a tall, splendid creature, lighter in colouring than an Arab, she comes from Damascus; her skin, particularly on her body, is slightly coffee-coloured....She has one upper incisor, right, which is beginning to go bad....*Coup* with Safia Zugarah ('Little Sophie') - I stain the divan. She is very corrupt and writhing, extremely voluptuous. But the best was the second copulation with Kuchuk. Effect of her necklace between my teeth. Her cunt felt like rolls of velvet as she made me come. I felt like a tiger (Flaubert, 1972: 113-115).

Despite the blatant sexual context of this passage, Said's discussion of Flaubert and his encounter with Kuchuk Hanem is limited solely to the racial/geographical axis.

According to Said, Flaubert's tryst with Hanem

produced a widely influential model of the Oriental woman; she never spoke of herself, she never represented her emotions, presence or history. *He* spoke for and represented her. He was foreign, comparatively wealthy, male, and these were historical facts of domination that allowed him not only to possess Kuchuk Hanem physically but to speak for her and tell his readers that she was 'typically Oriental'....It fairly stands for the pattern of relative strength between East and West, and the discourse about the Orient that it enabled (Said, 1978: 6).

While I do not disagree with Said that Flaubert spoke for Hanem, I do not agree with his locating Flaubert's power solely in terms of the East/West axis, to the exclusion of the power differentials of economics and gender relations. Said mentions that Flaubert was "foreign, comparatively wealthy, male" yet he fails to see how these various factors (economics, class, gender) might have affected Flaubert's Orientalist text. Said neglects to adequately contextualise Flaubert's encounter with Hanem within various power differentials (class, economics and gender) other than exclusively racial/geographical terms.

In discussing Flaubert, Said completely disregards his homosexual encounters in Egypt. While Said engages in a preliminary analysis of Flaubert's heterosexual exploits -- how Flaubert's encounter with Kuchuk Hanem produced a

“widely influential model” of the Oriental female and Oriental sexuality in general, how do Flaubert’s homosexual exploits figure into Said’s “internally consistent” and “accepted grid” termed Orientalism?

Speaking of bardashes, this is what I know about them. Here it is quite accepted. One admits one’s sodomy, and it is spoken of at table in the hotel. Sometimes you do a bit of denying, and then everybody teases you and you end up confessing. Travelling as we are for education purposes, and charged with a mission by the government, we have considered it our duty to indulge in this form of ejaculation....Be informed, furthermore, that all the bath-boys are bardashes. The final masseurs, the one who come to rub you when all the rest is done, are usually quite nice young boys.... My *kllau* [masseur] was rubbing me gently, and when he came to the noble parts he lifted up my *boules d’armour* to clean them, then continuing to rub my chest with his left hand he began to pull with his right on my prick, and as he drew it up and down he leaned over my shoulder and said ‘*bakshesh, bakshesh*’ [money, money]. He was a man in his fifties, ignoble, disgusting (Flaubert, 1972: 84-85)

Said neglects to deal with Flaubert’s homosexual exploits in Egypt, for, I would argue, they do not fit into Said’s “grid” of Orientalist depictions of sexuality, which subscribes to a notion of compulsory heterosexuality. Said, by only analysing Flaubert’s heterosexual exploits, constructs Orientalism as a discourse between a powerful (masculine) Occident and a powerless (feminine) Orient. This has the effect of creating a discourse that speaks entirely of male-female relations, the homosexual aspects of Orientalism are completely erased. To see it as a “duty” to “indulge in this form (homosexual) of ejaculation” implies that the Orient was not only a site of heterosexual sexual exploration but also a homosexual one. Flaubert’s

statement that “here it [sodomy] is quite accepted” gives one the sense that elsewhere, undoubtedly France, it was not accepted. Just as the discourse of Orientalism failed to adequately describe the ‘real’ Orient (according to Said), Said fails to fully describe the ‘real’ Orientalism. He has neglected a whole tradition within, or counter to, Orientalism by avoiding the issue of sexuality, specifically homosexuality. I would contend that such travellers, because of their unique (disad)vantage point in Western society, may have constructed different representations of Oriental sexuality and gender roles. It should also be stated that within these broad categories of sexuality and gender, differences of class, race and nationality also come into play.

When first mentioned in Flaubert’s letters, Kuchuk Hanem was an exotic, coffee-coloured, mono-toothed creature. There is an animalistic sense to Flaubert’s treatment of his sexual encounter with Hanem: Flaubert felt like a *tiger* as he copulated into her rolls of *velvet*. He *bit* her necklace between his teeth as he climaxed inside her. Sex with Hanem was somehow less than human; it was exotic, wild, foreign. It was Oriental, to the extent it differed from the sexual relations countenanced in the West. But the sexual exploits Flaubert describes could only be enacted against an Oriental backdrop, and the effects read off from these encounters

change as the contexts in which they were produced become distant, both spatially and temporally. Flaubert's views of Hanem altered considerably upon his re-entry to France. Flaubert states:

As for Kuchuk Hanem, ah! Set your mind at rest, and at the same time correct your ideas about the Orient. Be convinced that she felt nothing at all: emotionally, I guarantee; and even physically, I strongly suspect....The Oriental woman is no more than a machine: she makes no distinction between one man and another man. Smoking, going to the baths, painting her eyelids and drinking coffee - such is the circle of occupations within which her existence is confined. As for physical pleasure, it must be very slight, since the well known button, the seat of same, is sliced off at an early age....You and I are thinking of her [Hanem], but she is certainly not thinking of us. We are weaving an aesthetic around her, whereas this particular very interesting tourist who was vouchsafed the honours of her couch has vanished from her memory completely, like many others (Flaubert, 1972: 220).

Flaubert acknowledges outright the constructedness of his created "aesthetic" of Hanem as a sexual, exotic creature, yet his critique ends up portraying her as an unemotional sex-machine incapable of enjoying sexual relations which is another, but dissimilar, Orientalist image in that he attempts to speak authoritatively for the Orient, to "correct your ideas about the Orient," and justifies his revised, and unified, construction of Hanem. Flaubert now states, in a gross generalisation that is consistent with Orientalism, that "The Oriental woman is no more than a machine" which is quite changed from his original euphoric description of his copulation with Hanem. However, Flaubert is conscious that he is "weaving

an aesthetic" around Hanem -- that he is constructing an Orientalist image. He warns the reader to correct his/her ideas about the Orient, that his previous discussion of Hanem was in fact, not the case. He concludes that while he, a "very interesting tourist," knew the honours of her couch and her sexual services, he had very little impact on her life and has disappeared from her memory. Flaubert's initial encounter with Hanem produced feelings of attachment and a sense that something 'magical' had occurred between them (Flaubert, 1972: 118-199).

Upon revisiting Hanem, he has to confront Hanem's version of the previous event. Flaubert tried to encapsulate Hanem into an mould that he can manage and understand but Hanem's unemotional state during the second rendezvous, forces Flaubert to revise his previous conception. Said's theorisation of Orientalism does not allow for this inconsistency and contradiction within specific texts or Orientalism at large nor for the realisation by travellers that they are actively involved in the construction of Orientalist images that differ greatly from the Other's (in this case Hanem's) version of events. It is when Flaubert's remembrances of his initial interaction with Hanem encounters her version of the event that Flaubert is forced to reconsider his sexually glorified conception of Hanem and Oriental women in

general; this also has the effect of creating a new, and different, version of Hanem -- the unemotional machine who cannot achieve physical nor emotional pleasure.

'Sensuality without Seduction'

Edith Wharton, a wealthy New England novelist, travelled to Morocco at the end of the first World War; her stated purpose is to record her "personal impressions [and] a slight sketch of the history and art of the country" (Wharton, 1920: vii). Wharton opens by stating that, as of yet, there is no guide-book in English on Morocco, and her aim is to remedy this deficiency. While her journey lasted only a month, she felt it was sufficiently long enough to give an important glimpse of a society that was slowly disappearing before a "great torrent of 'tourism'" which was gradually commercialising and homogenising Moroccan culture (Wharton, 1920: ix). Wharton's desire to write the first (English) guide-book on Morocco is seemingly in contradiction with her desire to catalogue the remnants of a culture that will soon disappear under the pressure of the "great torrents of tourism." Would not the publication of such a guide-book aide in the development and promotion of the fledgling Moroccan tourist industry which will have the effect of destroying the culture she seeks to inscribe? Wharton feels that it is critical that she record the vestiges of this culture and this impetus has two effects. She seeks

to create a definitive and authoritative depiction of Moroccan culture -- "This *is* Morocco." However, the second effect is to give this culture a limited 'life-span' -- "This is the Morocco that *was*." On the one hand, she produces a stable, ahistorical Moroccan culture; one that only she, as a Westerner, can fully understand and transmit to her readers. On the other hand, her capturing of Moroccan culture will be the last glimpse of it before it disappears in the void of modern development.⁴

Wharton's journey, as detailed in her guide book, took her to the major towns and cities of Morocco. Within her account of her travels, she centres in on Moroccan history and architecture, the role of the French colonial administration, and the harem. She seeks to provide the world, presumably the Western world, with an accurate "impression" of Moroccan culture, a culture that has not changed for hundreds of years (according to her) but is now suddenly threatened with extinction. Her chapter on harems and ceremonies is an example of her impetus to

⁴ Wharton's intentions in Morocco were to catalogue the last remnants of a disappearing culture -- one she felt was threatened by the 'inadequacies' of the Arab mind. Her section on Moroccan architecture highlights, for her, the inability of the Moroccan people to maintain their cultural heritage. Along with her work cataloging Moroccan architecture, she seeks to justify in her text the 'civilising' impact of French colonial control of Morocco -- a control she felt was necessary for the preservation of Moroccan culture and in particular, architecture. It should be noted, however, that she felt the development associated with French control was also hazardous to the sustainability of Moroccan culture -- she especially deplored the development of French-designed urban centres outside the Medina, the traditional commercial and social centre of Moroccan towns and cities (Wharton, 1920: 207-229).

provide a glimpse, albeit fleetingly, of Moroccan cultural practices. Wharton's desire to definitively capture Moroccan society leads her to conclude that the harem, and the position of the women in the harem, was typical of Moroccan (Oriental) society. Nonetheless, Wharton does encounter differences (nationality, age, culture and religion) between Oriental women, inside and outside the harem, and this encounter forces her to considerably qualify her statements on Moroccan women and society.

Conversing through interpreters is a benumbing process, and there are few points of contact between the open-air occidental mind and beings imprisoned in a conception of sexual and domestic life based on slave-service and incessant espionage. These languid women on their muslin cushions toil not, neither do they spin. The Moroccan lady knows little of cooking, needlework or any household arts. When her child is ill she can only hang it with amulets and wail over it; the great lady of the Fazi palace is as ignorant of hygiene as the peasant-woman of the *bled*. And all these colourless eventless lives depend on the favour of one fat tyrannical man, bloated with good living and authority, himself almost as inert and sedentary as his women, and accustomed to impose his whims on them ever since he ran about the same *patio* as a little short-smocked boy....Ignorance, unhealthiness and a precocious sexual initiation prevail in all classes. Education consists in learning by heart endless passages of the Koran, and amusement in assisting at spectacles that would be unintelligible to western children, but that the pleasantries of the harem make perfectly comprehensible to Moroccan infancy. At eight or nine the little girls are married, at twelve the son of the house is "given his first negress"; and thereafter, in the rich and leisured class, both sexes live till old age in an atmosphere of sensuality without seduction (Wharton, 1920: 193-195).

Wharton, with her "open-air occidental mind," is the only one who can get, and record, a last peek into the institution of the harem, an institution Wharton sees

as archaic, barbaric, and oppressive. Wharton mentions that these women are "imprisoned in a conception of sexual and domestic life based on slave-service and espionage" yet it is Wharton herself, who is imprisoned in a Western conception of the harem but also what it means to be a woman. She details the 'inadequacies' of Moroccan women -- they do not spin, do household work, cook or do needlework. By why is this unusual? Implicit in this is Wharton's reliance on the Western model of woman, who knows how to cook, sew and perform various other household duties, as the standard by which women in Morocco should be judged and compared.

Travellers not only had a perception of how Oriental gender roles operated, but these perceptions were informed by their own (Western) definitions of gender and sexuality. Wharton finds this "atmosphere of sensuality without seduction" so problematic, so Oriental, for in the West (at least in her eyes) sensuality should be, or was, tied to seduction. Hoodfar (1995) points out "that the representation of the Muslim 'harem' says at least as much about the gender relations of the colonisers, as it does of the colonised nations" (17). The connotations of Wharton's description are that these "colourless eventless lives" should be colourful and eventful, as

Wharton's is.⁵ Wharton seeks to proscribe a definitive, cohesive of Islamic Moroccan culture, as expressed in the cultural practice of the harem. However, through her travels she encounters difference within this category of "The Moroccan lady;" differences based on nationality, age, culture and religion.

The ladies who greeted us were more richly dressed than any I had seen except the Sultan's favourites; but their faces were more distinguished, more European in outline, than those of the round-checked beauties of Rabat. My companions had told me that the Caid's harem was recruited from Georgia, and the ladies receiving us had been brought up in the relative freedom of life in Constantinople; and it was easy to read in their wistfully smiling eyes memories of a life unknown to the passive daughters of Morocco (Wharton, 1920: 202).

Wharton's meeting of the Caid's harem at once confirms her beliefs regarding the imprisoned state of the Moroccan "passive daughters" yet it also posits difference based on nationality. The Georgian women, while still confined within the prison of the harem, knew a different life in Constantinople. One where they enjoyed more freedom in comparison to Morocco. Her encounter with difference, here based on nationality, results in her distinguishing between Morocco and Turkey, two Oriental nations. However, this encounter does not force Wharton to re-examine her conception of the Moroccan harem, indeed it confirms it.

⁵ Wharton was born into wealth and was privately educated in America and Europe. She permanently relocated to France in 1906 where she continued with her career as a novelist and short-story writer (Shuck, 1971). Her life, as she saw it, was evidently colourful, eventful and exciting.

Wharton does encounter difference within the Moroccan harem, but she sees this difference based on age and class rather than symptomatic of harem life.

The door had just opened to admit an elderly woman preceded by a respectful group of girls....This impressive old lady was the Sultan's mother. As she held out her plump wrinkled hand to Mme. Lyautey and spoke a few words through the interpretess one felt that at last a painted window of the *mirador* had been broken, and a thought let into the vacuum of the harem. What thought, it would have taken deep insight into the processes of the Arab mind to discover; but its honesty was manifest in the old Empress's voice and smile. Here at last was a woman beyond the trivial dissimulations, the childish cunning, the idle cruelties of the harem. It was not a surprise to be told that she was her son's most trusted adviser, and the chief authority in the palace (Wharton, 1920: 177-178).

The Empress was head of the household, she was a trusted advisor to her son, the sultan. Wharton saw this woman as an anomaly; a rare powerful women in a room of "passive daughters," yet by discussing her, Wharton demonstrates that not all women were "imprisoned" in the harem. Wharton approves of this women for she conforms to how Wharton feels women should be. Here is a woman, because of her age and relation to the Sultan, who was beyond the banality, the cruelty of the harem. Again, Wharton's account confirms her condemnatory beliefs of the harem while at the same time posits difference within the harem. The impetus to transcribe the remnants of Islamic Moroccan culture, before its annihilation, yet her encounter with difference within this supposedly uniform institution, forces Wharton to considerably qualify her representation of harem life.

She also goes to great length to demonstrate that within Morocco, there was difference between women based on class and culture.

It is rare, in Morocco, to see in the streets or the bazaars any women except of the humblest classes, household slaves, servants, peasants from the country or small tradesmen's wives; and even they (with the exception of the unveiled Berber women) are wrapped in the prevailing grave-clothes. The *filles de joie* and dancing-girls whose brilliant dresses enliven certain streets of the Algerian and Tunisian towns are invisible, or at least unnoticeable, in Morocco, where life, on the whole, seems so much less gay and brightly-tinted; and the women of the richer classes, mercantile or aristocratic, never leave their harems except to be married or buried. A throng of women dressed in light colours is therefore to be seen in public only when some street festival draws them to the roofs. Even then it is probable that the throng is mostly composed of slaves, household servants, and women of the lower *bourgeoisie* (Wharton, 1920: 51-52).

Here, Wharton discusses the differences between Moroccan women based on class; those of the working classes, of the "lower *bourgeoisie*," enjoy more spatial freedom than their upper-class counterparts. Her declaration points to a realisation that class plays an important role in defining gender boundaries. She posits both a homogeneity within the harem while concurrently positing diversity between the broad notion of Moroccan women. Wharton also notes that Berber women go unveiled, or in her words, do not wear the "prevailing grave-clothes." She finds Berber women radically different from the women of the harem.

Here at least we were in touch with un-Arab Morocco, with Berbers of the *bled* and the hills, whose women know no veils and no seclusion, and who, under a thin surface of Mahometanism, preserve their old stone and animal worship, and all the gross fetishistic beliefs from which Mahomet dreamed of freeing Africa.... They seemed abler bargainers than the men, and the play of expression on their dramatic and intensely feminine faces as they

wheedled the price of a calf out of a fierce hillman, or haggled over a heap of dates that a Jew with greasy ringlets was trying to secure for his secret distillers, showed that they knew their superiority and enjoyed it (Wharton, 1920: 111-113).

In contrast to the bland uniformity of the upper-class Arab harem, a space which Wharton sees as the synecdochic representation of the affluent Muslim household, and whose dominating and defining characteristic is the 'seclusion' that renders everyone within it passive, inert, and self-effacing to the point where no differentiation amongst individual members is possible, the representation of the Berber woman is almost violent in its vivacity. Unlike the delineations of the harem women, who are present to the reader only as the impalpable figurations of stagnation, the Berber women, as with the Georgian 'captives' and their "more distinguished" facial features and expressions of "wistfulness," have faces which are "dramatic and intensely feminine" and which allow a "play of expression." Amidst the bustle of the marketplace, these women take on a concrete substantiality and life, with their "brilliant hennaed eyes and smiles that lifted their short upper lips maliciously" and their faces "painted in stripes and patterns of indigo" (112). Their 'haggling' and 'wheedling,' in Wharton's estimation, not only demonstrates their "superiority," but also self-awareness, self-knowledge, and self-satisfaction. This and the enjoyment that Wharton detects in the Berber women distinguishes them

from their harem counterparts, who, in their supine immobility and lack of employment, have no self about which to be aware, let alone enjoy.

Wharton attempts to explain the difference between the harem women and the women of the *bled* by suggesting that in the Berbers there exists a culture in which 'Mahometism' never took hold, and this lack is directly related to their freedom. Instead of Islam, the Berbers still retain that veneration for "all those gross fetishistic beliefs from which Mahomet dreamed of freeing Africa." In contextualising the spiritual beliefs of the Berbers using the pejorative terms 'gross' and 'fetishistic,' Wharton explicitly opposes this 'primitivism' to Islam, using words that situate Mahomet as an enlightening, emancipatory and visionary force. However, in Wharton's view, the tenets of Islam have been the primary cause in structuring and maintaining the harem as the stultifying 'prison' as she has experienced it. Wharton specifically traces the freedom of the Berber women to the space of "un-Arab [Islamic] Morocco" and defines that freedom as the lack of two of the most predominant images of the Islamic women -- the veil and seclusion. Yet following within the same sentence, Islam, the lack of which allows this freedom, is then reinstated as superior to the primitive beliefs of the Berbers.

This sets up a contradiction that forecloses any attempt to contain the differences of Oriental women as exceptions to the harem and the beliefs it represents. Initially positing the space of the harem and the functioning of its inhabitants as emblematic of the *imprisoned* role of women in Islamic society, Wharton comes to find that the homogeneity of the harem cannot stand in for the experiences of all Moroccan women. She attempts to preserve the validity of the harem as image of the lot of women under Islam by explaining away differences as being the result of factors such as age (the 'Empress') or nationality (the Georgian women), or class (the dancing-girls), all of which gives them a certain individuality, and, to Wharton, autonomy. Likewise, the Berber women's freedom is explained by the lack of the power of Islam. But the primitivism that the Berbers exhibit prompts Wharton to recontextualise Islam as an emancipatory rather than repressive force, thereby suggesting that Islamic attitudes to women cannot be encapsulated within the image of the harem, and that what she sees as exceptions or aberrations to be surprised at, are instead the various roles normally available to women *within* Moroccan society. By imbuing all exceptions with 'Western' connotations of enlightened progress, Wharton is disquieted by the Berber women, whose freedom, consequent on their independence from Islam, has made them, in her view,

anything but enlightened moderns -- so much so, that her conception that Oriental women free from the restrictions of Islam must be exhibiting a Western pattern of women liberation is rendered questionable.

The 'Thin Edge of the Wedge'

Gertrude Bell was from a wealthy English industrial family.⁶ This wealth allowed her the freedom to travel around the world and to lead an 'independent lifestyle.' Her first experience with the Orient was a trip to Tehran to visit her uncle, then the British Ambassador. She, along with her brothers, travelled around the world, but was most captivated by the landscape and people of Iraq. In 1916 she became Political Secretary to Sir Percy Cox, who was head of the transitional imperial administration in Iraq, and eventually made Baghdad her home (Birkett, 1989: 276).⁷ She was deeply involved in the dissolution of the British mandate in Iraq and supported King Faisal in his claim to the throne. While she was implicated in the colonial project as a Political Secretary, her experience illustrates the

⁶ It should be noted that Bell's letters were edited by her stepmother before their publication. There is no sense of Bell's romantic and sexual affairs and the discussion of her eventual death by suicide is couched in terms of 'natural causes' by her stepmother.

⁷ In 1913, Bell journeyed to Iraq on an archaeological dig yet during World War I she began to work for Military Intelligence. It was the notoriety associated with this work that landed her the job with Cox.

difficulty women faced working in the empire. Bell was the only women officially employed in the colonial establishment in Iraq and indeed, one of only a handful of women who actually held jobs within the official colonial apparatus (Birkett, 1989). This is not to say that there were no European women in the colonies at all, far from it as most men in the colonial apparatus brought their wives and families along, but the gender boundaries that existed in the 'Mother country' did not somehow radically change in the colonial nation. Thus, her appointment as Political Secretary was undoubtedly controversial.

After she had spent some weeks at her task, the military authorities decided that the particular service for which she had been deputed to Basrah had been completed as far as it could be for the time being, and finding a member of her sex a little difficult to place as a permanency in a military G.H.Q. in the field, they offered her services to me....the G.O.C.-in-Chief expressed considerable misgiving at the news, as he feared her arrival might form an inconvenient precedent for appeals from other ladies, but I reminded him that her services had been specifically offered to me by his predecessor as an ordinary member of my Secretariat; that I regarded and treated her no differently from any male officer of my Staff (Letter from Sir Percy Cox in Bell, 1927: 506, 514).

Cox alludes to the controversial nature of Bell's appointment to his staff. As a member of the colonial government, Bell enjoyed the privileges associated with the ruling elite. But as a women, however, she enjoyed less privilege compared to her male counterparts. "To maintain the distance from surrounding societies upon which their authority rested, colonial communities had to fortify their own sense of

Victorian middle-class identity” and notions of gender (Birkett, 1989: 75). Women were involved in colonial communities but their contributions were generally restricted to the ‘feminine’ world -- holding parties and picnics, organising women’s clubs, maintaining the household. The threat came, as expressed in the G.O.C.’s misgivings, when European women sought to become part of the colonial ruling machine. Women like Bell, who were a part of the colonial project, could neither conform to the Victorian conception of woman nor could be accepted as a full member of the colonial institution which was overwhelmingly male. Because of this, she frequently refers to her intermediary gender status within the colonial project in Iraq.

I must tell you a curious problem that arose - I hope you’ll think I decided rightly. To-morrow Sir Henry gives an official dinner to the King, Cabinet and Advisors, a male dinner. He told me about it before I went to Babylon and I made no comment except approval. When I came back I found an invitation to myself and I went to him and asked him, as man to man, whether he wanted me to come. He said “yes of course if you won’t feel smothered.” I said I thought, as a high official in his office, I was sexless and that I ought to come and would (Bell, 1927: 678).

Bell’s “sexless” nature allowed her access to male circles that had been previously limited to men yet she was still seen as a exception, an oddity. As a women, she would have been excluded from such events, but as a member of the of political office in Iraq, she was allowed entry. Yet this entry was not a given. Bell

expresses her surprise upon receiving an invitation to this all-male dinner. When first hearing of this dinner, she expected *not* to be invited because she was a woman. Her comment as to her “sexless” nature demonstrates that she neither saw herself as a woman, for she was invited to the masculine dinner, nor did she see herself as a man, for the invitation was not expected. Her “sexless,” interloper nature often created conflict for Bell, as a woman and as a colonial civil servant.⁸

She was frequently accused of being a supporter of the Arab cause. As an interloper, she felt an identification with the Arab cause. She was frequently invited to meetings with King Faisal and other officials of the Arab government.

Throughout her text, she details the friendships she forms with the Arab (male) members of government and other officials. Through these friendships, she begins to identify with the Arab cause, to understand the motivations behind it and to give it her qualified support. Her sympathetic view of the Arab nationalist movement however also conflicts with her role in the British government, one that was fundamentally at odds with the Arab cause.

I have realised how prominent a place I have occupied in the public mind here as the pro-Arab member of the administration. Over and over again lately I have heard from the frequenter of the coffee shops, my own servants and casual people up and down the bazaars, that I am always

⁸ This conflict recurs frequently as Bell tries to justify the aims and operations of the British protectorate in Iraq while at the same time she was also fully in favour of Arab independence.

quoted in the coffee shop talk as the upholder of the rights of the Arabs (Bell, 1927: 499).

Oh, darling, isn't the human equation immensely interesting. I feel as if I and all of us were playing the most magical tunes on their heart strings, drawn taut by the desperate case in which they find themselves. Can they succeed in setting up a reasonable government? Can they save themselves from chaos? Their one cry is 'Help us.' And one sits there, in their eyes an epitome of human knowledge, and feeling oneself so very far from filling the bill! Poor children of Adam, they and we! I'm not sure (but perhaps that's because of my sex) that the emotional link between us isn't the better part of wisdom (Bell, 1927: 640-641).

Bell's "emotional link" with the Arabs leads her to support, or seen to support, the Arab cause which contradicts with her role as Political Secretary for the British government. Others such as T.E. Lawrence, who will be discussed shortly, were 'victims' of this conflict between supporting the Arab cause *and* British interests in the region. The British mandate in the region was to establish an Arab government yet while at the same time maintaining its political and economic influence over Iraq, thus the mandate was to set up an Arab government that was open to the British while maintaining an Arab facade.

Bell's lack of mobility in the colonial government and the lack of progress in the creation of an Arab state frustrated her and she eventually decided to take up a post as head of antiquities for the Arab government. Her letters outline her frustration with the colonial establishment yet say little of Bell's affair with the married Major Dick Doughty-Wylie (Birkett, 1989). Bell's stepmother's (who

edited Bell's letters) exclusion of certain unmentionables from Bell's past (her affair, her suicide) illustrates the restrictions placed on Bell and how her deviation from gender-defined rules were erased, had to be erased.

Bell was politically conservative when it came to female rights in England. She was a founding member of the Anti-Suffrage League in England which sought to deny women the right to vote (Birkett, 1989: 276). However, her views on female emancipation in Iraq point to a less conservative approach.

Meantime I'm hard at work at the log book of Iraq Personalities, a gigantic task. I think I shall get it into shape by the end of this month. Further I'm seeing a great many people and incidentally a good many of the women. We have got a lady doctor. I'm taking her to see some of my friends and arranged a series of lectures for her in the home of a Pasha's wife. The ladies seem to be very keen about the classes (Bell, 1927: 465).

It is very interesting, the little group of Syrians here. They are almost all in Govt. employment, like Hussam Afnan - a good many of them are teachers in the schools. They are making a little social revolution of their own, for the women, even if they are Moslems, are educated and behave as far as they can like European women. It is the thin edge of the wedge and I need not say that I am all in its favour (Bell, 1927: 719).

The education of the 'gentler sex' in Iraq seemed to be quite an interest of Bell's. While nowhere does she discuss issues of giving Iraqi women the vote, she was keen on arranging educational classes, setting up a hospital for Iraqi women, and holding women-only parties, which by the way, the Arab women found most unusual. "Not even in a Mohammedan house would so much care have been taken

to exclude all males" (Bell, 1927: 457). Bell also supported the "little social revolution" regarding women in Iraq.

Her comment on the education and employment of a group of Syrian women contrasts with Wharton's portrayal of the passive, ignorant upper-class women of the Moroccan harem. Bell and Wharton, two women writing at the same time about the Orient produced radically different versions of Oriental women. Of course, national difference (of the country travelled in and of the writer) no doubt played a part in these different constructions, yet Said would have us believe that neither the nation travelled in, nor the nationality of the writer, had any sort of impact on work produced on the Orient. Orientalism, for Said, is essentially a relationship between the powerful West and the powerless East -- gender and nationality have relatively no impact on this relationship. Lowe's reconception of Orientalism, however, does take gender and nationality (as well as other factors) into account.

It is also interesting to note the differences in reception between Bell's travel text and that of Lawrence's. They both wrote on the same topic, the British mandate in Iraq, yet Lawrence eventually became a folk-hero, touted as the English supporter of the Arab cause, of Arab independence. Numerous biographies and treatises have been written on Lawrence in Arabia; his text was even made into the

now-famous film *Lawrence of Arabia*. Little, however, was made of Bell's text, of her experience in Arabia, of her life-history -- no movies made of her life, no biographical industry disputing the minute details of her life (unlike Lawrence). I would argue, as Mills (1991) does, that Bell's text on the Orient was not given the same authority, nor permanence in Western imagination, as Lawrence's for it was a text written by a woman, confined to the general triviality of the feminine world and thus delegitimised.

'Two Customs, Two Educations, Two Environments'

T.E. Lawrence's *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* has been touted as the greatest of all imperial/Oriental texts. It is an account of Lawrence's involvement in the Arab nationalist revolt against the Ottoman Empire, and has been criticised as the myth of the white, male, Westerner leading the poor Arabs to victory. Lawrence was born in 1888, the second son of the unmarried couple Thomas Chapman and Sarah Maden. Upon their migration to England from Ireland, Chapman and Maden changed their last names to Lawrence in an attempt to erect a facade of married respectability. Like Bell, he was involved in archaeological excavations in Iraq but was eventually drawn into World War I and the conflict with the Turks. Lawrence was commissioned as a liaison officer to Arabia and he had been trained as an Arabist

at Oxford. Informed by the Orientalist tradition, Lawrence comments on the 'Semitic consciousness' of the Arabians: "Semites had no half-tones in their register of vision. They were a people of primary colours, or rather of black and white, who saw the world always in contour. They were a dogmatic people, despising doubt, our model crown of thorns....They were a limited, narrow-minded people, whose inert intellects lay fallow in incurious resignation" (Lawrence, 1962: 36). Under the auspices of Said's *Orientalism*, Lawrence has been labelled a staunch Orientalist, a perfect example how the West saw the Orient as its morally, genetically, socially, and racially Other. Of course, there are sections of the Lawrence's text that admirably demonstrate this thesis; yet a close reading of this text reveals that, far from illustrating the monolithic nature of Orientalist discourse, it is riddled with internal *in*consistencies. As Porter argues, Lawrence's text can be "shown to be fissured with doubt and contradiction, it will confirm how under certain conditions Orientalist discourse, far from being monolithic, allows counter-hegemonic voices to be heard within it" (Porter, 1994: 155). The excavation of counter-hegemonic voices further complicates the study of Orientalism and demonstrates the disunified and fractured natures of Orientalism.

Porter highlights how a re-reading of *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* demonstrates the contradictions within Lawrence and his text. While Lawrence was a representative of the British government and military in Arabia, he makes it very clear in his text the extent to which support of the Arab revolt was part of a plan of the Western Allies to crush the Ottoman Empire and maintain control over the area. While his official role consisted in furthering British imperialist interests, he believed himself morally committed to the Arab Nationalist cause. He dressed in Arab garb in an attempt at integration, but he realised that, while such dress signalled his desire to free himself from his status as a British interloper, such strategies could never 'make' him an Arab.

In my case, the efforts of these years to live in the dress of Arabs, and to imitate their mental foundations, quitted me of my English self, and let me look at the West and its conventions with new eyes; they destroyed it all for me. At the same time I could not sincerely take on the Arab skin: it was an affectation only....I had dropped one form and not taken on the other, and was become like Mohammed's coffin in our legend, with a resultant feeling of great loneliness in life, and a contempt, not for other men, but for all they do. Such detachment came at times to a man exhausted by prolonged physical effort and isolation. his body plodded on mechanically, while his reasonable mind left him, and from without looked down critically on him, wondering what that futile lumber did and why. Sometimes these selves would converse in the void: and then madness was very near, as I believe it would be near the man who could see things through the veils at once of two customs, two educations, two environments (Lawrence, 1962: 30).

Lawrence concluded he was not 'British' because not only was he a bastard (illegitimate), but he was a 'poofster' (homosexual), and thus a 'deviant' in

mainstream Christian bourgeois society. But although this made him an 'Other' in a sense, it did not follow that this status enabled him to become an Oriental Other.

He was a man who could see the world through "two customs, two educations, two environments" yet could not belong to either of these two worlds. Robertson, et al (1994) argue that "The travel narrative is always a narrative of space and difference. It may not always broaden the mind but it prods at it. It provokes new concepts, new ways of seeing and being, or at the very least, when the old ways of seeing and being have been stubbornly imported into foreign territory, subjects them to strain and fatigue."

Lawrence's portrayals of homosexual sex in the Orient follow two very different narratives -- sexual threat and sexual purity. Theorists such as Kabbani and Said have argued that Lawrence's sexual assault at the hands of the Turkish Bey at Der'aa was simply a creation of his imagination, a demonisation of his (and Britain's) Turkish opponents (Lawrence meticulously describes his sexual assault in Chapter LXXX). For me, the crucial debate lies not in whether the assault really happened or not, but how Lawrence used it to describe and portray one aspect of male-male sexual relations.

He began to fawn on me, saying how white and fresh I was, how fine my hands and feet, and how he would let me off drills and duties, make me his orderly, even pay me wage if I would love him.

I was obdurate, so he changed his tone, and sharply ordered me to take off my drawers. When I hesitated, he snatched at me; and I pushed him back. He clapped his hands for the sentry, who hurried in and pinioned me. The Bey cursed me with horrible threats; and made the man holding me tear my clothes away, bit by bit. His eyes rounded at the half-healed places where the bullets had flicked through my skin a little while ago. Finally he lumbered to his feet, with a glitter in his look, and began to paw me over. I bore it for a little, till he got too beastly; and then jerked my knee into him....He took off his slipper, and hit me repeatedly with it in the face, while the corporal braced my head back by the hair to receive the blows. He leaned forward, fixed his teeth in my neck and bit till the blood came. Then he kissed me....He saw me shivering, partly I think, with cold and made it whistle over my ear, taunting me that before his tenth cut I would howl for mercy, and at the twentieth beg for the caresses of the Bey; and then he began to lash me madly across and across with all his might, while I locked my teeth to endure this thing which lapped itself like flaming wire about my body....I remember the corporal kicking with his nailed boot to get me up; and this was true, for the next day my right side was dark and lacerated, and a damaged rib made each breath stab me sharply. I remembered smiling idly at him, for a delicious warmth, probably sexual, was swelling through me: and then that he flung up his arm and hacked with the fell length of his whip into my groin (Lawrence, 1926: 452-454).

If Lawrence's discussion of his sexual assault at the hands of the Turks at Der'aa is the only evidence theorists use to brand Lawrence Orientalist, then the deliberate exclusion of Lawrence's discussion of sexual relations among male Bedouin Arabs is suspect. He portrays the Turks as sexually violent, cruel and animalistic (all common attributes of the Oriental male within Orientalist discourse), yet his description of sex between Bedouin Arab soldiers is radically in contrast. Lawrence describes an occasion where he and the Arab troops encountered a group of female prostitutes, whose quality and quantity were not sufficient to fulfil the

troop's desires. The second quote describes Daud and Farraj, Lawrence's two boy companions.

In horror of such sordid commerce our youths began indifferently to slake one another's few needs in their own clean bodies - a cold convenience that, by comparison, seemed sexless and even pure. Later, some began to justify this sterile process, and swore that friends quivering together in the yielding sand with intimate hot limbs in supreme embrace, found there hidden in the darkness a sensual coefficient of the mental passion which was welding our souls and spirits in one flaming effort (Lawrence, 1962: 28).

Daud leaped at the chance, kissed my hand and Saad's, and ran off up the valley; while Saad, laughing told me stories of the famous pair [Daud and Farraj]. They were an instance of the eastern boy and boy affection which the segregation of women made inevitable. Such friendships often led to manly love of a depth and force beyond our flesh-steeped conceit. When innocent they were hot and unashamed. If sexuality entered, they passed into a give and take, unspiritual relation, like marriage (Lawrence, 1926: 244).

In comparison to the offensive nature of his sexual encounter with the Turks, he portrays sexual relations among Arab men to be pure, clean, sterile, unspiritual and sexless. This shows how different situations derived different (Orientalist) conclusions. The Turkish homosexual encounter was portrayed differently than the Arab homosexual encounter, yet both instances involved Oriental men. The contradictions evident in Lawrence's text highlight his contradictory and conflictual relations to the Orient and Oriental men; Said would argue that both depictions would be Orientalist, and I would agree, yet I would argue that the two constructions of Oriental male homosexuality are essentially different, thus positing

two very different Orientalisms within in a single text, something for which Said does not allow as Orientalism, for him, is solely about the power of West over the East. Lawrence's portrayal of homosexual encounters is Orientalist in that it posits these types of sexuality (violent and pure) as Oriental, yet these are two very different types, thus pointing to the conflictual nature of his text and to the instability and inconsistencies of his construction of Oriental male sexualities.

Travelling in the Empty Quarter (Of the Soul)

Wilfred Thesiger's *Arabian Sands* is an account of his journey to the Empty Quarter, that part of Saudi Arabia devoid of settlement but inhabited by a nomadic people, the Bedu. While *Arabian Sands* was first published in 1959, the actual travel took place in the late 1940s. Thesiger was born in Addis Ababa in 1910 -- his father was the British Minister. Thesiger only lived in England for the duration of his education at Eton and Oxford, spending most of his life travelling or working in colonial posts in Sudan, Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia.

Under the auspices of the Anti-Loeust Research Centre in London, Thesiger's official mission was to locate areas in the Empty Quarter that might be substantial breeding grounds for locusts which threatened agricultural production in

the region.⁹ His unofficial reasons, however, for travelling throughout this uninhabited region was to record the last glimpses of a way of life, a society, that was being threatened by the encroachment of the oil companies and the Western ways of life associated with this development. Thesiger's mission is remarkably similar to Wharton's, the impetus to catalogue a culture before it evaporates under the pressure of Western development. Yet his desires in this regard are radically different from Wharton's: "They were not ignorant savages; on the contrary, they were the lineal heirs of a very ancient civilisation" (Thesiger, 1959: ix). Wharton and Thesiger both postulate an ahistorical view of Oriental society. The vestiges of this "ancient civilisation" are threatened suddenly by the ravages of modernity. However, the 'primitiveness' each associates with the culture they seek to transcribe is considerably different. Wharton sees the harem, an artefact of the disappearing Morocco, as part of the barbaric savageness of the past. Thesiger, however, sees the Bedu as the last remaining survivors of the noble savages.

I realised that the Bedu with whom I had lived and travelled, and in whose company I had found contentment, were doomed. Some people maintain

⁹ Britain held considerable control in the Persian Gulf states of Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait and the Trucial States (Arab Emirates). The danger posed by locusts -- the total destruction of a year's crops -- was very important to the British colonial project which sought to avoid any food shortages and the resulting riots associated with such shortages. It was also crucial to the 'civilising' mission of the colonial project which sought to wipe out famine, or at least appear to wipe out, with Western technology and research. Thesiger's locating of such breeding grounds helped to control future infestations.

that they will be better off when they have exchanged the hardship and poverty of the desert for the security of a materialistic world. This I do not believe. I shall always remember how often was humbled by those illiterate herdsmen who possessed, in so much greater measure than I, generosity and courage, endurance, patience and light-hearted gallantry. Among no other people have I ever felt the same sense of personal inferiority (Thesiger, 1959: 265-266).

Thesiger finds among the Bedu the "generosity, and courage, endurance, patience and light-hearted gallantry" that cannot be found, according to him, in the West. Whereas Wharton's pessimistic version of the archaic, uncivilised Morocco had its counterpart in the civilised, freedom of the West, Thesiger's desire is to move away from the West. His identification with Bedouin society signifies his dissatisfaction with the effects of capitalism and development in Western culture. "Today the desert where I travelled is scarred with the tracks of lorries and littered with discarded junk imported from Europe and America" (Thesiger, 1959: ix).¹⁰

There are two implications of Thesiger's text; that Bedouin society has not changed for millennia and that Western-style development will erode this culture and that Western development is not necessarily the path to freedom. His perception of the unchanging nature of Bedouin society locates his discussion within

¹⁰ Part of Thesiger's mission was to draw up maps of the Empty Quarter, a section of land that had not been adequately mapped out. In the final pages of his text, he is conscious and remorseful about the role his maps played in the development and encroachment associated with oil exploration -- development he saw as disastrous to Bedu culture and civilisation.

an Orientalist framework: the unchanging, static nature of Oriental society. Yet he is also saying that Bedouin society is changing, or has changed, thereby applying both a static and a transitional nature to Bedouin culture, just as Wharton does.

One interesting aspect, and the reason for this thesis, is his discussion of gender and sexuality among the Bedu. Perhaps symptomatic of travel writers in general, Thesiger seeks to rectify European conceptions of gender and sexuality. However, his rectification does not fall into the trap of binarisms. By this, I mean that he does not offer the positive version of Oriental culture in comparison to the previous negative version or vice-versa. His reconceptualisation involves more of a qualification rather than truth-telling. He, at one point, confirms European conceptions but he also seeks to qualify these conceptions in relation to Bedu society.

The general belief among English people that Arab women are kept shut up is true of many of the women in the towns, but not among the tribes. Not only is it impossible for a man to shut up his wife when he is living under a tree, or in a tent which is always open on one side, but he requires her to work, to fetch water and firewood, and tend to their goats. If a woman thinks she is being neglected or ill-treated by her husband she can easily run away to her father or brother. Her husband has then to follow her and try to persuade her to come back. Her family will certainly take her part, insisting that she has been monstrously ill-treated. In the end the husband will probably have to give her a present before he can seduce her to return. Wives cannot divorce their husbands, but the husband may agree to divorce his wife if she has refused to live with him, on condition that he recover the two or three camels which he gave as the bride-price. If, however, he divorces her of his own accord he does not get back these camels (Thesiger, 1959: 150).

Thesiger makes a distinction between the Arab women of the towns and those of the Bedu. At one point, he confirms Europeans beliefs that women are kept shut up, as in a harem, yet he qualifies this by stating this is only true of the townswomen, thereby excluding the Bedu, and other tribes, from this practice. He details the relative freedom that Bedu women enjoy. Not only is it nearly impossible to imprison someone within the confines of a tent, but in order to ensure the survival of the family and the tribe, the women have to contribute to the labour associated with nomadic life; the men simply cannot afford to lock up their wives. To fall into the trap of binarism, Thesiger would have to argue against the previous conception of women in the Orient while simultaneously constructing another conception that was oppositional to the previous one. Yet this is not what he is doing. His rectification of European beliefs of Oriental society always takes on a decidedly qualified character.

This is also evident in his discussion of homosexuality which also seeks to both confirm *and* revise past (Western) conceptions.

Homosexuality is common among most Arabs, especially in the towns, but it is very rare among the Bedu, who of all Arabs have the most excuse for indulging in this practice, since they spend long months away from their women. Lawrence described in *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* how his escort made use of each other to slake their needs, but those men were villagers from the oasis, not Bedu. Glubb, who knows more about the Bedu than any other European has ever known, once told me that active

homosexuality among them was almost unknown. I myself could not have lived as I did with my companions and been unaware of it had it existed among them; we lived too close together. Yet during all the time I was with them I saw no sign of it. Nor did they talk about it. They sometimes joked about goats but never about boys. Only twice in five years did I ever hear them mention the subject. Once when we were staying in a town on the Trucial Coast, bin Kabina pointed out two youths, one of whom was a slave, and said that they were used each night by the Sheikh's retainers. He evidently thought the practice both ridiculous and obscene (Thesiger, 1959: 93).

Thesiger corroborates Lawrence's, and other's, notation as to the prevalence of homosexuality amongst the Arabs. Yet this stated prevalence is not applicable to the Bedu, even though it apparently makes the most sense to find homosexuality among them for they spend long periods without women. The Bedu men, according to Thesiger, did not engage in homosexual behaviour, and he would undoubtedly know about it for he lived with them. His summarising of bin Kabina's account of the two boys and the sheikh's retainer, and bin Kabina's ridiculing of the practice demonstrates, for Thesiger at least, that homosexuality was not only uncommon among the Bedu but that it was also frowned upon.

Thesiger's desire to accurately portray Bedu culture, with all its noble qualities, before its destruction is what drives him to constantly qualify and contextualise Bedu culture in differentiation to Arab culture, particularly urban culture. By quoting other sources and concurring with their conclusions, Thesiger is effectively saying "This is Arab society" but by doing so, he is also saying, "This is

not Arab society, this is Bedu society.” Thesiger’s desire to accurately portray Bedouin society as different from Arab society in its treatment of women is again reflected in the next quotation.

I knew that elsewhere in the Arab world a girl who is immoral, or indeed in many places even if she is only suspected of immorality, will be killed by her relatives in order to protect the family honour. An Englishman told me of a tragic case that occurred on the Lower Euphrates while he was serving there as a Political Officer after the First World War. An Arab boy and his sister, who were orphans, lived in a tent outside his house and were close friends of his. One day his servants rushed into his house and told him that boy had stabbed his sister and that she was calling for the Englishman. He went to their tent where the girl was lying fatally wounded. She said, “I am dying and I have a last request to make of you.” He asked her what it was, and she said, “Grant it before I ask you.” The Englishman hesitated, and the girl became so upset that he granted her request. She said, “Tell my brother that I was innocent and that I never did anything to shame him. I swear this as I die. But you have promised me my request and you are not to punish him, for I know that I was talked about and by our custom he did right to kill me.” Later, when the Englishman told the tribal sheikhs what had happened, they all said, “But of course the boy was right to kill her. She brought shame upon her family because she was talked about.” I told my companions this story, and they shook their heads, and old bin Kalut said it was barbarous to kill a girl even if she had been immoral, and that among them such things would never happen (Thesiger, 1959: 151).

Thesiger posits difference within Arabia; the Arabs of the towns were cruel,

barbaric; they legitimised the slaying of the suspect girl. By reciting the

Englishman’s story and his citing of the tribal sheikhs approval of the killing,

Thesiger maintains that this was a socially accepted practice in the “Arab world.”

Yet this practice was limited to a specific region and culture, i.e., Arab culture. But

the Bedu found this (Arab) practice “barbarous” and would not kill women

suspected of being, or found to be, immoral. Again there is the combined effect of both confirming Western beliefs of Arab culture, especially in regards to its treatment of women, and qualifying these beliefs to exclude Bedu cultural practices. This difference, however, is not between a barbaric Orient versus a civilised Occident, but is located within one nation, what is now known as Saudi Arabia, between what Thesiger sees as two very distinct cultures. Thesiger's insistence on cultural difference between the Bedu and Arab cultures, as it relates to sexuality and gender, illustrates the complexity within travel writing on the Orient. A complexity that is forever lost in the pages of *Orientalism*.

The colonial travel narratives examined here illustrate the complex positions the Orient held within Western imaginings and experiences. The selected sexual and gender representations establish the diversity of images within individual travel texts and this diversity points to a variance within the larger field of travel writing on the Orient. These narratives do have a relation to Orientalism as each writer/traveller had to negotiate his/her text within Orientalism as an institution. Traveller's conceptions of Oriental gender roles and sexualities were assuredly informed by the traditions of Orientalism. When these preconceptions of the Orient (the 'Mythic Orient') did not, and could not, adequately describe or explain

what is experienced (the 'Experience Orient') by the traveller, he/she is forced to negotiate this conflict between what was expected and what was experienced. This negotiation is also influenced by certain factors: the gender, sexuality and nationality of the author and the culture he/she travelled in. These factors have the effect of producing internally *in*consistent examples of Oriental sexualities and gender roles.

The next chapter will reveal how postcolonial travel narratives differ from the colonial travel narratives discussed here; while again there is a multiplicity of gendered and sexualised depictions, there is also a dialogue between Orient and Occident, a dialogue only made possible, I will argue, by the dissolution of empire and the emergence of the Western 'sexual revolution.'

Chapter Five

OCCIDENTALISM, ORIENTALISM AND THE POSTCOLONIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Despite Evelyn Waugh's prediction in 1946, "I do not expect to see many travel books in the near future," travel writing as a genre has yet to cease (quoted in Fussell, 1980: 215). Travel books continue to be published on virtually every nation in the world. Bookstores have entire sections of their stores devoted to travel literature and in Montreal there is even a travel book store -- Ulyssees. The end of colonialism did not immediately result in an equality between the Orient and Occident, yet there was a change in the balance of power as is demonstrated by the various nationalist movements that arose and succeeded. Said claims that the dissolution of the French and British empires shifted Orientalism from a dominantly European landscape towards the United States, which was assembling a more dominant role in the Orient. Did the French and British Orientalist institutions suddenly dissolve? Or suddenly become non-Orientalist? Do French and British travellers enjoy the same freedoms in their former colony as previous travellers? More importantly, do they portray the Orient in the same manner? Little work has been done on travel writing since the dissolution of colonialism, with the exception of the research surrounding the travel writing of V.S. Naipaul.

In an attempt to “remedy this deficiency” (à la Wharton), I will attempt to shed some light on situation of postcolonial travel writing. I do not, however, want to make grandiose claims as to the nature of all travel writing in this postcolonial age. My limited survey of texts does not permit such statements and claims. Nonetheless, I do think I can draw some commonalities between postcolonial travel texts on the Orient. I would argue that the author’s discussed below, not only question the West’s general perceptions of the Orient but more specifically, they interrogate Western conceptions of Oriental sexuality and gender roles. Contrary to what I had theorised in my methodology chapter, the Orient still persists as an object of sexual exploration and freedom for many people. For Orton and Busi the Orient represents a site where sexual relations with boys and young men are available, unlike the prudish West with its severe taboos against intergenerational sexual activity. Theroux and Walker also travel to the Orient for they find it sexy or are seeking the sexually-liberated woman. Kennedy is the only author discussed here, and the only female in this postcolonial group, who does not travel the Orient in search of sexual relations. So while there is this commonality between the colonial and postcolonial travel texts (Orient as a site of sexual exploration), there is also a difference between these two groups.

This difference is based on, what I term, a postcolonial consciousness. This consciousness is a critical interrogation and dialogue with the effects of Western culture on the Orient. The liberalisation of sexuality and gender equality in the West has affected relations with, and in, the Orient. Not only do these postcolonial travellers realise their monetary power in the Orient and how this affects sexual and gender relations while travelling, there is also a sense of how the Orient looks back at the West. Changes in the West, partly brought on by the women's and gay rights movement, have altered how the East looks at the West (Nader, 1989). The West, as some of the authors discuss below, has also become a site of sexual exploration and freedom for the East. The watched are now watching the watchers. This effect, of the East looking back at the West, has been termed Occidentalism and the postcolonial travellers are keenly aware of its existence and its relation to gendered and sexual practices both in the Orient and Occident.¹ This theme which runs throughout the texts will be discussed and elaborated on.

¹ See Chapter 3 for a discussion of how the end of colonialism and the emergence of the Western 'sexual revolution' significantly altered the ways Western travellers could speak of gender and sexuality -- the implications of relations between Orientals and Occidentals, as enacted through sexual activity, now took on new and different connotations and ramifications.

'The Spirit of Fucking British Civilisation'

Joe Orton, the bad-boy of the English literary scene, renowned for his frank, sexual and farcical plays of the 1960s, travelled to Tangiers, Morocco, only twice.² He travelled to what had become a gay paradise for Western men where writers such as William S. Burroughs, Tennessee Williams and Paul Bowles came to Tangiers to escape Western sexual repression. Not yet fully developed by the tourist industry, Tangiers was an affordable city, in its housing, food and young men. Orton and his partner of sixteen years, Kenneth Halliwell, stayed in Morocco for two months. *The Orton Diaries*, edited by John Lahr, detail Orton's last eight months alive including their trip to Morocco.³

Orton's diaries detail his sexual exploits, with Halliwell, with men in parks and lavatories in England, and with boys and young men in Morocco. Orton has been taken to task by Boone (1995) for this engagement in sexual activity with young boys (read sexploitation). "He depends on the dynamic of (moneyed) white

² Tangiers occupied an unique role in Morocco. From 1925 to 1961, Tangiers was an international zone -- the Statute of Tangiers gave Britain, France and Spain equal say in the running of the city. It had its own government, tax rules, and laws independent of the French protectorate in the rest of Morocco (Finlayson, 1993: 23-84).

³ According to Lahr, Orton never intended his diaries to be published until "long after my death" (Lahr, 1986: 13).

man/(purchased) brown boy to make his own vacation a success" (Boone, 1995: 102).⁴ Orton's motivation for travelling to Morocco was not to immerse himself in the local culture but to find boys/young men that were sexually available for a fee. Indeed, Orton saw Tangiers as a sexual site where activities with boys/young men, criminalised and severely tabooed in England, could be practised. Upon their return to England, Orton and Halliwell travelled to Brighton and walked along the beach:

Here and there were numbers of nearly-naked young boys. This made me unhappy. After passing a fifteen-year-old youth lying face-downward, wearing red bathing-drawers, I said, in a rage, "England is intolerable. I'd be able to fuck that in an Arab country. I could take him home and stick my cock up him!" "This is verbal exhibitionism!" Kenneth said, glancing at a number of evil-faced old women in a shelter. "Look at them - crouching like Norns or the spirit of fucking British civilisation," I said. "I hate this tight-arsed civilisation" (Orton, 1986: 259).

One gets a sense of how Orton saw Morocco -- a site of sexual exploration and perhaps, sexploitation. He would "be able to fuck that in an Arab country" which implicitly assumes that all the boys and young men were available in Morocco for a certain price. But his travels in Morocco were also an escape from, what Orton saw, as a "tight-arsed civilisation;" one that tabooed and criminalised both homosexual

⁴ Boone's dynamic is informed by a Western conception of childhood and by the desexualisation of childhood and adolescence. By using such Western concepts to explain sexual behaviours in another culture, Boone himself falls into the trap of "Orientalism" he seeks to criticise.

and intergenerational sexual activity.⁵ Young men were available for their sexual services in Morocco for a fee -- money, clothing. As a Westerner, Orton could afford to buy these sexual services. He does see Moroccan boys in terms of commodities, that he could rent anything he wanted.

Orton's text provides an example, that I think is symptomatic of travel writing on the Orient, of the clashes between 'Mythic' and 'Experienced' Orient. Orton travelled to Morocco for the purposes of having lots of casual sex with boys/young men -- no strings attached. However, when what Orton expects does not conform to what he experiences, his views on Moroccan sexualities are considerably revised. This was also the case for Flaubert. His original sexual encounter with Hanem produced, for him, a model of the Oriental woman. Yet his second meeting with her radically contrasts his first meeting, forcing him to reconsider and revise his initial observations and feelings. This collision between expectation and experience also affects Orton.

I went to bed with Mohammed Khomsi. We had a long love session. "Please, I must fuck you," he said, "I've had no *l'amour* for many weeks." I let him. He didn't get right in though. He came. We went on with the session. Stroking each others bodies. Kissing necks, tits, running the finger over every part. I found something wrong, I've always been unexcited by

⁵ Homosexual activity, buggery, between two consenting adults (over 21) in private was only decriminalised in England in July 1967 while Orton was still in Morocco. There was, however, a public identity associated with a homosexual/gay lifestyle that began in the late 1950s. (Jeffery-Poulter, 1991).

Mohammed Khomsi. After a long while he fucked me again...Why can't I fuck him though? He's quite young and pretty. What chemical is missing that makes him, for me, totally unexciting?...I said to Mohammed, "I shall give you a *petit cadeau*." He immediately looked interested. "These," I said, indicating the trousers I was wearing. He looked put out because, as it turned out, he wanted the other, more expensive pair which I'd no intention of giving him. "No *l'amour* today," I said. "Pourquoi?" I suddenly remembered it's always "Why? Why?" with Mohammed....I gave him the trousers, refused to give him the belt. He went and knocked on the door of Kenneth's' room, had a long emotional scene in which he said I was behaving badly and didn't like him....So I took Mohammed back into the bedroom, explained, that though I didn't want *l'amour* I would still give him the money. "I know that," he said, indignant. "You give me money, yes - but me want *l'amour*. Me like you. Me want *l'amour*....We had a long sex session. Finally, wringing with sweat, he rolled off me having not come. "I love you too much," he said, by way of explanation. I thought this a piece of real sexual devotion. I have frequently given my best sexual performance with people I didn't love, in fact rather despised. I have fucked the arses off ageing queens quite easily, but found a beautiful young boy often to difficult to come, because I loved him too much (Orton, 1986: 163, 173-174, 188).

Orton confronted by Mohammed's love for him recognises why he cannot fuck Mohammed, for he loves him as well. Orton eventually pushes Mohammed away for this "piece of real sexual devotion" was not what Orton had expected, nor wanted, from his travels in Morocco. Orton had expected to 'rent' a number of boys in Morocco for sex, but he did not, and could not, conceive that a Moroccan boy would fall in love with him and vice-versa.

Orton mocked love in his plays and in his life (Shepherd, 1989: 44). His sexual encounters in England had been in parks and lavatories; Orton liked the danger, the furtiveness associated with type of sexual activity, he did not believe in

the coupling between romance and sexual activity. The fear of "getting caught" excited him and was one of his many literary muses (Shepherd, 1989). Orton saw sex with boys as a continuation of his furtive, sexual lifestyle. He meticulously plans out his sexual escapades; he cannot take them back to his flat at certain times for their maid was there and he could not be seen taking boys in. For those boys who were far too young to be seen with anywhere near his flat, Orton arranged to have sex on the beach with them. While homosexual activity was generally tolerated in Tangiers, the recent appointment of a non-Tanjawi police chief resulted in a number of arrests of English and Moroccan homosexuals (Finlayson, 1993: 307-310).⁶ Rather than scare off Orton, it further excited and intrigued him.

While Orton felt that he could buy the sexual services of any Moroccan boy, he did realise that homosexual relations in Morocco were constructed in different terms than in the West.

As I was talking to small Absolem and Mustapha on the boulevard, a Moroccan man passed and said to them, "*Hasstsi* [one who gets fucked]," at which they looked sheepish. I suppose it's the equivalent of bum-boy. In a civilisation where homosexuality is frowned upon, whether active or passive, I can't think of an English equivalent of *luart* [fucking something]. Larbi frequently admits to *luart* but not *has-hass*, though, in fact, I have been up him as he must very well know (Orton, 1986: 189).

⁶ Dollimore (1991) points out that several colonialised writers, most notably Franz Fanon, argued that homosexuality and homosexual relations were imported, foreign, Western habits and behaviours -- symptoms of the perverse effects of colonial influence and power.

Here, Orton perceptively describes what he sees as the differences between English and Moroccan homosexuality. In Morocco, as in other Arab societies, homosexuality itself is not frowned upon, but the sexual position one engages in is.⁷ The passive position, where one gets fucked, or *hassiss*, is frowned upon and ridiculed. It is frequently used as an insult as the above case demonstrates. Absolém and Mustapha, because they were talking to a European male, were assumed to be negotiating sexual services. And, of course, it was assumed that the Moroccan boys would take the passive position. The active position, *luart*, is not frowned upon to the same extent as the passive position. Orton points out that this is unlike England, where homosexuality is frowned upon not on the basis of sexual positioning but because it is men having sex with other men. As Orton states, Larbi (one of the boys both Halliwell and Orton had sex with) does admit to *luart* but not to *hass-hass*. Orton's statement is very interesting in that it proscribes difference in acceptance of homosexual relations based on one's sexual position. Yet, Orton aptly points out that what one admits to is not necessarily translated into what one does. He posits a cultural construction of homosexual relations in Morocco, one based on

⁷ For an enlightening discussion of sexual activity between men in Moslem societies, see Schmitt and Sofer, 1992.

active/passive sexual positioning, but he also warns that such a construction does not necessarily inform sexual practice thereby placing difference between the Moroccan cultural construction of homosexuality and the Moroccan cultural practice of homosexuality.

Orton also realises, and I would argue that this is symptomatic of most postcolonial travel writers in the Orient, the effects of Western culture on sexual and gender relations in the Orient.

A terrible Moroccan queen sat at the bar. Someone called her a queen. "I'm not a queen," she said. "I'm too young to be a queen." And then later, contradicting herself, she said, "I'm old enough to be a queen's mother." "I find Arab queers most offensive," I said. "Western society pushes people queer who wouldn't be so in the East. There are pressures to conform to the image of the "queer." The Arabs have all the benefits of homosexuality." "With none of the doubts," Nigel finished. "Yes," I said (Orton, 1986: 223).

Orton's dislike of the Moroccan queen is twofold. Orton, back in England, tried to form an identity that did not conform to dominant images of gay men: the stereotypical gay queen or the masculine homosexual. He saw his experience in terms of class (he was from a working-class family in Leicester) and in terms of the emerging youth culture of the 1960s. "Youth culture offered a version of male sexuality which was not 'straight' in adult terms, but neither did it reproduce the images of flaunting queen or law-abiding, masculine homo which were both

circulated in homosexual culture and which Orton rejected” (Shepherd, 1989: 65). But Orton’s dislike of the Arab queen also points to, what I call, a postcolonial consciousness. Orton realised that the Moroccan, and Arab, conception of homosexuality differed greatly from a public, static homosexual identity found in the West. In the West, there was a public identity associated with homosexuality and various offshoots of that identity. I had expected to find gay bars, bathhouses and ‘out’ homosexuals in Tunisia because for me, that is what it meant for me to be homosexual. This identity, as many have pointed out, is historically and culturally specific. Yet the West has, in effect, produced Western-style homosexuals in the Orient. Orton realises the effects that Western (gay) culture has had on homosexuality in Morocco. The West pushed an homosexual identity on this Arab man who would presumably not have taken up such an identity without the “pressures” of Western society. The increasingly public and static identity as a homosexual in British and Moroccan society troubled Orton; it was not what he wanted for either nation.

‘Colonial Shudders!’

Aldo Busi, an gay Italian writer, travelled throughout Morocco and Tunisia in the late 1980s and his travels are recorded in *Sodomies at Elevenpoint*. Like Orton,

Busi's narrative documents his sexual activities in North Africa with men and boys. He is also at great pains to disavow any sort of essential gay identity. And like Lawrence, he portrays Moslem male sexuality in two very different ways -- sexual threat and sexual innocence. However, he is also very conscious of his monetary power and how this affects his relations with the Moroccans he encounters.⁸

Busi's sexual encounters with Arab men and boys frequently involves payment of some sort. At first, Busi offered money for sex but as his money reserve quickly runs out, he ends up paying with the clothes off his back -- literally! There are numerous occasions where Busi gives his sexual partner the pants that he was wearing and Busi describes the horrid look on the faces of the tourists when he arrives back at the hotel wearing only his underwear. His sexual encounters are for the most part consensual. Even when Busi enters his hotel room to find two thieves ransacking the place, he persuades them to have sex with him rather than rob him.

However, there are several instances where Busi is unsure as to the motives of his partners -- he frequently obsesses with thoughts of being stabbed or killed.

For most of these sexually 'dangerous' encounters, Busi comes to no harm. One

⁸ Busi goes to great lengths to discuss the problems of modern Morocco -- the high rate of unemployment and underemployment, the poverty, the racist attitudes of tourists and Moroccans alike. Busi's journey, however, is predominantly a journey of introspection. He muses with theoretical questions of life, death, sexuality, colonialism and capitalism.

incident, however, does involve rape. Busi is invited by Said (not Edward Said), one of his sexual partners, to visit Said's home town in the south of Morocco. Busi, tired of the banalities of living in a tourist compound, unhesitatingly accepts. Once he steps on the truck that will take him south, Busi meets Said's two friends. It is at this point that Busi senses that he is not one of them and fears for what will come next. This fear, as imagined in past sexual escapades, is confirmed upon their arrival to Said's home.

The flash of a torch! and then from another point another torch and a third, all converge on me, the three begin to curse in Arabic in my direction, chasing each other round the room, trampling on me in their mad race, throwing themselves on me and falling on me, a din like cats and rats. And once more, suddenly, silence and total darkness. I say something witty in French but no one responds. What are they preparing, where are they, how far from me? Little laughs, a neigh, a cockcrow. A hand on me - whose I don't know, the voice says '*Je veux tirer un coup, pousse-toi là.*' It is the tall skinny one who is not very well and stinks of garlic and wine....I let it happen, while the other two play a game, keeping an eye with their torches on their friend's prick, which is going in and out of my thighs. He comes between my legs, the idiot who has not even noticed that I was pretending to have it up my arse; the other two take me by the legs and lay me out towards the centre and I hear that they are doing a kind of dance macabre round me, round my face lit by the on-and-off torches. I am struck by a punch in the ribs, by a kick in the ribs - but no cry comes from my mouth, it might incite them more....Someone seizes me by the arms, then another by the feet, I am dragged round the room, I bang my head against objects and walls, I cut my wrist....In the dark Said starts talking loudly again in Arabic, the negro replies, the torch lights up again; Said, as if to give a good example for the last time, comes on top of me and sticks it up my arse once more while the negro throws a light on his friend's balls which are pressed against me. When he finishes Said begins to roll on top of me with the skinny one once more, trying to draw in the negro. 3.26. Finally the negro wavers, his friends leave the torch on and take off his drawers, laughing, shouting, and take me and make me open my mouth on their friend's turgid and enormous member, which I suck off unrewardingly because it is

stuck between my lips, while he gives me hefty slaps on the cheeks and punches in the neck to adjust things so as to get it well in and all of it all the way. I know I have to make him come publicly if I want to have any further hope of saving myself, I must make him the equal of the other two, thus robbing his hatred for me of its drama. And, when he comes in my mouth, I let the spunk slip out on to his prick so that they all may see that he came, that he too is an animal....One ought never to expect anything. It is not nice to be badly raped....Now I am really fed up - I get up and formally say goodbye to master and pupils, Said turns pale, he accompanies me outside, I shake his hand and set off up the mountain. Then suddenly Said says to the lanky one to accompany me 'for a bit.' Catching up with me he asks what my intentions are once I am down below. To leave, I say, to go to a chemist's. No, he says, about what happened last night. So you know that what happened last night is not normal? No, it is normal - on the contrary- isn't it what you wanted? To my face! What more could we do! (Busi, 1988: 78:87).

Busi's description of this rape scene parallels that of Lawrence's, but as was discussed in the previous chapter, Lawrence portrayed two different types of Oriental male sexuality based on nationality. The cruel Turks, who England was fighting against in World War I, savagely raped and beat Lawrence; the sexually cruel Turks were also contrasted with the homosexual purity associated with Lawrence's Bedouin entourage. The differences between Lawrence's construction of Turkish male sexuality and Bedouin male sexuality also had political and military connotations. For Busi though, he places no difference based on nationality. Busi, who had had sex with Said previously, did not expect to be raped by him and his friends. It also seems that for the three men involved in the rape, they did not see it as rape or that Busi was not consenting. In fact, they thought it was what he

wanted! In the past, as was most notably shown in the case of Flaubert, the East was an important site of sexploration. In postcolonial times, the West (and Western tourists) has become the site, for Orientals, for sexual gratification (see discussions of Theroux, Kennedy, Walker below). Busi's rapists assumed that Busi, as a Westerner, wanted this type of sexual activity, that it was somehow "normal" for him, that it was part and parcel of a Western sexual repertoire.

Busi did have sex with a large number of men and boys in Morocco and Tunisia, and most of them were based on monetary reasons. He frequently paid boys with clothes and/or money for sex. However, there are several occasions when the trade in sexual services did not correspond to Busi's conception of homosexual sex in Morocco.

Confronted by his arms, which detach themselves exhausted and fall back open on the bed, I do not know what to do. Take out my wallet? Go away? Say goodbye or say nothing? Shut the door without saying anything? How many hours we had been together. I ask him, greatly embarrassed, if he allows me to make a contribution for my share of the hashish - I took one draw out of five. Looking elsewhere, at the wall, he says with clenched teeth "*Ca vaut pas la peine.*" I swallow, understanding the grave error, the insult to him. I blush crimson, this is the most powerful emotion of all - it was all free of charge. I feel a worm, I invite him to dine at least, wherever he wants, even in the thousand-and-one night hotel in the nearby oasis. He says no. I leave, I join my lips to his once more, he remains passive, accepting my excuses, which are full of gratitude, respect, love, whoredom. But the damage is done. And I am out in the corridor, humiliated by myself, by my lack of faith in myself, in others, by my total unpreparedness to be loved for *myself*, which this time has screwed me thoroughly....On the first floor the handsome man's door is shut; light filters from under it. A desire to knock, to be with him, to present him with my watch, to ask for pardon (Busi, 1988: 75-76).

After supper I hand him a small fortune for having kept me company even if we have spoken so little. He poured me wine, smiled at me and lowered his eyes. No, he doesn't want this extra money - to tell the truth he insisted because he wanted to pay for the cigarettes himself....He looks at me in the dark and with a broken voice whispers to me, "I am excited" and clasps me to him so that I can feel it. He is trembling. "It's late - tomorrow." "What if I gave you the money from before?" I laugh and am touched, his style floods my body in a couple of moments...More than loving him I adore him centimetre by centimetre, someone who made the error of thinking himself a beggar arrives in my room and leaves again feeling himself an idol....I re-accompany Kabir to the same gap, he begins to climb over the wire-netting because we can't find the hole again and then he stops, searches in his pocket, hands me the banknotes. Overcome by this gesture which must have cost him a good deal I take them (Bust, 1988 : 316-317).

Busi did not expect not to pay for sex, or at least the hashish. Nor did he expect to be "loved for *myself*" and he laments his "grave error" in offering to pay for something that was not supposed to be for money. Similar to Orton, Busi is confronted with two men who do not fit the pattern, that they expected and/or previously experienced, of selling sexual services. But unlike Orton, Busi does not mock love and he seeks to rectify the situation and indeed goes to great length to rendezvous with the man he offended, to "ask for pardon." Orton when confronted with Mohammed's love for him, and his realisation that he loves Mohammed as well, pushes Mohammed away for love was not part of his travel itinerary. Busi, though, does seek love and makes an effort to appease the situation but nothing can remedy what he has done. The second quote from Busi highlights another

encounter, this time on the beaches of Tunisia. Despite Busi's attempts to reimburse the young man Kabir, for his services, fail. Kabir gives back the money, a substantial sum of money nonetheless, for Kabir the sex was not about the money. There are points at which, in the encounter between West and East, where love, sexual desire, and 'romance' overrule the issue of money. For both Busi and Orton, most of the sexual encounters involve a material transaction yet there are instances when this is not the case. Boone's "(moneyed) white man/(purchased) brown boy" dynamic is inapplicable to instances where money and/or colonial power do not predominantly govern sexual relations between Occidentals and Orientals.

Busi, however, is aware of this "(moneyed) white man/(purchased) brown boy" dynamic, or at least of the power dynamics of the West/East encounter.

In less than twenty-four hours I have achieved my touristic end - to escape from the clutches of the hotel-owning organisation (more strict than ever in this city - contacts with natives in the street are forbidden) and to go to a family outside the city in a hut of cement blocks with a roof of beams and corrugated iron. The Moroccan mother looks a hundred and is forty-two - with her son and his friend I went to the market and, for what it would cost for a day in an average hotel, bought supplies to satisfy the hunger of five people for a week. It is not that I am simply generous - I have a good business head and then I do not like comforts, I get bored at once, I am not used to them. I shall always have time to try out those soft bedclothes, but it will be more difficult to return to this pallet of beaten earth and matting and two boys, one on each side, who fuck me in turns and modestly turn the other way when it is the other one's turn. I don't know whether it is lust on my part or good manners but they have to discharge their debt, and it feels to me that I am merely adapting to the rules between guest and host in an Arab country when the guest is a European. Well! be that as it may, by dint of butter, milk, bread, mutton, sugar, coffee, peppers and salad, soup-cucous, oil, vinegar, Coca-Cola, orangeade and long-lasting

chewing-gum, I am loved.... They make me laugh, the single men who say they go to Africa for the folklore!...And here I am, obedient, the white man who, while he fills the bellies of three generations of mixed blood, lets himself be stuffed, comfortably served and revered. Colonial shudders! (Busi, 1988: 37).

Busi recognises the role that money plays in the West/East dynamic. He acknowledges the disparate role tourism plays in a nation's economy, how the money spent on one night's accommodation feeds a family for a week. He purposely goes out of his way to "escape the clutches" of the tourist industry. For Busi, travelling is not about the comforts of a hotel, it is about meeting Moroccans, eating with them, having sex with them.

He also acknowledges the West/East sexual dynamic, that the Moroccan male must take the active position when having sex with a European. "Whereas the fucking of Muslim boys by Westerners is seen as exploiting the Third World and thus causing resentment, fucking Westerners, whether male or female, is seen as a well deserved revenge for suffered injustice and as an expression of physical and moral superiority over a decaying West" (Schmitt, 1992: 125). Busi points to a realisation that sexual relations are closely tied to the politics of colonialism and postcolonialism and more importantly, how the sexual interaction between Easterners and Westerners has changed since the end of colonialism. He finds it ironic that while he "fills the bellies" of the family, it is he who gets filled (fucked)

by the two young men. Oh how the colonial power dynamics have changed! Busi's economic power does not necessarily result in sexual power, in terms of taking the active position. By alluding to colonialism -- "Colonial shudders!" -- Busi is demonstrating that the West/East sexual dynamic has shifted. In colonial times, boys were hired to be fucked, yet now, while the economic dynamic has not changed, the sexual dynamic has changed. Part of the postcolonial consciousness is this realisation that relations, in this case sexual, between Orientals and Occidentals have significantly altered since the termination of empire.

'In adulteress-stoning Arabia!'

The next text I want to deal with is a modern travel narrative in Saudi Arabia -- Dale Walker's *Fool's Paradise*. Walker, an American, lived in Saudi Arabia during its boom years, teaching English as a foreign language.⁹ His return to Saudi Arabia was not to work as a teacher, but to write a travel book on the country that was his home for over 10 years. Walker was recently divorced and quite bitter about the divorce settlement as well (Walker, 1988: 139). His motivations in travelling to Saudi Arabia was to discover something he calls the pre-Islamic woman of Saudi

⁹ Walker discusses the complex and contradictory role of Western expatriates living in Saudi Arabia. The Saudi government relied, and still does, on foreign labour to run the oil industry along with other industries. Yet, as protector of the Moslem Holy sites, the Saudi government also has to restrict, or appear to restrict, the interaction between Saudis and Westerners.

Arabia. Throughout his trip, however, he constructs two versions of the Saudi woman and he also draws similarities between Western women and pre-Islamic women, while at the same time contrasting modern Western women with anti-modern (in his eyes) Islamic women of Saudi Arabia.

Scholarship has shown that in pre-Islamic times women had a status as high as it now is low; two thousand years ago these women had the kind of freedom that we think of today as modern. They were celebrated for their beauty and intelligence. They were often chosen to be judges.... Under a matriarchal system (today Muslims refer shamefacedly to this period as the 'Ahad Jahaliya,' or Age of Ignorance) there were no permanent marriages but rather a good deal of promiscuity. A woman formed an alliance -- a temporary monogamy -- with a man of another tribe, but she stayed with her own people and kept the children. She could dissolve the alliance when she wished. She had independence and could contract business with anybody under her own name. How she has fallen!... Their women down in the remote green corner of otherwise wasteland Arabia did not wear veils. They worked side by side with men in the small plots and terraced hillsides of their fertile valleys.... They had a custom of providing their guest, a sojourned stranger, with one of their widows for three nights! (Walker, 1988: 26-27).

Indeed this search for the sexually-available pre-Islamic woman obsesses Walker throughout the text. He traverses all of Saudi Arabia in search of women untouched by the 'evils' of Islam. His view of Saudi Arabian women is at one point concurrent with Said's concept of Orientalism. Walker seeks a woman, and the society that produced her, that supposedly existed two thousand years ago. He assumes that cultures not affected by Islam (those in the remote parts of Saudi Arabia) continue to practice traditions that supposedly existed some two millennia ago, positing the

changeless nature of Oriental society characteristic of Orientalism as Said has demonstrated (this was also the case for Wharton and Thesiger). He assumes that, despite two thousand years of conquest, colonisation, and technological influences, this matriarchal culture still practices the same traditions and beliefs in exactly the same ways.

He highlights the similarities between the pre-Islamic woman and the modern (read Western) woman, but by doing so he asserts the dissimilarities between the Western woman and the Islamic woman. His perception of Islam's effects on women in Saudi Arabia are considerably negative.

'This in Arabia! In adulteress-stoning Arabia! In Arabia, where women are so tabooed and bugabooed that it is bad form to ask a man how his wife is (or is sister, mother, daughter), lest you seem to be taking an unnatural interest in the womenfolk of his family. In Arabia, where, though for years you may be invited to a man's house, you will never see his wife, or his mother, or his sister, or his daughter. If, through some unavoidable mischance, a woman does speak to you, you will hear her disembodied voice coming, as at a seance, from behind a curtain. Sleep with a widow for three nights! In Arabia? Arabia, where women are not allowed to drive or hold jobs alongside male workers or attend classes taught by men. Arabia, where a brother or father would put to death a sister or daughter whose lack of chastity brought dishonour to the tribe (Walker, 1988:27).

Walker's portrayal of Islamic women is the antithesis of his portrayal of pre-Islamic women, and accordingly modern Western women. Walker's discussion of modern Saudi women (although I doubt he would use the word modern) also conforms to Said's detailing of Orientalism. Islam is oppressive to women in Saudi Arabia;

women cannot drive, adulteresses are stoned, premarital sex is outlawed and corporally punished. Saudi women are the Other compared to Western women. However, Walker's text demonstrates the diverse, and sometimes, contradictory images of Oriental women in travel texts. Neither the sexually-available widow nor the repressed Islamic woman are necessarily positive Oriental archetypes, yet they are distinctively different. Said's construction of Orientalism as a hegemonic discourse does not allow for this multiplicity of Orientalist, and more importantly, gendered representations.

Walker also encounters homosexuality in his travels, something, however, he was not searching for. He discusses his former pupil's, Dheifallah, homosexual behaviour at school in terms of it being accepted as the natural, innocent thing to do before marriage because of the separation of the sexes and indeed, Walker does not castigate or condemn Dheifallah for his behaviour (Walker, 1988: 147). However, the episode I wish to discuss involves Walker himself. Feeling he is coming down with a cold, Walker goes to a pharmacy in search of Vitamin C. His interaction with the pharmacist was not the type of cold remedy he was looking for.

Among Arabs, this bandying of insincere formalities can go on all day. It was lucky that we were perfect strangers, because if we had been acquaintances, and he dragged the health of our relatives into it, we'd have grown old standing there. But when I'd had enough and stated to withdraw my hand, he held on to it and scratched my palm with his fingernail. *I did* withdraw my hand then, I can tell you. Did I look like one of those

worthless old Brits who've been hanging on here in the Magic Kingdom forever? So much for my provisioning. I was so put out of countenance by this completely unexpected invitation to lewdness that I walked out without getting the vitamin C. (Walker, 1988: 17-18).

This homosexual advance, seen in threatening terms, does recur in other travel texts, notably Lawrence's and Busi's, although Lawrence's and Busi's are much more striking, more threatening in that they involve rape. What is interesting about Walker's description of this event was that he did not choose to chastise the pharmacist, but instead denigrates "those worthless old Brits" who have been hanging on to the last vestiges of empire. An advance by an Arab leads him to ridicule British homosexuals. It is odd that Walker, whose entire trip is focused on finding some archaic, sexually-available woman, should seek to castigate those who seek the sexually-available, though of a different gender.

Within Walker's Orientalist/sexist text there is a tendency to self-reflect and challenge Western conceptions of Saudi Arabia, i.e. Orientalism. Indeed the title at first suggested that Walker felt the Saudi's were fools for thinking their nation a paradise, yet I would suggest that the fool is rather Walker and Saudi Arabia is this fool's (his) paradise -- his search for the pre-Islamic woman. But other than the title, Walker's text is full of self-reflection and questioning.

I heard Ahmed come out, start the tuck, and roar off to begin another long day on the road; and I reflected how unfair was our common opinion that Arabs are lazy. Which Arabs? In Asir and Zahran I had seen only heroic

husbandry and industry. If the *desert* Bedouins were 'lazy,' it was because they knew only famine, thirst, and hardship, and even a colony of yodelling Germans, transplanted in that desperate land, couldn't do any better. Nobody works harder than Mexicans, and yet when I was growing up in Texas we perceived them in the same way. It takes no Freud to figure out why, just as it takes no Goebbels to appreciate the value of a propaganda so effective that before I ever laid eyes on an Arab, I despised them. It helps, when you take someone's land, to picture the owner as undeserving of it anyway" (Walker, 1988: 135).

Walker realises and recognises the Orientalist stereotypes and he has some idea as to why these stereotypes exist with his reference to imperialism/colonialism. So while Walker's realisation of Orientalist propaganda (and its relations to imperialism) is a more recent phenomenon, I think it points to the ability of a traveller to realise and recognise Orientalist constructions and to actively deconstruct and challenge those images. Was Flaubert's recognition that he was "weaving an aesthetic around her" a realisation of his active construction of Hanem as the 'typical Oriental' female? Walker realised that his image of Arab (men) as lazy was inaccurate and that this stereotype was probably due to the West's imperial interests in the Orient, hence the main hypothesis of *Orientalism*. Walker, however, does not question his positive construction of the pre-Islamic women or the 'evils' that Islam has done to Saudi women in the past 2000 years. So while Walker questions the divide between Orient and Occident, i.e., Orientalism, he fails to recognise his sexual/gendered constructions of Saudi women.

'Wonderful Puppies'

Peter Theroux, brother of the famous American travel writer Paul Theroux, lived and worked in Saudi Arabia for seven years. During that time, Theroux investigated the disappearance of Imam Moussa Sadr, leader of Lebanon's Shi'ite Moslems. He also worked for several American papers as their Saudi Arabian correspondent. Fluent in Arabic and knowledgeable about Arabic literature, history and politics, Theroux leaped at the chance to work in Saudi Arabia.¹⁰ There were, however, other reasons for Theroux's interest in Arabia:

Yet another brother had a single resonant word of advice: "China." But China was too far and too foreign, the language much too difficult, and I did not find the Chinese sexy. I mean this in the most literal way: it was one of my distinct criteria. Does anyone with a non-profit interest in a foreign land not owe it largely to the sexual pull of the culture and people? Even if not, I don't think I'm overly prurient for having thought so. This assumption of mine was often confirmed by the long procession of Egyptologists, Arabists, Iranologists, kibbutzniks, missionaries, and anthropologists I saw, whose fixation on the bible lands was notoriously carnal. Perhaps they, too, were motivated by *Beau Geste* or *Lawrence of Arabia*, not to mention *Scheherazade*, *The Dance of the Seven Veils*, *The 7th voyage of Sinbad* ("In Dynamation - The New Miracle of the Screen"), *Sins of Jezebel*, *Samson and Delilah*, *Solomon and Sheba*, and *The Ten Commandments* - the apotheosis of what Gore Vidal's Wise Hack called "tits and sand." (To the West, of course, fleshpot had preceded oil wells as the Orient's seductive staple)....Nineteenth-century Europeans sought in the Middle East sexual thrills unobtainable in Europe. The twentieth century

¹⁰ Theroux's discussion of Saudi Arabia is very similar to Walker's in that he demonstrates the contradictions associated with Westerners living in Saudi Arabia. For Theroux, there are two distinct groups of people with whom he socialises -- Western expatriates and Saudis. These two groups of people never seem to encounter each other on casual terms. The Westerners return to their compounds after work and socialise with each other and the Saudis go home and socialise with other Saudis.

was a very different story. Now Middle Easterners of all persuasions could satisfy their fetish most easily in Europe or America (Theroux, 1990: 36-37).

Theroux finds Arabia sexy and talks a lot about women, boys, homosexuality, royal princes killing their male lovers and so on. It is interesting, however, that Theroux never clarifies exactly what he finds sexy about Arabia. The women? The men? The sand?

He outlines where exactly his sexual motivations comes from: Western literature, plays and movies set in Oriental locales. He also argues that past visitors to the Orient, "Egyptologists, Arabists, Iranologists, kibbutzniks, missionaries, and anthropologists," who had official, academic or political, reasons for travelling to the Orient also had unofficial, carnal reasons as well. It is here that Theroux has realised the role Western cultural products play in his, and other's, creation of Arabia as sexy. He realises that past conceptions and glorifications of sexuality in the Orient greatly influence not only how he sees the Orient, but why he travels there as well. And while, he points to a change in the Orient's seductive staple, from the fleshpot of the past to the oil of the present, he does not give any evidence as to why the

Orient, for him and others, still occupies sexual space within a Western imagination.¹¹

Despite the lack of personal sexual information in his book, Theroux provides ample evidence that sexual roles have changed: the West has now become the promised land for “sexual thrills” unobtainable in the Middle East, or more precisely, Saudi Arabia. Theroux describes numerous incidents where the East/West power dynamic has switched as demonstrated through gender roles and sexuality. The oil-rich Saudi’s now travel to Europe and America to engage in sexual activity that is not only tabooed, but illegal, in their home country.

One prince I met (the size of the family defeats the use of pseudonyms) had a lifestyle that intrigued me. He lived in Riyadh and had a farm for his horses outside the city. On his frequent vacations he flew straight to New York, checked into the Pierre, and immediately abandoned his suite for a series of Greenwich Village bars where he could have sex with twenty men in an evening, lounge in a bathtub with a dozen men urinating on him, sniff cocaine, be bound, whipped, and washed off in time to be back at the Pierre by dawn, nap, and then lunch with his investment consultants. The prince’s fun spoke volumes, to me, about his social access, his good upbringing and credit rating, and his perfect understanding of Arabian and American rules. He was someone who truly knew both worlds and should have held much more power than he did; unlike any number of Saudi kings, he would never be fooled by America (Theroux, 1990: 89).

¹¹ I do not want to posit, however, a distinct, uniform Western imagination for that is what is so problematic about Said’s theorisation of Orientalism. I do believe in a Western imagination but not in its hegemonic nature.

Theroux's retelling of the prince's experiences demonstrates, for Theroux, that there has been a reversal of sexual sites. The West, with its 'sexual liberation,' is not only a site for Eastern sexual imaginings but also for Eastern sexual practice. The prince who flew to New York to engage in 'kinky' sexual practices -- being urinated on, being bound and whipped -- all associate the West, at least for this prince, with sexual decadence. The wealth of Saudi Arabia has allowed for the importation of Western technology -- VCRs, televisions, satellite dishes. Accompanied by this importation of technology is the underground trade in Western pornography, particularly in the form of VCR cassettes.

This change, due to the liberalisation of sexuality in the West combined with the wealth of the Saudi Arabians, has only occurred since the end of empire. Theroux's postcolonial consciousness is a recognition that the sexual stakes between Orient and Occident have changed. Theroux is also quite correct in pointing out that the prince's experiences in New York "spoke volumes" about the prince's social access, upbringing and credit rating, that his class and wealth also had an impact on his ability to go to the West and to mediate some sort of existence between Arabian and American rules. In other less-wealthy Arab nations, as will be

discussed later in reference to Kennedy, sexual experience with the West is made available only by Western (female) tourists.

Theroux sees Western perceptions of the Orient as flawed, based on misunderstanding and difference. Theroux is frequently referred to by the American embassy as one who 'knows' Saudi Arabia; in the eyes of the embassy, he is an authoritative source of knowledge on Arabia. Yet he is extremely uncomfortable with this label, this construction of his position in Saudi Arabia. He constantly has to provide tours to American officials 'fresh off the plane' with little knowledge of Arabia nor willing to learn. He frequently mentions how exhausting and annoying it is to have to consistently correct and challenge American views of Saudi Arabian women, precisely in reference to the cultural meanings associated with wearing the *abaya*.

"What's with the women in the black bags?" She pointed out the car window at a flock of veiled women with shopping bags.

"Those are *abayas*, the black cloaks that women wear to go out."

"Or they'll get flogged, right?"

"Well, no, I don't think so. They're traditional, like hats and gloves used to be for American women." (Theroux, 1990: 156).

Ann was looking out the window at several American women in muumius and filmy kerchiefs. I explained that Arab women wore their *abayas* over their clothes—whether a silk dress or jeans; one Saudi girl had told me that she loved the *abaya* since she could go out "like a slob" and no one knew. They shed the veils as soon as they were indoors. Only foreign women wore such concealing clothing—few Saudi women would wear such unfashionably modest clothing all the time, and I had heard them snicker at American women (Theroux, 1990: 161).

Theroux goes to great length to try to correct the American visitors' misconceptions of Arabian women, the role of the veil, the role of women in society. It is also of note that Theroux links the practice of the *abayas*,¹² one that people in the West find archaic, barbaric and oppressive to women, to the practice that was dominant in the early twentieth-century in North America -- the practice of women wearing gloves and hats. Theroux, unlike the people he has to guide around, does not find the *abayas* so bizarre, so unusual, and he can see similarities with past Western cultural practices. Arabia may be the Other for the visiting officials, but not for Theroux. From the second quote, we get a sense of the postcolonial consciousness, the East looking back at the West, and laughing. The Saudi women see freedom with the veil, they can go out like slob and no one would know any different. Their snickering at American women with their concealing and dysfunctional clothing resonates of "perhaps you 'liberated' women do not have a monopoly on freedom."

Yet Theroux regularly meets people who find the whole situation in Saudi Arabia oppressive to women, especially the veil.

¹² The *abayas* are long, black outfits found in the Gulf states and cover the entire body, which is unlike the *hijab*, the headscarf used to cover one's head.

"I was put in jail in Amherst protesting the Vietnam War, I got malaria in Chad in the Corps, I travelled through Turkey alone and got harassed, I taught in New York and got mugged, and I spent the whole Lebanese civil war in Beirut not getting fazed by the bombs, but I won't be told to veil my head, and not be allowed to drive, and made to take taxis, and have my phone tapped, and have every taxi driver try to convert me to Islam, and then try to fuck me. No one ever tried to lock me up and bore me to death before." Linda was a lesbian, and I wondered why she didn't find it more congenial, being restricted to the company of women in Riyadh. Saudi girls were said to be ravishing....

"Lots of them were stunning, but so pampered and, like I say, brainwashed. I don't mean to sound patronising, but they reminded me of, you know, wonderful puppies." (Theroux, 1990: 67-68).

The woman Theroux describes, Linda, had experienced all these monstrous situations yet none, not even bombs, mugging or malaria, can rival being required to veil one's head. The harem, as *the* Oriental oppressive-institution for women (as Wharton expressed), which had long dominated Orientalist writing on women has now been replaced with the restrictiveness of the veil.¹³ Oriental women once locked in the prison of the harem had now to deal with the confines of the veil, at least in Western eyes. We also get a sense, from Theroux's quoting of Linda, that she saw Saudi women as "wonderful puppies," cute, passive creatures willing to bring your slippers and daily paper.

One difference that I have noticed between the pre-1960s group (colonial) of travel texts is that they rarely, if ever, quote the voices of people. The postcolonial

¹³ See Hoodfar's "The Veil in Their Minds and On Our Heads: The Persistence of Colonial Images of Muslim Women." *RFR/DRF*. 22 (3/4): 5-18.

travel narratives are in this sense, more dialogical; writers of the colonial texts, no doubt engaged in conversations with Orientals yet none of this dialogue is actually quoted within the text. So while other voices may be heard in the text through the subjective narrator, in Behdad's terms, these other voices are actually quoted and voiced in the postcolonial travel narrative. Whether this is merely a stylistic change or a concerted effort to engage in, and quote, dialogue with people in the Orient is unclear and not the purpose of this thesis, but is a trajectory that should be investigated.

'Mutual Misapprehension Reigns Supreme'

Sylvia Kennedy, unfortunately the only woman in the post-1960s sample, offers a unique perspective on the nature of Moroccan male-female tourist relations.¹⁴ A British woman, she encounters different issues than that of the male traveller's discussed. As a woman and a tourist, her position in modern Moroccan society is distinctly different than her male counterparts. She made several travels to Morocco in the late 1980s and early 1990s while writing her book; during her first

¹⁴ Like Busi, Kennedy details the economic impact of tourism on Morocco and its affect on Westerner-Moroccan relations. She is keenly aware of her monetary power and how it affects her relations with Moroccans. She refuses to buy anything extravagant and expensive in the presence of her Moroccan guides. She also discusses the current political situation in Morocco -- the reign of King Hassan, political criticism of the monarchy, the misuse of Saudi development funds to build the world's largest (at that time) mosque while Moroccans go hungry and unemployed.

trip, her entourage consisted of her husband, nanny, three children and a Japanese friend who did all the photographs found in the book. Her second trip was with her female friend, Sheila, and took place at the commencement of the Persian Gulf War and due to increasing political tension and unrest within Morocco over the war, she cuts short her journey.

She, too, talks of the Western misconceptions of the Orient and she is aware that the Orient is, and how it is, looking back at the West. Despite these commonalities with her male travel-counterparts here, she also specifically deals with the issue of tourism's impact on Moroccan male sexualities and their relation to Western female tourists.

Like many Westerners, Sheila is familiar with the tradition of courtly love which has inspired so much Arabic art and poetry, but thinks of it as an historic phenomenon, a curiosity rather than an indication of symbolic systems at work today. Having received more than my fair share of "My dreams are ravaged by thoughts of your absence" letters inspired by a ten-minute conversation held on a bus or in an office queue, I am far less inclined to believe that simple warmth and friendliness will not, by some mysterious process, be reinterpreted as passion on the basis of cultural difference. Mutual misapprehension reigns supreme (Kennedy, 1992: 222).

Kennedy's awareness of this situation comes about because she is a Western, female tourist and on one of her trips, her female travelling companion engages in such a relationship described above and not surprisingly for Kennedy, the relationship soon sours.

Kennedy sees a relationship of this sort as problematic and she highlights the potential, and eventual, conflicts that arise in such situations.

The Western woman becomes confused by the direction the friendship seems to be taking, reassuring herself that she is only being polite when she takes an interest in the Moroccan's life, views and family. The Moroccan man starts to feel cheated. He has been offered a chance of achieving intimacy on the chatty, personal level and sees this as proof that the woman has designs on him. Why else would she prod and enquire so thoroughly? A hurt stand-off inevitably degenerates into dislike and a sense of betrayal on both sides. Tourism has further exacerbated the problem on both the sexual and emotional planes....On the other hand, in a galling reversal of the traditional male-female roles, Western women, however suspect sexually, must be pinned down emotionally to some form of commitment, for without their help, their letters of invitation, the Abduls and Samirs are stymied and helpless, reduced to letter writing. It is the women who have the money to buy plane tickets, to decide if and when they may visit, when they must leave. The men hope and wait. I cannot believe that this bodes well for either party and, should the affair blossom, and a visit to the West actually materialise, then all too often this ill-fated experiment signals disaster. In the Western woman's eye the confident, omnipotent protector from Tangiers's hustlers and souk touts becomes the badly dressed, helpless foreigner, an embarrassment who knows no one and can't even work the dishwasher. In the Moroccan man's eyes, the uncertain, glamorous creature of shorts and bikini metamorphoses into an impatient, domineering female who persists in leading her own life without deferring to him or granting him any autonomy or power (Kennedy, 1992: 225-226).

Kennedy points out the "galling reversal of the traditional male-female roles" has come about because of increased, some would argue bettered, positions of women in Western society.

The gender-equality movements in the West have generally led to more power for women. It is their economic power and independence that allows them to travel to Morocco and other destinations. The "polite" interest that female tourists

take in a Moroccan male's life, his views and family means one thing for the female tourist. It is a chance to get to know the 'locals' and perhaps, for some, engage in sexual activity without commitment. For the Moroccan men, however, these relationships are more than transitory and anonymous sexual encounters. The prodding and enquiring, to them, is proof that the Western female "has designs on him." When these two versions of the same event collide, a sense of betrayal, dislike, and "mutual misapprehension" results for both parties.

When one's understanding of a situation encounters the other person's version, feelings of resentment and shock are produced. Flaubert was dismayed by Hanem's shunning of him during his second visit to her, and because of this he is forced to reconceptualise Hanem in a different light. Busi and Orton are surprised, even bewildered, when their views of Arab boys (unromantic, purely sexual and commercial) are thrown into relief by incidents that run counter to this view -- the non-monetary motivations of the Arab boys. Kennedy's account demonstrates that perhaps this is also typical of Moroccan male/Western female encounters. The Western woman sees her relationship with the Moroccan man in terms of friendship, yet she also has to eventually consider his version of the relationship, which is radically different.

Similar to the other postcolonial travel narratives, Kennedy's text registers the interaction between the Western tourist and a Moroccan woman, an interaction where "mutual apprehension" often "reigns supreme."

I noted the two men in the bus had averted their eyes and were looking straight at the maroon wallpaper in order not to gaze at the Berber ladies. I had no such shame and grinned when a toddler was plonked in my lap, for security, as we bumped down the road. My hand was seized unceremoniously by an older woman with blushed red cheeks and magnificent false teeth, rings surveyed, bracelets rolled between thumbs and assessed for weight and decoration nail-varnished toes examined with interest. We both laughed at our mutual incredulity at each other's appearance and, as I descended at Tinerhir, she patted my face, whether with affection or out of a sense of sympathy, I could not tell (Kennedy, 1992: 320).

Kennedy articulates the divide that separates Orient from Occident -- both women have trouble in understanding each other's appearance. In a colonial narrative, this encounter would be couched in terms of how the author saw the Oriental. "She never spoke of herself, she never represented her emotions, presence or history. *He* spoke for and represented her" (Said, 1978: 6). In the case of Flaubert, as with the other colonial travel narratives, Oriental voices are never heard. And while Kennedy does not verbally communicate with this Berber woman, she provides evidence that misunderstanding and disbelief occurs on *both* sides of the Oriental/Occidental equation. In her text, she repeatedly refers to the 'mutualness' of her encounters. In relations between the female tourist and the Moroccan male, "mutual

misapprehension" typifies the relationship. Her encounter with the Berber woman on the bus illustrates their "mutual incredulity" of each other's appearance.

For Kennedy, the Berber woman on the bus represents an exotic aspect of Morocco. She had "blushed red cheeks and magnificent false teeth." But Kennedy was also the exotic for the Berber woman -- the Western woman with her "nail-varnished toes." Not only is there an understanding of how the West has watched, and is watching, the Orient but combined with this is an understanding of how the Orient looks back at the West.

Postcolonial travel narratives critically engage in discussions of Oriental/Occidental power dynamics and more importantly, how these dynamics interplay with gender roles and sexual relations. Unlike the fairly unified subjective narrator of the colonial travel narrative, as discussed in the previous chapter, the postcolonial travel account recites multiple voices -- voices from the past (Western travellers), voices from the present (fellow Western travellers and Orientals themselves), and voices from inside the soul of the narrator. This multivocal characteristic allows for an examination of Occidentalism -- how 'they' see us, how the West has become a site for sexual exploration for the Orient. From this, we get a sense of how those on the other side of the looking-glass view the West, tourism

and themselves. The dialogues between East and West are not only about Western power or the desire to catalogue and encapsulate the Orient into a monolithic, powerless object. The Orient correspondingly constructs ideas about the Occident: how it operates, its genders and sexualities as different than in the Orient.

The Orient still represents, at least in the travel texts described here, a sexual site, where sexuality and gender are somehow different than in the West. But with end of colonialism and the rise of Arab national governments, the relations between the Orient and Occident have significantly changed, as the cases of sexuality and gender illustrate. There are, however, political, social, cultural and economic contexts of travelling in developing nations. These contexts and differences are not ignored by the travellers discussed here, in fact they critically engage in discussions of such differences. By sexualising and gendering the study of Orientalisms, I do not want to disavow the other contexts that are involved in travelling in the Orient, yet these contexts are not the purposes of this project.

Gender and sexuality has also changed in the West partly due to the women's and gay rights movements. Women have enjoyed a more public role in Western society and homosexuals have also enjoyed a more public identity and community. The postcolonial consciousness has to take all of these developments into consideration. Western perceptions of the Orient are critically engaged but this was

also found within the colonial travel narratives. Postcolonial travel narratives on the Orient differ from their colonial counterparts in their recognition of gendered and sexual change in the West and how these changes have substantially affected gender and sexual relations in the Orient, specifically between tourists and locals. Along with change in the West, as pertains to sexuality and gender, change has occurred in the East. The West and its flocks of tourists have now become objects of sexual exploration, imagination, and experience for the East.

CONCLUSION

Travelling, with its various pressures on the stability of the self, allows the traveller to establish a critical distance from the home culture, to adopt an 'interloper status' allows for sufficient distance to critique and contest cultural representations. The Western traveller voyages to the Orient with preconceived notions of the Orient: the dimensions of Oriental society, its genders and sexualities. The Western traveller also transports his or her own (Western) conceptions of gender and sexuality, along with more general beliefs of how (Western) society operates, and these conceptions inform the construction of the self, how she/he sees herself/himself in relation to the world. It is against these two notions, the preconceived Orient and the traveller's conception of his/her own (Western) gender and sexuality, that the 'Experienced Orient' must be judged, compared, and contrasted. The negotiation between these three factors can never lead to a unified, coherent, internally consistent portrayal of Oriental genders and sexualities as there is no unified, internally consistent, coherent Orient nor Occident.¹ If the discourse of Orientalism posits a binary distinction and

¹ In saying this, I do not want to argue that Western travellers were magically able to comprehend some essential 'Orient' for I believe that such a thing as **the** 'Orient' does not exist. The discourse of Orientalism, by the West, was intertwined with colonial interests in the region. Yet all knowledge, in this case of the 'Orient,' is influenced and shaped by polemical, racial, social, classed, national, gendered and sexualised discursive constraints. Travel opens up past 'understandings' of the 'Orient' to critique and contestation but whether or not it reflects any notion of 'reality' is not for consideration here

differentiation between Orient and Occident, the collision of the preconceived, 'Mythic Orient' and the 'Experienced Orient' -- the differences between what is expected and what is experienced -- opens up the binary structure of Orientalism to critique, contestation, revision, contradiction, qualification, and extension. The discourse of Orientalism seeks to encapsulate the Orient as the Other of the Occident, its binary opposite, yet the dismantling of the preconceived Orient (Orientalism) not only threatens this binary structure of Orientalism but also entails a questioning of the opposite of the Orient -- the Occident.

Differences between travellers also play a crucial role in the production and creation of diversity within travel writing on the Orient. Travellers, specifically travel writers, write from a certain position, within society and in relation to the Orient. Said argues that "in the relationship between the ruler and the ruled in the imperial or colonial or racial sense, race takes precedence over both class and gender" (quoted in Ahmad, 1994: 167). For Said, Western writers on the Orient wrote solely from the "*positional* superiority" of their racial/colonial position. (Said, 1978: 7). However, Western writers not only wrote from their racially/geographically defined positions. Nationality, race, class, gender and sexual identity must all be considered when investigating travel writing on the Orient for they not only help to

define what one writes about but how one writes about the Orient. Writers write from the positions they occupy in relation to the Orient and within their own societies. The creation of complex, contradictory, and internally *in*consistent constructions of Oriental genders and sexualities results from the multi-determined and defined positions of the Western traveller.

It is also important to recognise the influences of history on travel and travel texts. The dissolution of empire, the rise of national movements and governments along with the emergence of the 'sexual revolution' in the West have significantly altered the relationships between Orient and Occident and within the Orient and Occident. Even during colonial and 'pre-sexual revolution' times, there existed a plurality of relationships between Orient and Occident. Travel accounts have generally been investigated within the confines of colonialism, yet those written since the end of colonialism in the Orient have rarely been examined. I do not seek to fill in this lacuna, but rather offer some insights as to the additional issues encountered in the postcolonial travel narrative. Future research should explore differences and commonalties between colonial and postcolonial travel accounts while assuring that issues of difference -- within the Orient and within the Occident -- are appropriately addressed. To obscure, neglect, and collapse difference within

the Occident and Orientalism is to reinscribe within the discourse of Orientalism the same problems Said seeks to critique and deconstruct in *Orientalism* -- a critique of the "internal consistency of Orientalism and its ideas about the Orient" (Said, 1978: 5).

Travel writing on the Orient is an incredibly diverse and prolific genre, its range and breadth encompassing a complexity that ultimately resists totalising definitions. The texts that fall under the rubric of 'travel writing' share a common link in that they are, or profess to be, a 'description' (in the broadest sense of that word) of a space and a culture through which the writer has passed. But the ways in which this recording and this movement occur is never able to cohere into a unified and coherent pattern that can stand in for all travel writing. Contrary to Said's conceptualisation of Orientalism -- that Western hegemonic discourse that speaks in unison for the Orient -- the voices that emerge from 'Orientalist' travel writing do not repeat an unchanging mantra, but rather continuously qualify, discount, revise, disagree, and contradict those pronouncements on the Orient that have come before and that have informed preconceived notions, notions which do not confirm, but conflict, with the experiential 'reality' of travel. This study has shown how such

notions are radically challenged by the issues surrounding sexuality and gender that are brought up in the texts that have been examined.

Such issues play an integral and indispensable part in constructing, reconstructing and deconstructing Orientalisms that never solidifies, but rather remains fluid thereby positing a temporal, historical, situational creation of Orientalisms. Given the reified and entrenched binaristic structure of Western notions of gender and sexuality, the most potent inconsistencies of Orientalistic ways of thinking occur when these notions fail in experiences of the Middle East, often remaining impervious to mediation. Therefore, to leave out considerations of sexuality and gender when ruminating on the constitution and power of Orientalism, as Said has done, is to force an inadequate and inaccurate concept of an Orientalism that not only bypasses the points of most interest, but that also fails to grasp the complex ways in which Orientalisms function in constructing, for Western imagination and reality, "one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other" (Said, 1978: 1).

The excavation of the counter-hegemonic voices that constitute Orientalisms does not disavow any relation between colonialism and Western culture. The extension of the study of Orientalisms to include sexuality and gender does not

diminish the validity of Said's, and other's, theses. Colonialism did have a great impact on the development and shaping of Western culture. Said's paradigm is as valid as ever in specific political and economic contexts of Orientalisms; one need only think of the Persian Gulf war and its silencing of the Oriental to see the persistent effects of such discourses. Iraqi casualties were referred to as "collateral damage" by the American war propaganda machine. Western media still construct the Orient as a site Other to the West. The association between the Middle East and terrorism is a dominant theme in Western media representations. After the Oklahoma bombing, Middle East terrorists were immediately suspected and numerous assaults of Arab-Americans subsequently followed.

Race and geographical location must be considered in the analysis of Orientalisms but they must not be the only factors considered. The excavation of counter-hegemonic Western voices in travel accounts, however, seriously questions the construction of a single, unified, hegemonic discourse of Orientalism. My project has highlighted the unique predicament of travel writing on the Orient and its troubling of the maintenance of a hegemonic conception of Orientalism. The conflict that arises when expectation does not, and can never, fully conform to experience produces incomplete, contradictory, challenging and diverse constructions of the Orient, in this case, gender and sexuality. The possibilities of

social, sexual, gendered, and existential relocation associated with travel offers a way around and beyond the confinements and limits of Orientalism -- the discourse and the book. Said argues for a study of "other cultures and other peoples from a libertarian, or a nonrepressive and nonmanipulative perspective" and I believe this possibility exists within the modalities of travel (Said, 1978: 24).² Continuing with the tradition started by Said and more fully developed by later colonial and postcolonial theorists, my project adds to this tradition by excavating the voices of women and gay men, by including concepts such as sexuality and gender in the study of Orientalisms, and by examining the possibilities of travel as a form of study, education and learning.

² By libertarian, Said refers to a more humanistic understanding and study of Other cultures and societies -- an apolitical knowledge that adequately and ethically captures the 'real' essence of a culture. Said (1994) argues that travel offers "a kind of academic freedom at its highest" yet it is unclear whether Said would grant such freedom to the traveller in the Orient.

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APPENDIX

Note: Citations with a double asterix at the end (**) have been used in this study. Other texts cited were read in preparation for this thesis.

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