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Neo-Orientalism on Twenty-First Century American Screens

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Abstract

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The work is an investigation of the origin of the defamatory image seen today on the Western screens, especially in the United States. It goes back to the origin of the clash and hatred between the two worlds, by looking at the most important events that created and shaped both the Western and Oriental identity. These events created an idea, a perception and a stereotype of the Orient that for the most part was complicit in its own defamation. The ominous stereotypes that are stuck to Arabs and Muslim have a disastrous effect in real life, as many terror attacks against Muslims were committed because of rightwing media and politicians, creating and reinforcing hate and fear towards Arab Muslims. The aim of the work is to study the most impactful encounters between the two worlds, in order to understand the heinous image and perception that Western entertainment holds for the East. It traces the Orientalist origin of these stereotypes and examines their new developments in the 21st century in the form of films and TV shows such as *American Sniper* and *Jack Ryan*. The historical approach is used to understand past events that shaped the Orient and the West and also to give some perspective and meaning to more recent deadly events and to see the changing stereotypes and imagery of the Orient through the years. This work puts forward the concept of Neo-Orientalism to refer to these changes. Only with understanding, studying and denouncing the stereotypes that are constantly attributed to the Orient, that the Western entertainment studios, politicians and media can change their manner in dealing with the Orient.

Dedication

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To everyone trying to quench his or her big hunger.

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General Introduction

General Introduction

The audio visual images seen in today's screens are more inflammatory and impactful in shaping the minds, attitudes and opinions of the twenty-first century generation. It is ominous the way pictures of Islam and Muslims are being distorted by politicians, entertainment and media outlets. In their defense, they have inherited a lie and fiction that is thousands of years old, known as Orientalism. This ominous attitude that has become a culture could have survived and lasted only because of the religious tensions and wars fought between the East and the West.

What started as religious war in the medieval times continued in the centuries that followed. Western authors wrote epics about the war between the true faith and the heretical one, in honor of the Christian crusaders and the savagery of the Mohametans (that was the name given to Muslims). Elizabethan playwrights were inspired, by these epics; they even created more gloomy and ruthless image about Moors (residents of North Africa). In peace times, mainly after the eighteenth century, many travelers ventured in the Oriental lands and brought with them many tales of the beauty and the savagery of the faraway lands. This heritage and writing gave to the Western colonial desires in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The colonial powers exploited the heinous depiction found in these Oriental writings as an alibi to loot and destroy these lands.

European stories formed the roots of the stereotypes given to Arabs, but with the twentieth century, America has introduced to the world the most effective storyteller: Hollywood. By the beginning of the twentieth century, it was no longer just travel books and Oriental fictions like *The Arabian Nights* that did the most damage to the Oriental imagery. Hollywood early productions breathed life to the most racist, derogatory and degrading Oriental stereotypes ever imaginable. The situation worsened in the twenty-first century, especially after the 9/11 terror attacks. From that day, the world saw and treated Islam and Muslims in horrible prejudices. Counter-terrorism themes and plots filled and fueled television shows and movies, creating violent stereotypes about Orientals that harmed the Muslim and Arab community in America and around the world.

The reason behind this work is to introduce entertainment productions, rightwing media and politicians as the new defamatory power shaping the Orient and its relationship with world, but also the Orient responsibility, contribution and abetting of this defamation.

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This work examines the new images that emerged in the 21st century American screens, inspired by Orientalist stereotypes but containing new forms, hence referred to as “Neo-Orientalism”. Neo-Orientalism deals, primarily, with the distorted image of the Orient seen in nowadays entertainment, but also delves into the history and the inspiration for the images seen nowadays.

It seeks to answer the following research question:

What are the origin and strategies of Orientalist stereotypes?

How did these evolve in the twenty-first century in the most effective vehicles to convey such images, mainly films and TV shows?

Is there an Oriental responsibility for these stereotypes and how can the Orient correct its image?

The historical approach is used to understand past events that shaped the Orient and the West and also to give some perspective and meaning to more recent deadly events and to see the changing stereotypes and imagery of the Orient through the years.

The work is divided into two chapters. Its first part will be dedicated to the events leading to the twenty-first century. The first chapter will be dedicated to understanding and dealing with the first encounters between the East and the West. From the days of Crusades, to the colonization time and till the terror attacks in the 1990s, all the while highlighting the evolving perception when dealing with the Orient. These perceptions and their evolvment are found in the most celebrated Western works, but also these perceptions of the Orient and its residents evolve depending on many factors, among them, the latest armed encounter between the two nations, the shifting political powers governing the West and East and most importantly, the decline of power in the Eastern lands. Each era accumulated an idea a perception about the Orient.

The second part will focus on the new way of depicting the Orient, what is called Neo-Orientalism. But it does not stop at depictions only, it would discuss the need for the war movies and shows so that myth about the Orient can survive. This will help to see how violence affects and drives 21st century societies. Highlighting also the ruthless defamatory attacks of the rightwing parties in Europe and America and their damage on Arabs and

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Muslims around the world, but especially citizens living in the West or trying to cross to live there. Arguments will be presented, on possible breakthroughs and ideas to help fix the approach that entertainment used when dealing with the Orient and its religion.

Chapter One : Orientalism

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1.1. Introduction

This chapter deals with Orientalism and the roots of hatred between the West and Arab world. It sheds light on religious wars that fueled the masses, on both side, with anger and despise for the other; that lead and justify atrocities in the name of God. It also contains an account of literary distortion and defamation that lead to bloody and ruthless imperial wars that would change and ruin the Arab lands. The bloodshed, religious animosity and imperial greed create a stereotype about the Oriental people and land, a stereotype that will be exploited by writers, photographers and the media to sell a degrading image about the Orient, but highly profitable for Westerners who went along the Orientalist path and exploited it.

1.2. East-West Relations

It is difficult to remember a time when peace ruled the world. It seems like since the dawn of time, man as often as he can has inflicted pain and misery to his fellow man. It is even more difficult to remember a time when people from the East and the West were not trying to slit each other's throats. It is hard even to remember a time when there was no tension between the East and the West. The history of clashes between them can be traced to the war between the Greeks and the Persians 479 years before Christ. Man's addiction to have the original descent, the true faith and the right to reign over all mankind, are reasons that justified these atrocities. Identity, to distinguish oneself from the other and faith provided humans with a sense of belonging to universal morals—but many times: identity and faith—were the fuel that ignited wars and took away millions of innocent lives.

For the west, Europe and The United States, the history and identity of the Orient have started with the rise of Islam in the 8th century. Western media, programs and entertainment, paint the Oriental people as bearded Muslim men and veiled Muslim women. In the Western media, the only people who exist or ever existed for that matter; are Muslim Arabic people. Arab Christians, Arab Jews or the Druze have had no place in the Western media coverage. That is probably due to the rich history of conflict between the West and the East. But in all the wars that were fought between the two, one always stands in its bloodiness, vileness in creating an everlasting opposing identity for the East and the West. Indeed, the Crusades Wars changed the history of the Orient and the West.

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With time, both the inhabitants of the East and West tailored down not only a different identity—but an opposite one—that is when the real clash started, when both parties created and believed that the other, not only has a different identity (which was sufficient enough to justify going to war against him), but is adhering to an opposite truth. That is enough, if not to eradicate the other, then, to take him as a lifelong enemy.

1.2.1. Oriental Identity

The Orient means the geographical boundaries and Oriental countries as analyzed by Edward Said, the Arab-Islamic lands that came into direct contact with Britain, France and America (Orientalism 17). These lands were and still are the place of struggle and wars.

The Orient went through numerous civilizations, the main ones being the Babylonian (that included large parts of modern day Iraq and Syria) and the Pharaoh civilization, with the Hammurabi codes, laws and beliefs thousands of years before Christ. The Pharaoh's monumental Agriculture Revolution had a huge influence and impact in creating Eastern identity, belief and standards (Harari 70). However, nothing was more gripping and instrumental in manufacturing the Eastern Identity as it is known today than Islam.

Islam's ability to rally different people, cultures and lands under one umbrella, has to do with stories. According to the evolutionist Yuval Harari, stories enable the creation and the development of societies; since every individual believes in the same story (92). Hammurabi and the Pharaoh told stories of discipline and labor to their disciples, but none as peaceful as the Muslim one. For the first time, people of that region stopped worrying that they have to work for long hours and perhaps even die to build the new pyramid or tomb for the new god. Individuals in the time of Islam stopped seeing the neighboring tribe as potential invaders, but as brothers. The Muslim army in the newly Muslim countries and citizens no longer see themselves just part of a sector, but defenders of a whole faith.

Islam based its foundation in Mecca. Then, many tribes thereafter converted to Islam and created an Islamic-based civilization. It was only after the death of the Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him), in the 8th century, that Islam started converting other nations. The Umayyad empire was responsible for Islam reaching Asia; Syria, Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon. In the same century, Tariq Ibn Ziyad, was able to conquer the Barbary territories in North Africa. Islam's biggest victory would have to wait until the beginning of

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the 9th century, when Muslims entered Spain. By that time Islam and Muslims were threatening the very existence of the most sacred pillar of the Western identity—Christianity.

Islam was divided. Even though it managed to conquer, in its peak parts of Spain and Sicily, the Muslim World was divided. The ruins of the Abbasside Empire was fighting the Umayyad Empire to rule the Muslim lands, the Fatimid caliphs were trying and fighting other Muslims for a Shi'a caliph in Egypt.

1.2.2. Western Identity

To speak about a western (European) identity before and after the coming of Christianity, would mean talking about the Roman Empire, an Empire that shaped European identity for centuries. Prosperity, development marked the majority of its rule. At its peak, it ruled many parts of Europe, Africa and Asia. Europe also endured in those times oppressive and military rule that treated everyone else who does not have a noble blood running through his veins or Roman as a slave. Emperors like Nero, made a name for himself, prosecuting, torturing and killing unarmed Christians. Christ and Christians endured humiliation and persecution for centuries till year 312, the Empire started adhering the Christian faith.

According to Karen Armstrong, specialist in religious wars, it took Europe five hundred years of wars, religious hatred, division, and a Pope telling them to kill the new anti-Christ to find acceptances and unity (476). Mainly because, as Nicholas Jaspert, a professor in the medieval argues, for many century leading in up to the first Crusade the West had a crisis of identity (15). There was no such a thing as Europe or the West, mainly because the West was divided. Europeans had more allegiance to the parish they lived in and families they descend from, than a Western identity.

Jaspert shows that Europe in that era was divided into the Greek East and the Latin West, with both blocks being different: costumes, traditions in everything. Europeans, at least the Western block, mainly because it was responsible for the majority of the Crusades; enjoyed a geographical territory from the Pyrenees to the Elbe (2). Jaspert shows that Europe in that era was divided into the Greek East and the Latin West, with both blocks being different: costumes, traditions in everything. Europeans, at least the Western block, mainly because it was responsible for the majority of the Crusades; enjoyed a geographical territory from the Pyrenees to the Elbe (Ibid).

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The idea here is not to reduce Christianity, one of the most famous and old religions known to man, to two paragraphs, but to show the crisis of identity that Europeans had in that era, but most importantly how the Church looked and went to extraordinary length and bloody means and lies to forge an identity that could encompass all Europeans; an idea, identity a story for all Europeans to rally behind.

1.2.3. The Crusade Wars.

After witnessing a Europe torn apart by internal conflict and wars, Pope Urban the second, in 1095, begged all Europeans in the name of God, to put their hands together to help their orthodox brothers in Palestine, and to rescue the holy land from people who did not know God (Asbridge 38). Not only was that, during many hate-speeches in his campaign to raise capital and to rally warriors for his cause, a truly barbarous image given the Turks who “were slaughtering and capturing many [Orthodox Christians], destroying many churches...” (41). The response was better than expected, Thomas Asbridge remarks, children, women, men and the elderly were all marching to save their brothers under name of religion.

Asbridge also remarks that after seeing the enemies going to the holy land, Muslim Imams ignited in their followers the sense of *jihad* to go defend and kill the enemies of Islam (15). People from Egypt, Iraq and Syria came to the aid of their brothers in Palestine. Names like Salah-Adin and Sultan Baybars were leading the Muslim army against the pagan worshipers.

According to Karen, what follows are stories of ruthlessness and bloodshed by the army of the Cross and the Crescent. In entering parts of Jerusalem, Europe’s armies slaughtered what is estimated to be thirty-thousand Muslims and Jews in two days against stories of patience and peacefulness of the armies of the crescent (476). But, with time and the continuity of war for centuries to come, both armies committed atrocities against each other. This war in the name of God would continue for centuries. Partly, according to Asbridge, for the belief in Europe that fallen soldiers in the holy land are martyrs (Asbridge 15). Moreover, Europeans believed that a trip to the holy land would redeem the souls from all sins (Asbridge 15). The end of the thirteenth century would bring with it an end to the bloodshed, with the European armies retreating from the holy lands.

The aftermath of these wars did not end there, the wealth that Europe and the Church accumulated from looting the holy land of its wealth, the power and trust that the European

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people gave their kings, now that they are celebrated as defenders of the faith, would give rise to a European identity. An identity that will lead to the new Imperial attitude and wars as Asbridge asserts (16). The decline of the Islamic world after the Crusades with their inability to defend their land and the subsequent rise of the Ottomans in Constantinople by the 13th century will give the latter the status of the defender of the Islamic world. The Ottomans being the only opponent to the dominance of the Christian European power, they will be taken as the new anti-Christ.

Both Armstrong and Asbridge agree on the ever lasting impact of the Crusades. Asbridge thinks that these wars paved the way not only for an artistic and tragic portrayal of these wars where a conflict is painted between powers of the good and true faith, represented by the Christian chivalry, and the powers of wrath and the anti-Christ. They also gave much needed justification for a later Western imperial period as well as situating Islam as the enemy of Christians (2).

The Church's hostility towards Islam and its inability to justify its rise, fame, success and the accelerating pace of Islam in converting new believers and the zeal and enthusiasm of the believers of the new faith gave rise to the most ancient and bloody religious conflict in human history. The decline of the Muslim world, and the rise of the Ottomans in the East, created an Eastern camp while the wealth and religious zeal of Europe created a new power in the West. The two camps will continue the war in the name of all Muslims and Christians.

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It is no surprise that one of the first lines written in Edward Said's *Orientalism*, was about representation. The book in its entirety is speaking about the Western representation of the East, which is, first, very generous of the Western writers, giving a voice to the voiceless. The problem is that, for the most part, they gave it a very wretched, barbaric and exotic voice. That was what Said was targeting when he quoted Karl Marx, and the latter's idea about the Orient, that "they cannot represent themselves, they must be represented" (quoted in Said 1).

The idea of going back in time to briefly analyze the writing, thoughts and attitude of the modern era may seem fertile, because the countries of Shakespeare and Chateaux Briand had a hostile stand against everything that is Oriental. A documented trail of misleading

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leading images (to say the least) of the East will serve to better understand the source material of the post-modern era.

To understand the hideous portrayal of the East in today's Entertainment, an analysis of the history of the East-west conflict must be given. Every single notion, idea, belief, portrayal or stereotype that is given about the Orient can be traced in previous works about the Orient, and as Edward Said states, every notion about the Orient "affiliates itself" with other previously done works (20). That is why, it is important to see the western (European) portrayal of the East through the most recognizable and influential artistic eras in the West. Orientalism, as Edward Said sees it, is a collection of literary works that depict the Orient as a land full of exoticism and barbarity (6). In Edward Said's idea, it should never be seen as static through time, but as dynamic. Different depictions were given, depending on the West's need.

As far as this works is concerned, an Orientalist picture as Edward Said defines it began with the 11th century. France's oldest epic—*Chanson de Roland* builds a world where king Charlemagne successfully frees Spain from the Muslim rule, axes down the synagogues and statues of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and imprisons, tortures with hot iron and burns at the stake, infidels who refuse to convert to Christianity (Routledge 92).

In Medieval Europe, as John V. Tolan writes, Easterners were seen and portrayed as a bunch of polytheist-worshippers (1), which was not strictly false. Easterners had a rich history of worshipping fire, sun and god-like-statues made of dates. But Medievalists invented and developed an idea that will breed an immortal image about the Orient, Islam and Muslims—the worshipping of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The rising star of the Church and its control, influence and fame brought a progress to the depiction of the East. Islam, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and Muslims are seen as a heresy for Christianity, a false Prophet, and as lustful demonic-like people (Tolan 2). As far as the medieval church or Europe (because the only representatives were the ultra-Catholic priests); Fra Dolcino sects and the reformation Martin Luther and Islam were all heresy for the true Christian faith.

By the time of the Renaissance, the fame of the Elizabethan plays contributed to the image of the Orient. Plays like Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* and Shakespeare's *Othello* were shocking, bloody and graphic plays that solidified and ingrained a ruthless image about the land and the people of the Orient. The Enlightenment period was a very mixed-bag. Philosophers and writers like Voltaire and David Hume rebuked the Crusades and the

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crusaders (Sibery 364). Edward Daniel invited and encouraged his readers to question the common belief about the Orientals; praising them to be more enlightened than the Europeans (Sibery 365). On similar stapes, Sir Walter Scott followed in *Talisman*; showing the generosity, loyalty and knowledge of Orientals. But the surfacing of Romantic poet Lord Byron and his friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the rising fame of the *Arabian Nights* tainted the picture of the Orient in those times.

By the beginning of the 20th century, Orientalist imagination conjured up an ambivalent imagery of the Orient. The soft touch and depiction in Robert Hitchens's *the Garden of Allah* and the truly fulgurous imaginary of *The Sheik* by Edith Maude Hull were amongst of the most widely successful published works. The travel writings of Gertrude Bell, Wyndham Lewis and Edith Wharton were not as popular as their predecessors, but they contributed immensely to the extravagant and exotic portrayal of the Orient.

1.3.1. Orientalist Sources

It seems that every period that Europe went through, the Orient and its people are used, tailored and depicted in a different way. Periods like The Medieval, Renaissance, Enlightenment and Imperial times had a different perception and a different purpose and goal for depicting the Orient. Wars and conflict are always the most powerful incentives for human imagination. One of the first documented presences of Oriental characters can be dated 479 years before the coming of Christ, with the production of the Aeschylus plays. One of the incentives that perhaps lead to the spiraling of the imagination of the Greeks at that time was the war and potential invasion of the Persian armies.

The crusades were the first and far most determining element of the Orientalists writings. As previously stated, the Orient's tyranny, barbarity and exoticism were first produced in Medieval Europe, during and after the crusades. The war inspired many writers and wars to come. After the signing of the Karlowitz peace treaty in 1699, travelling to the Orient was much safer. Travel writers flocked to write about lands that their ancestors died to claim. This is perhaps most permanent in the case of one of France's most remarkable 19th century name—Chateaubriand. His mother used to tell him chivalry stories of his great ancestors who witnessed the Holy Wars. These tales were pivotal when writing “We travel to Jerusalem under the banner of the Cross” (quoted in Sibery 365). Chateaubriand's brain did not only venture nostalgically when he was in the Holy Land. Apparently, he took his

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knighting too seriously, when he promised to free the Holy lands from the “dominion of the infidels” (ibid).

Many of the Orientalist writers build a deeply spiritual relationship with the Orient that will later breed an imperial attitude and colonization. Benjamin Disraeli and Mark Twain’s imperial writings about the Orient in the 19th century were heavily dosed with Crusades or Crusaders hints. The British former prime minister subtitled his most famous work *Tancred: The New Crusade*. In addition, part of the story is set in a Crusades battlefield. Mark Twain’s travel to the Holy Lands made him very much eager to have witnessed that era, after being astonished by the sword of Godfrey of Bouillon. His romantic mind took him to the times of Richard the lionhearted and Princely Saladin (Sibery 388).

One of the first published works in the newly established settlement in Virginia, America; were the works of Captain John Smith. In these writings, Timothy Marr’s investigating efforts lead him to remark the permanent influence of the Crusades. Captain Smith practically saw himself as a “crusader against Muslims” (2). The Ottoman Piracy activity and the conflict between the newly established United States were a rich material for American writers. Many 19th century books were dealing with stories of slaves, or whites captured by the Ottoman pirates, which led to the captivity narratives. The Crusades nostalgia will continue to influence travel writing and writers; most notably the works of the British writer-spy: T.E. Lawrence. Similar to Chateaubriand, Lawrence of Arabia had ancestors who accompanied Richard the Lionheart to the Holy Lands.

Another source, equally catalytic in igniting the Orientalist writing was the publication of the *Arabian Nights*, somewhere in the mid-18th century. *The One thousand and One Nights* does not date back to the Crusades, and it did not incite a religious hatred as they did; but the book provided a much needed sexual freedom that the Victorian age was repressing. The *Arabian Nights* inspired the Victorian generation and many generations to come to write about the exotic women, barbaric men and the richness of the Oriental land.

1.3.2. The Image of the Orientals.

Through the years, Europe was always in constant need to reevaluate itself and its identity, so the other was always needed. When France was ready for a revolution and to change its values, ruling and social system, there was the Orient to illustrate the corruption and despotism of the French king. When the British wanted a social change, the writing of Mary

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Wollstonecraft to demand the right for women's education found the Orient with its ignorant, lustful and exotic women as damning illustration. The same that can be said for many European philosophers who wanted change, most notably Benjamin Franklin. Franklin in his very much late, but still honorable attempt to abolish slavery, in 1790, wrote a letter to the *Federal Gazette* satirically attacking and comparing the misery, awfulness and pain of slaves under American rule to that of slaves under the Algerian despotic rulers (Pangborn 6). It might be very honorable of Franklin and Mary Wollstonecraft to defend the rights of men and women to have control and saying over their lives, but why the need to make the Orient and Orientals the land and people of ignorance, control and slavery?

The Orientalist imaginary seems to have been present in the European stage and mind since time immemorial. From the Geek plays to the Elizabethan ones, from the sexual insights in *The Persians*, 479 BC (Said 21), to the "thick-lips, Moor and devil" of Shakespeare's *Othello* in the 16th century (365-66-67). From falsifying events in the epics of medieval Europe like: *Songs of Roland*, to the "false infidels!" of Lord Byron's in the Victorian times. From the insinuations of the dumbness, slowness and the retardedness of the Arab minds in the 20th century travel narratives (Lawrence 17), to the blunt depiction of the terrorist minds of the Arabs in nowadays novels.

American clash with the Oriental world was to some extent with the only powerfully enough representative—the Turkish Empire; and they started both with the wrong foot. The latter, seen by all Westerners and the eastern countries (at least for a while) as the representative of the Muslim world, the former representing this conservative version of Christianity and a clear religious mission, to spread the American belief to the rest of the world. If this encounter feels like a Deja-vu (with medieval era), it is because it was so for a while—until the battle of Navarino, 1827—each side thinking he is the soldier of God, doing "God's work". The seeds of hatred in America were planted way before its independence. It started with the stories that the first European settlers brought with them to North America. In the newly established plantation of Virginia there was no more adventurous, exotic and entertaining stories to pass a day full of dreadful labor, famine, illness and death that encountered the first settlers, than that of one John Smith. The most graphic writings in recent history are about Orientals or take place in an Oriental world. This is clearly seen in Captain Smith's writings where he is fighting and bashing the brains out of the "cruel devouring Turk" (Marr 3).

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In the American colonial era, the image of the Orientals progressed, but it did not change. Even after the Independence, the imaginary went from bad, with the tales of the barbarous Turk, to worst, the Ottomans and Orientals being portrayed as the enemy of Americans and their liberal values. This belief was ingrained in the hearts of the founding Fathers and in the American imagination. Timothy Marr showed that the first draft of the American Declaration of Independence had some clear comparison between the dictatorship of the British rulers over the American people and that of the Ottomans (20).

1.3.2. Oriental Responsibility

To depict the Orient as passive and impotent at the times where an image and a stereotype was being manufactured in Europe, as Edward Said believes, is only half of the truth. Said minimizes the scholarly breakthroughs of William Jones in 1783. Yet six months after his coming to India, Jones created the Asiatic Society, a society whose interest and investigation of the Sanskrit language will lead to the identification of Indo-European language (Harari 256). Said never pauses to ask why neither the Muslims, who invaded India many centuries before, nor the Indians took any interest in the Sanskrit language like the Europeans did.

Edward Said found refuge in the works of the French Philosopher, Michael Foucault, especially in the *Order of Things* about the subversiveness and imperial power of knowledge (Orientalism 22). Yet, Foucault thinks that “individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application” (quoted in Mills 35). If the Orientalist writers created lustful, barbaric and ignorant Orient, Orientals became the emancipation of these imageries. Moreover, by abiding to this definition, Orientals gave, and continue to give, life to the notion of Orientalism that Said was denouncing—Orientals are the real Orientalists.

The European powers, unlike the Muslim Arabs and then the Ottomans in their prime, managed to balance their imperial greed with their knowledge curiosity. James Cook's voyages, in the 1786, to what is now New Zealand and Australia, were financed by the English Royal Society; probably to colonize new lands, but on the dock of that ship were artist to draw the new land, astronomers and many others. After three years, the ship brought back priceless astronomical, geographical, botanical and zoological information (Harari 15). On one hand, Europeans were willing to admit their ignorance and sought knowledge everywhere, beyond the reverend books and beyond the European land. On the other hand, the last Muslim or Arab financed expedition or contribution to humanity can be traced to medieval times. Muslim Empire and then Ottomans one were full bellied by the insight

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Qur'an contributed to them. Afterwards, the first perished and the second went to the solitude of the harems. Harari remarks that when the Muslims conquered India, they were not interested in its history, zoology or culture, but the Europeans were (254).

Bernard Lewis cites the chronicles of an Ottoman officer in the 16th century after being visited by a diplomatic ambassador from Britain. Selaniki Mustapha Efendi is shocked by witnessing firsthand the might of a ship from England; a land to his surprise ruled by a woman (48). This shows the ignorance and solitude of the supposedly “defender of Islam”. A clear state of the Oriental ignorance, illiteracy and passivity can be seen in the trip of travelers and travel writers. Many of the knighting ceremonies and promises (like that of Chateaubriand) took place publicly in the Holy Lands; where, as Sibery remarks, Muslims were calmly “smoking chibooks, or drinking Sherbet” (Sibery 366).

Most of Orientals adhere to a faith that teaches and encourages tolerance and acceptance, yet as Asbridge remarks, the Orientals’ inability to understand the Christian faith; as they regard it as polytheist (540). This religious hatred is clearly seen in the translation, in 1865, by Syrian Christian historians of what was known as wars of the Ifranji, wars of the Franks, to al-hurub al-Salabiyya, which means wars of the cross, (548)—a clear insinuation to the Christian faith. The Oriental world not only resurrected its animosity with Europe, but it made a new enemy—all Christian believers. Besides the way the Orient elite and politicians justified their failure to protect the holy land, after the Second World War, and paint the Jewish immigrant as a form of a new crusade; and by doing so, added to the ever increasing enemies to the East to include all Jewish believers (549). Now there is “Christian-Jewish” army against Islam.

The kidnapping and piracy activity of the Ottomans in the Mediterranean stained the image of Orientals for centuries to come. To make matters worse, the Ottomans (the defenders of Islam) in their time ruling what is now Saudi Arabia, banished the Arabic language from schools, courts and offices (Lawrence 22). Yet, Said is blind to this imperial attack on the Arab language and people by the Ottomans, which will lead to an insurgence in the Arab peninsula.

1.4. Popular Image of the Orientals

The nineteenth-century brought with radical change in the European way of thinking about the other. The attractiveness and fame of many evolutionist writers and writing had its

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influence on shaping the Western mind for centuries to come—but more importantly; these writings paved the way to a superior and imperial look and attitude towards everything that is not western. Michael Pickering remarks that from the beginning of the nineteenth century onward, the European society regarded itself as modern; and told itself stories about “[a] pseudoscientific rationalization of racial differences developed at that time” (xii). However, this notion of having a superior race that Europeans took to heart led to a problem, as Brayan S. Turner remarks, because it begged the question—how do these other strange (different) creatures “fit into God’s plan?” (5). Paul Gilroy emphasizes the dilemmatic position, since the very fabric of decision making in the European history used “a logic that uses race to solve wider problems of belonging and fate” (quoted in Pickering xii).

European imperialists had a more violent manner when dealing with the Orient. A clear example of this attitude can be seen in the trip and the speech that Napoleon III gave in Algeria, in 1865. Some of the first words that Napoleon the third uttered to his fellow French settlers (colonizers) in Algeria were words that ignited a sense of rationalization of colonization in the colonizers’ hearts, that colonizing these barbarians is fair and justified since “... we are more civilized... because we are stronger’ (quoted by Çelik 21). The British also went along with this notion of civilizing their subjects. Although Rudyard Kipling finished his poem “The White Man’s Burden” by the end of the nineteenth-century, the idea and the responsibility of bringing some civility to the barbaric nations had been growing in the minds of the British for centuries.

Alongside the image of savagery and inferiority, Orientalist perception focused on women and harems. The less fortunate Western class, the poor one, was like a life line for the Orientalist cheap and pornographic writings. The minds that stepped in the Algerian harbors, in 1830; were those of soldiers, but among them were artist, novelist and painters who wanted first, to see with their own eyes the lustful lands they read so much about, second, to have their share of fame and richness that came with dealing with Oriental topics. In Britain, the industrial Revolution hit hard everyone who does not descend from a Royal family. For a penny or two, Malek Alloula remarks, Europeans can buy their way to these exotic lands (4); when in reality could never lay a foot on these land, let alone hand on the Oriental women.

It was not expensive or a gamble to publish them, on the contrary, as Reina Lewis frustratingly remarked “the harem sold books” (12). Selling related or Oriental imagery was profitable—especially if they were dealing with the exoticism and lustfulness of the harem

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women. All what the Western publisher needed to do, according to Reina Lewis, was just title the work: Harem, Arabian or any other title that can ignite in the readers minds the image of the exotic women of the harem (12), and the publishers secured for themselves readers. Exotic and lustful as these writings may be, as Reina argues, they were from the very beginning just a procedure for the Western male fantasy to dominate the Orient (18). This idea is pivotal (and would be later discussed and illustrated) to the continuity of the Oriental imagery in the twentieth-century.

“Orientalism leads to riches and respectability” wrote Mallek Alloula, writer, poet and critic. His work on documenting Orientalist photography and post cards is very pivotal. These pictures of the colonial era would contribute in the making of the Orientalist motion pictures. Ironically, richness and respectability came from producing and selling photographs of half-naked women. Alloula argues that postcards, paintings and photographs took Oriental literary works in the nineteenth-century (3). Laymen and tourists, who were illiterate or were not able to afford travel expenses, could cheaply buy photographs that suited their illicit pleasure and imperial minds; from half naked women to little girls behind steel bars. The women for the most part were not Algerian; they were just French models; who were paid and painted in black (15) to manipulate a mind that is famished and thirsty for the looks, the famous gaze and bodies, that Westerners read or heard about; but those illustrations were not quite authentic and accurate as these photographs.

The insight that West accumulated all those centuries about the East proved very useful, especially in the twentieth-century with the progress of the imperial plans of the European countries and the Great Wars. The Orientalist wheel will continue in the twentieth-century; but it is no longer just the superiority of everything white and western over the Oriental world. In addition to that, because the West dominated, ruled and colonized the Orient for so long, by the western standards and calculations, the Orient owes and is owned by the West. The Oriental Imagery was altered depending on France and Britain’s needs. Orientalist imagery and its distortion can be seen in the European propaganda in those decades.

In the Second World War and in order to regain some control and to get some very much needed support from their colonies; for in the early days, France and Britain were losing terribly both territory and men, Britain wasted no money and planning to recruit men, even people who were sick, poor, never traveled to the next village let along another continent and had no experience with firearms. Nevertheless, they were given guns and put in the front lines

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of the bloodiest battles. For a short while the Orientals and every other resident in colonial Europe (lands occupied by France and Britain) were given an image other than villains. Even Nazi Germany created propaganda about the Arab world, mainly after the visit of the grand Mufti of Jerusalem: Haj Amin Al-Husseini. Pictures were taken of the meeting between the Mufti and Hitler. Propaganda was made about the dreadful encounter that showed a total agreement between the Nazis and the Arab world against their supposed enemies: France, Britain and Jews.

As soon as the Allies won the War, with the unaccredited help of the Orient a familiar argument and imagery was needed to justify the continuing presence of Western troops in these lands. Newspapers, radio broadcasting and prestigious politicians and scholars ranted around about the saint-like foreign troops and the barbaric and ruthless Orientals. Robert Lacoste, the general, minister and the Algerian governor, kept feeding himself, colonists and the Western media a barbaric image of Algeria and Algerians (Fanon 89).

The impact of both religions in the shaping of the East and the West has already been stated, religion continued to be part of the popular imagery of the Orient that shaped Imperial Europe and 20th-century West and East. As Bernard Lewis remarks, in the best scenario, Muslims regarded Europeans and their faith as “accretion and distortion”. Europe’s view as Lewis remarks was more radical as Europeans saw their neighboring religion as “subsequent to God” and its worshipers as infidels and full of evil (57).

The Orient or the Arabs were not the only victims of this vicious propaganda, residents of the southern Africa, people with Black skin generally, and Jewish people had the most hideous, animalistic and dehumanizing propaganda attributed to them because of the color of their skin and their faith. As Frantz Fanon remarked, in his *Towards an African Revolution*, the propaganda about the dysfunction of the skull and emotion of people of color and the hatred towards the Jews was deeply rooted in the colonizers minds (32). But in the twentieth-century cinema, apart from few early racist anti-Semitic productions, there was a change of heart. By the mid of the twentieth-century, producing a work attacking Colored or Jewish people would label the work racist or worse anti-Semitic—but producing a work about the ignorance and barbarity of the Arab or Muslim people would get a laugh from the audience and perhaps even an Academy Award.

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1.5. Twentieth-Century Adaptations

The twentieth century brought with it events that affected the American Orientalist depictions on both the small and big screens since the film industry flourished mainly in the United States. The Second World War, the War on Vietnam, the Nixon and Regan eras, were very influential in creating many of the themes that were later depicted in many Orientalist works. David Harvey, professor in New York University and a writer of many social economical books, argues from the begging of Seventies, America have witnessed a “sea-change in culture and as well as political-economic practices” (quoted by Tomlinson 185). These political events, political and economic hardships produced many of the most racist and Orientalist adaptations ever seen. But most importantly, lamentably and dangerously, the political and economic confrontations between America and the Orient created a society where racism, prejudice and degradation of the other are acceptable and even successful. All these eras helped to shape the American consciousness. The production of Hollywood varied when it comes to the Orient. A classification for these films is necessary, from: low budget, critically acclaimed and cartoon films. The idea of the Orient also changed depending on the social events taking place in the West and the Arab lands.

This idea of demonizing, vilifying and creating a stereotype of the other—the non-American, is the cornerstone of Hollywood. From D.W. Griffith’s racist epic *The Birth of a Nation* in 1915, depicting African Americans as criminals and rapists, to John Wayne gunning down indigenous Indian tribes in many of his cowboy movies (as *The Searcher* in 1956), this awful depiction will continue to focus on building an anti-Soviet propaganda, Sylvester Stallone’s *Rocky IV* (1985) and Tom Cruise’s *Top Gun* (1986). It reached its height in banning directors and writers, known as Blacklist writers, who have some association with Communist Parties. The four-time Academy winner Dalton Trumbo was one of its victims. This propaganda also targeted Arabs and Muslims. The *Arabian Nights* had an influence on the early adaptation on the big screen, but also insurgents in the near East and North Africa had a huge coverage in America. Consequently, these tensions were either directly adapted or had an influence to shape the American mind.

The image of the Orientals would develop through the twentieth century. Motion pictures will come to substitute novels and travel books as the official representative of the Orient. Most of the works that will be analyzed are produced and financed in America. At first, America and Americans tailored themselves an identity that stands opposite the Soviet

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Union's people and standards after the Second World War. Through the cold war years, the Eastern Block will get most of the media coverage and movie propaganda, but with the images coming from the Near East: the veiled women, the heavy built bearded men and the violence shown erupting in those lands, Americans started to build themselves an identity against the conservative and most of the time tyrannical tradition of the Orient.

Motion pictures, in earlier productions, were heavily influenced by the *Arabian Nights* and Slavery Narratives, like: *A Harem Knight* (1926), *Two Arabian Knights* (winner of Best Picture in 1927 Academy Awards), *Harem Follies* (1924), *Harem Scarem* (1932), *Dancing in a Harem* (1897), *Ham in a Harem* (1915), *Harem Girl* (1952), *The Harem Bunch* (1969) and many other productions (Shaheen 3). All these motion pictures tell different stories but with common plots and representation of Arabs: Western characters either infiltrate the sleazy, fat and ugly Arab men and charm the easily seduced Arab women or save the white Western lady who is in danger of these barbaric men.

Reel Bad Arabs : How Hollywood Vilifies A People, by Dr. Jack Shaheen, is a well-documented book that sheds light on the hideousness of Arabs from Hollywood early productions like that of *The Sheik Steps Out* in 1937 to modern day blockbusters like the *Mummy* franchise. Shaheen found that the production of many Oriental movies, low budget ones, were financed by Israeli cousins Golan and Globus (3). The two cousins are responsible for producing many of the most awful and racist movies in Hollywood history according to the *New York Post*. Topless women, R-rated and violent movies are their signature mark. It is hard to know whether there were driven by their hate towards the Arabs (especially Palestinians) or just that the Orient provided them with the material they very much desired: exotic women, barbaric men and mysterious land. The Go-Go boys, as they were known, financed and produced more than 40 low budget and quality films (Lumenrick). An example of their poor quality films is *Sahara* (1983), the whole plot of which is about a blond girl who is kidnapped by a barbaric sheik. The poster of the film shows bared legged blond in the hands of this bearded barbaric Arab that will be defeated by a muscular American male. The two cousins are from Israel, but the last propaganda machine that relied heavily on showing the perfection of their blood and bodies while humiliating and hunting the others—were Nazis!

The politics of fear that surged in the Nineteen-Eighties, with the rise of Reagan conservatism harbored the idea of fear of the other that is so central in the working of

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Orientalism. Most of these movies, *Bolero* (1984), the series of *Allan Quatermain* movies (1986), *Firewalker* (1986), *King Solomon's Mines* (1985), *Sinbad and the Seven Seas* and so many other are set in an Oriental environment with a redundant plot, a blond woman who needs rescuing in an Oriental land, and scenes of violence and sex, interrupted by intimate shots of the leading characters (Shaheen 3). The characters in the movies reduce women to sex objects as all of them show their intimate parts, and a masculine American protagonist to save the day from the ugly Oriental antagonist who tries (unsuccessfully) to ruin his plans.

1.5.1. Orientalism on the Big Screen

Motion pictures shaped the American mindset and policies, and but most importantly, American policies and politicians shaped Orientalist motion pictures. Shaheen shows scores of movies that are aimed to take away the humanity of the Arab people. Kirk Douglas in *Cast a Giant Shadow* (1966) showed Palestinians as blood thirsty maniacs and *Black Sunday* is a 1977 blood fest movie which showed Martha Kellner, a Swiss Golden Globe nominee, portraying an Arab woman on the quest to bring death and wrath to America, killing and blowing up civilians on her way to achieve her goal (*Reel Bad Arabs*). These are the product of American policy.

Indeed, Jack Valentine worked in the government of Lyndon B. Johnson, in the Seventies, before leaving it to pursue a career in Hollywood. In the Eighties, he was already the president of the Motion Pictures Association of America, but he did not stop there; he became American Foreign Policy representative (Wayne), meeting with over 80 foreign governments from India to Moscow. He actually stated that "Politicians and Movie Stars spring from the same DNA" (Wayne). This shows the heavy influence of movies and politics on each other.

This marriage of American politics and Hollywood was (and still is) very misleading instrument in creating a myth about a pillar of the Oriental: Islam. Matthew Alford and Secker, in national security cinema, more than 800 hundred movies and more 1.000 television shows were financed by the Pentagon or the Central intelligence Agency. That was very (and still) dangerous and life threatening for the Arab people; since American: media, television and movie industry depicted Islam as religion of fanaticism and everyone adhering to it is one.

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Each time that the Orient was on the news, Hollywood reacted by making Orientalist driven movies. In the 1972 Olympiad in Munich, where a group of Palestinians killed in cold blood 11 Israeli members, Hollywood produced *21 hours in Munich*; where the Arab attackers are played Americans. In the nineteen-nineties when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, the sensational master piece of the Coen brothers, *The Big Lebowski*, appeared. The critically acclaimed movie is not an Orientalist one, but one of its pivotal characters, Walter Sobchack (played by John Goodman) is built, shaped by and takes inspiration from the tension between America and the Orient. Sobchack is a veteran from the Vietnam War; keeps angrily saying “this aggression will not stand!”—taken from president Bush senior’s speech after Saddam’s occupation of Kuwait, whenever he faces trouble, he say this “[Saddam] that camel fucker” (*The Big Lebowski*).

The spectacle of terror and the terrorist attacks under the Reagan, Bush senior, Bill Clinton’s administrations and the horrors committed by fundamentalists Ayman al-Zawahiri and Bin Laden were smeared and aligned with Islam. This spectacle of Terror will be exploited by Hollywood to create a lasting imaginary that associates Islam, Arabs and Orientals with killing, fundamentalism and terrorism. The terrorist attacks in the Bill Clinton presidency: the 1993 World Trade Center, the 1996 Khobar Tower Attack, in Saudi Arabia targeting American soldiers and many other attacks ushered in myriads of counter terror movies, most notably the highly profitable movie of Arnold Schwarzenegger *True Lie* (1994). It gained 146 million dollars domestically and more than 300 million worldwide where an Arab, presumably from Palestinian character, played by Pakistani (Art Malik) is the terrorist who is trying to blow up an American city.

Edward Zwick’s *the Siege* (1998) and considered by *The New York Times* as best seller of *The Looming Tower*. In the opening intro of the film, it is shown scenes from president Clinton press conference after the attacks of Khobar Attacks. Starring Denzel Washington, the movie deals with attempt of two FBI Agents to catch a Muslim Middle-Easterner who detonated a bomb in New York City. But the movie’s most horrific scene is when Muslims are driven to internment camps (like what happened to the Japanese after the Second World War) because they are seen by the government and the American people as responsible. The movie came under fire from The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, that it only deepens the hatred for Islam and Muslims (Goodstein).

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When Oriental characters are not ripped to shreds by the strong and muscular American male; they provide as what is called in the movies industry a comic relief; characters whose sole being and purpose in the movie is to provide laughter for the audience, but in the case of the Oriental characters; providing laughter for being Oriental concerns the ignorance, richness and lustfulness of their men. *The Happy Hooker Goes to Washington* (1977) where in one scene the sheikh character (played by Jerry Fisher) admits of having intercourse with animals. Moving along with the cheap-comedic production is *Cannonball Run II* (1984) which is another take on the ignorant, lustful and rich sheikh (here played by Jamie Farr). Those two movies and others are mentioned by Jack Shaheen, but he never gives a reason for the production, acceptance and success of these movies. The hardship, crisis, spiraling of oil prices, the increase of transportation and inflation that the American societies underwent for months and even years after the oil embargo of 1973 can be considered a factor. Especially since all what they saw on television were the Arab leaders responsible for their hardships.

But perhaps the most famous, critically acclaimed and dangerous is the 1992 Disney's *Aladdin*, a movie that generated more than 217 million dollars domestically and 504 million worldwide (box office mojo). In its opening intro, the audience hears "oh, I come from a faraway place...it's barbaric, but hey, it's home..." sung by Aladdin. A movie that was targeted for children became an instant sensation. It is full of Orientalist negative imagery. The men and soldiers are corrupt, ugly, out-of-shape and constantly swinging and carrying their big scimitar swords. The women are either belly-dancers, wearing see-through-pantaloon, showing half naked chests or sad princesses waiting for a forced arranged marriage in their castles.

The defamation and attack on religion of Islam is also there. In one scene, princess Jasmine (voiced by Linda Larkin), is caught stealing, and the strong, fat and ugly apple store-man, catching the right hand of the princes and wheeling his scimitar, says "do you know what the penalty is for stealing?" The Orient is a far away land that is barbaric where every woman is either a belly dancer or oppressed and the men take with their own hands and scimitar swords to enforce the barbaric Islamic religion. The image and the damage that this cartoon made is far greater than any Orientalist writing or terror spectacle by politicians.

1.5.2. Orientalism on the Small Screen.

The Orient and everything related to it, the Oriental women, tradition and land, were deeply exploited by the American publicity machine to reach American consumers. The

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Oriental market was very much profitable to American conglomerate companies. Car, technology companies, cigarette companies and many others took profit from exploiting Oriental imagery on the television commercials. Fagheh Shirazi, professor and a writer of many Middle Eastern studies did a remarkable investigation in the history and presence of the Orientalist degrading imagery in the America twentieth-century propaganda.

Famous car and computer manufactures like Jeep and IBM run television advertisements for the American consumer. Advertisement took inspiration from the Orientalist prejudices in the hope that would trigger and bring to life the old stereotypes, perceptions buried deep in their audience's mind. Advertisements that professor Shirazi argues were targeted for the middle class American male (13), showing the beauty, the famous eyes and the charming gaze of the veiled Arab women. One may think there is nothing wrong of advertising these images of women, especially since car companies have rich history minimizing women as mere object to advertise their cars. But the implicit message of these advertisements, as professor Shirazi keeps arguing, is that by buying these products the male American can fill the exotic void missing in his daily life and "he may even win the admiration the most inaccessible women. The veiled women" (Shirazi 13).

"I'm not frightened. I'm going to blow them [Syrians] off from the face of the earth, with the fury of God's own thunder." Those are not a medieval Crusader's words; those words were the last words of the second episode of the first season one of the most successful and long running shows in the American history: *The West Wing* (1999-2006), written by the most critically acclaimed and talented screen writers in the recent history, Aaron Sorkin. The *West Wing* is not an Orientalist show, as far as the scope given by Edward Said, but it does venture in the essence of "Us" against "them" that was a pillar of the Orientalist shows and movies. Each time the Arab land or people are mentioned, it is with hostility and are swiftly dealt with by the American president (played by Martin Sheen).

The Western media coverage and headlines that were made by Orientals or took place in the Orient are crucial and catalytic. Crucial because these events shaped and created an image in the Western societies and minds about the Oriental. The speeches, aired live on the small screens, given by Presidents: Reagan after bombarding Libya, Bush junior after the desert storm and Bill Clinton after many terrorist attacks; were like a gold mine for Hollywood producers and the theme they want to ascribe for Oriental and to the Oriental people:

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terrorism. These elected men, as Adam Curtis, the critically acclaimed BBC reporter, argues are “[politicians]... promised to protect us...from nightmares...from dangers that we don’t understand. And the greatest danger of all is international terrorism” (quoted from *The BBC Power of Nightmares*).

These events were politicized and distorted by those powerful presidents and media giants; they succeeded in creating a policy and imagery of fear of everything that does not resemble the American standard way of living. Chris Hedges, Nobel Prize winner and former *New York Times* journalist, stated about the media manipulation during the time of war that “The images and stories were designed to make us feel good about our nation, about ourselves.” (143).

The American hostage crisis in 1981, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait (the Gulf War) in 1990, the 1993 Attacks on the World Trade Center are historical events that were repeatedly used to vilify and demonize the other whilst romanticizing and idealizing the American government or soldiers. “It gave us media manufactured heroes and heady pride in our military” wrote Chris Hedges after being part of the media spectacle of the Gulf War (143). The speeches of presidents, politician and the media coverage created a spectacle of terrorism and barbarity, a barbarity as often as possible associated with the Arab land. In his address to the nation, president Ronald Reagan stated “... the terrorist bombing of La Bell Discotèque was planned and executed under direct orders of the Libyan regime...this monstrous brutality is but the latest act in colonel Kaddafi’s reign of terror” (Reagan foundation). Bush senior and Bill Clinton will continue this terrorist-rhetoric, rhetoric that would be aired live on American televisions, about the Arab lands, rulers and people.

This politicizing and distortion were meant to create a fear about the other. One day after the Oklahoma bombing, in 1995, although the bombing that took the lives of more than 120 people was carried away by an American, Arabs were blamed. Mrs. Al Mosawi, a seven month pregnant Iraqi refugee apartment in Oklahoma was attacked while she was playing with her two-year-old daughter (Henneberger). This perception, binding of terrorism with Arabs and this fear that would influence western society’s views about the Orient, will make the scenes of the terrorist Oriental acceptable—or worst, it will make them authentic.

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1.6. Conclusion.

The war between the West and East, which started thirteen hundred years ago for Jerusalem, never really ended with each side committing its fair share of atrocities. But what started as a religious war came to develop as an ideological and cultural conflict as each side tailored for itself binary-identities and scary stories to tell about the other.

The fall of the last Arab defenders (the Ottomans) and the rise of Europe as an empire paved the way to an imperial greed, exploitation and depiction of the Oriental land and people. A distorted image that paved the way to many fictional. A stereotype labeled to every Oriental since time memorial that Western society forgot its fictional origin.

Politicians, media and movie makers created a fictional spectacle of terror about the other — Arab people. A romantic fiction about terrorism coming from the Oriental land that only American Presidents can understand, only American media can see it and cover it and only American soldiers can relieve the world from this great evil. This romantic vision about the self and heinous other will be the drive of much bloodier events, more sophisticated, political, media and movie spectacle that breed a new kind of Orientalism.

Chapter Two: Neo-Orientalism

Chapter Two: Neo-Orientalism in *American Sniper* and *Jack Ryan*

2.1. Introduction.

The image that was constructed about Muslims thousand years ago as the infidels who killed Christians in the holy land, the exotic land with its lustful, yet inaccessible women, the savage land with its ugly barbaric men, has come to create a stereotype. Michael Pickering argues the function of a stereotype, as he argues that it is used to normalize the attribution of despicable images to the other and wheeling and forcing power over him (5). A degrading idea that will be used by western and eastern terrorists to create a bloody war that will be broadcasted live, documented and distorted by the most famous networks and Hollywood studios. After the September attacks, the media established successful to link Islam and Arabs with every killing and terrorist attack, as many War movies and counter-terrorism shows. The reinforcing of the old stereotype about the faraway Oriental people and the entertainment behind the creation of a new scary stereotype of the near and close Oriental people, will be highlighted in what follows.

2.2. Twenty-first Century Neo-Orientalism.

The conflict that was fought between the two sides, the wars in the name of God; those in the name of greed and those in an imperial name, are the backbone and source material of a tragic conflict between the powers of good and those of absolute evil. In nowadays entertainment, this tragic-like conflict of morals, standards, beliefs between East and West will breed a new kind of Orientalism that has far more reaching and deadlier implications on the struggling nations.

The dawn of the twenty-first century and its catastrophes, bloodshed and wars brought with it a new potent-visual Orientalism that this work will name Neo-Orientalism. The latter is different mainly because of its goals. It is not a matter of subordinating and distorting the Oriental image in order to justify the colonization, looting, killing and control of the Oriental land (as Orientalism was defined by Edward Said). Neo-Orientalism is different mainly because of the level of sophistication of the political and religious propaganda used to subordinate, trap and ground the Muslim Arab immigrants coming to Europe and those in the Oriental land imaginary as ignorant, fanatic, despotic and terrorists. This hideous and distorted image of the Orient and its Religion, when it is used in the media or adapted to television shows or movies, is what this research calls a Neo-Orientalist entertainment. The latter is operating in its fullest speed to depict Islam as a religion of hatred and terror. It

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encompasses the image of the Oriental Muslim women to the same subordinate, ignorant and trapped veiled women, and creates a myth of fanaticism and terrorism around every Oriental male.

Douglas Kellner argues that “Media stories provide the symbols, myths and resources through which we constitute a common culture” (7). Neo-Orientalism is different because of the means that are used to defame the Orient and its religion. Selling the image of the terrorist, anti-Christian and evil “other” is very profitable. Fox News, CNN, CBS, NBC and many other networks and cable networks are the new mighty Orientalist writers. They figure out that selling images of hate, war and terror is more profitable and brings in millions of viewers, just like eighteenth and nineteenth-century Orientalist writers figure out that selling the stories of exoticism and barbarity of Oriental women and men leads to richness.

The capitalist driven system is weighing-in its heavy toll on the media since selling war propaganda is profitable as will be highlighted. Bob McChesney, founder of *Free press* and writer of *The Problem of the Media*, argues that the problem of the media starts with understanding its role in a capitalist system, “the crucial tension lies between the role of the media as profit-maximizing commercial organization” and its innate role to provide eligible and authentic stories (17). This is rather ironic, knowing that the pentagon spent 1.2 billion on war-propaganda (*Why We Fight*).

Religion as it was seen plays the biggest role in shaping the West and the East. In Neo-Orientalism and its entertainment, the stakes will be higher. For this romantic vision of the world will continue poisoning the heart of Muslims, Christians and Jews in killing in the name of God and the eradication of evil. This war on religion worsened in the 21st century with Popes and Pastors attacking Islam, the Prophet and even in one case a priest threatened to burn the Qur’an live. The use of the Islamic religious rhetoric is not only done and exploited by Westerners, even Orientals use Islam to advance their agendas and to rally around supporters.

In the 20th and early 21st century depiction, the Arab and Oriental threat was showed to be generally coming from the deep parts of the desert or mainly just Palestinians, but in Neo-Orientalism the threat is different; the terrorist other who wants to destroy the Americans life and way of living is coming from inside. The Arab Muslim terrorists depicted in the second decade of the twentieth-century popular shows like: Amazon’s show *Jack Ryan*, the BBC and Netflix joint production *The BodyGuard* and Showtime’s *Homeland* are German, English

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and French Arab Muslim immigrants. This attack on the new terrorist made its way to the political arena. At the peak of the British right-wing propaganda for Britain to leave the EU, immigration was used to advance and to rally around British anti-immigration supporters. A huge bus was painted in red and written on it “we pay the EU 50 million a day.” (Stone).

Modern society is a pillar to Neo-Orientalist depiction of Arabs. Anthony Giddens, a British sociologist, attacks the basis of modern society because it “undercuts the basis of its own moral legitimacy” (quoted in Tomlinson 174). A legitimacy that was lost in the last century and continues to be in these days mainly because of the manner and habit these societies chose in dealing with the other. As J. E. Tiles, a professor and a writer in the University of Hawaii claims, the habits in our reaction in responding to joy and misery of life “are potentially the most disruptive of our interactions with one another” (5). After each catastrophe inflicted upon White-Christian or Muslims, riots of social rage would erupt.

Neo-Orientalism thrives in nowadays consumerist society. “It’s hard to say why we do these things except they’re there and we do them” (Tomlinson 185). To say that the modern and postmodern societies have no real sense of their action would give neither justification nor hold them accountable for their action. This work argues that the entertainment industry depicts the Orient in a horrendous way, because it was and still is profitable. The audience tune in to watch these works because they are entertaining. It joins the idea of a capitalist modern society driven by entertainment and which has no sense of the harm that it is causing the other. Politicians are the fuel that ignites and profits many times from attacking or gaining support from targeting Orientals and their religion. Hillary Clinton, 2016 used the grieving Muslim parents of a fallen America soldier as propaganda for her electoral campaign to show her liberal stands. The other presidential candidate, Donald Trump, the sitting president made fun and rebuked the Muslim parents of the fallen American soldier because the mother did not speak; alluding to the old Western belief about the Islamic doctrine oppressing the rights of women and their tyrannical male Muslims (BBC Editors).

The emphasis on modern society and their political representatives is not in vain. On one hand, White-Christians would giggle with laughter and retribution against African Americans, Hispanics and Arabs. A clear example of that would be the racist slurs that the sitting president of the United States employs in his rallies. On the other hand, Oriental societies have turned against Westerners. After the invasion of Iraq, the majority of Arabs had

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nothing but contempt for America and the West. Each Friday, imams are screaming and praying for the destruction of Westerners and western society.

Western terrorists as well as religious fanatics that dominate the representation of Islam and Christianity would increase the religious hatred between the two sides and set a ripe environment for Neo-Orientalist defaming propaganda that is made from making spectacle of terrorism and fear. This spectacle and image of terror would be broadcasted live in the West, adapted into blockbuster motion pictures and critically acclaimed television shows.

2.2.1. 9/11 and its Aftermath

By the dawn of the twenty-first century, Bush pulled the biggest and most successful heist at an American presidency ever. In one of the most heated presidential races in the history of America, Democrat candidate and the vice-president of Bill Clinton: Al Gore was ahead in the polls and one state away from winning the presidency. On one hand, CNN and CBS news declare Florida State to Al Gore which made him the president but Fox News on the other hand declared that Bush won the state and the presidency (*Fahrenheit 9/11*). After much debate and public hearings, there was a schedule count in the Florida state but, the Supreme Court intervened and blocked the recount and gave the presidency to George W. Bush. For the next eight months, as Michael Moore shows, Bush was hated by the people and without a purpose. He could not get approval for his judges and the Republicans lost the Senate but smoke in the skies on the 11th of September would give him a new purpose.

On September 11th, 2001, 19 terrorists linked to al-Qaida hijacked four airplanes and crashed two of them on the World Trade Center (WTC) and one crashed in the area of the Pentagon, killing 2.887 civilians in New York and the Pentagon near Washington, DC. It was the worst attack carried in United States soil since the war of 1812. Arab Muslim men and women will be prosecuted, hunted and killed because of the group that Reagan and the head of the CIA William Casey financed and train to defeat the Soviet. Now these groups came and bit the hand that fed them (*The Power of Nightmares*). American society will be victim of terror of the other and its own government.

For two years, American and British troops looked for the attackers in Afghanistan but nothing was found. The operation brought only failure and humiliation for both. There was not a whim of trace of the terrible, sophisticated and barbarous evil the West believed in Afghanistan. By the end of 2001, both parties were looking forward to reconcile their fans and

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supporters. They believed to honor the dead of 9/11 to eradicate all evil and evil doers in the world; the target now was put on site—Iraq.

In order for a second probably expensive and long war to happen, it must be justified. First, a higher and nobler reason was needed for the public and the world to rally around the bloody actions that will come. A sham was created that Iraq had a link with al-Qaida and has Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). George Bush, the sitting president at that time, of The United States stated that “Iraqi regime possesses biological and chemical weapons”. After a year, he gave another interview saying that “we found the weapons of Mass Destruction”. In August 26, 2002, and in a national convention of veterans Dick Cheney, vice President of George Bush stated “Saddam Hussein now has Weapons of Mass Destruction...he is amassing them to use... against us.” Donald Rumsfeld when asked if Iraq had links to al-Qaida he said “sure” (The Center for Public Integrity).

After the al-Qaida terrorists killed thousand in the World Trade Center, the western terrorists will rise to kill hundreds of thousands and to destroy the lives of millions in the Arab lands. A new kind of terror rose up; what Ahmad Mamdani calls “political terrorists”. “The political terrorist is not deterred by punishment...have the need to be heard but, more than often, cause to champion” (229). Just over two years from the attack, in 2003, The Center for Public Integrity found that these top officials and others lied 935 times in television, journal and radio interviews about the responsibility and link of Iraq with the attacks on WTC. After the attacks, a “War on Terror” was launched but not only against the individuals who mastermind the atrocity but against a religion and ethnic group. On the very next day of the attacks, Bush was already planning an attack on Iraq.

Tony Blair also helped to rally the troops and the British society behind this myth of terror; warning his nation that a terrorist attack was imminent. The media complied as fake terrorist attacks headlined newspapers; The London *Times* headlined “MI5 Exposes threat of Chemical attack on Tube”. The BBC went further in exploiting the fear of terrorism by releasing in 2004 a hyper-dramatized program that visualizes a chemical attack with a bomb on London.

In order to rally this attempt of war, the public needed to be behind the idea of total war and there is no greater tool to manipulate the public views than the media. Dan Rather, a CBS news broadcaster, stated that “There is a belief that the public does not need to know” about what was really happening in the attempt to go to war against Iraq (quoted in *Why We*

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Fight). In its effort to manipulate the media and to rally the public behind its bloody and unjustified war on Iraq, *The New York Times* columnist David Barstow, 3-time nominee of the Pulitzer awards, published a story about how the Bush-Cheney Government recruited and trained retired American generals to provide consultants for television. These consultants were “presented tens of thousands of times on television and radio” as military and war experts. Retired air force general and Fox News analyst was caught saying “Good work. Will use them” after receiving fresh intelligence from the Pentagon. In addition to their profit from the government, news channels pay them from 500 to 1000 dollars-per appearance (Barstow).

The Bush administration manipulated networks especially FOX News, the cable network that started airing in 1996. Fox News from its launching had Roger Ailes as CEO and chairman. He was a media strategist for Nixon, Reagan and Bush Sr. (three of the last four Republican presidents). A memo was given to the producers, news-anchors and television hosts who were forced to have a pro-war attitude. In one memo from the chairmen, news anchors were forced to appease their audience about the images coming in from the Abu Ghraib prison and to refer to the US marines as “sharpshooters” instead of “sniper” because it had a negative connotation (*Outfoxed*). In Fox News biggest show *The O’Reilly Factor*, presented by Bill O’Reilly, the audience could hear before the war that “once the war against Saddam begins, we expect every American to support our military, and if they can’t do that—to shut up” (quoted in *outfoxed*). A report found that the audience that watched FOX abated and had misperception about the War against Iraq (McFadden).

In the first six months of the bloody war, 50 precision airstrikes were launched at Iraqi military operatives and Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, praised the precision and success of the air strikes. In reality, none of the bombs met their target; the F1-17 airplanes actually dropped 2000-pound bombs on civilians (*Why We Fight*). The first casualties according to medics in Dora Farms, Baghdad, were children. In the footage of the critically acclaimed documentary, *Why We Fight*, children can be seen being rushed to the hospital: crying of pain, being stitched in the head arm, legs—or just not moving at all; dead! This was the power, might and precision of the greatest military power in the world. By the end of the American-British invasion, the lives of 461.000 thousand Iraqis were taken (BBC Editors).

In America, Arabs and Muslims were also having awful times. Hate crimes against Muslims and Arabs skyrocketed. According to the Human Rights Watch, the number of hate crimes against Muslims or Arabs, since American society do not distinguish them, multiplied

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by 1700 times, just from 2000 to 2001. The situation was so bad that George Bush senior had to issue a statement “The enemy of America is not our many Muslim Friends; it is not our many Arab friends.” (quoted in Alsultany 2). In a society driven by hatred towards a religion and anyone suspected of adhering to it, the hunt for Arabs began. More than 6,000 Muslims were deported; 1200 Arab Muslims were detained without a criminal charge in the USA (4). The hunt for Arab-terrorists began, but built on a fragile ground and on prejudices. People would be taken into custody, jailed in the worst and most abusive prisons of all, Guantanamo Bay, and tortured for looking like a terrorist. The criteria that would elevate a man to that status is a beard or wearing a Casio watch (BBC Editors).

The humiliation that the Muslim women endured and are still enduring is a long, painful, miserable, degrading and humiliating story. After the terrorist attack on September 11th, Arab Muslim women that hold nothing more precious than their decency and honor are rudely asked in the airport to strip down (the Guardian Editors). All this injustice, pain, misery and prejudices that the Arab Muslim community (which cannot be fairly summarized in these few words) destroying of lives and families in those times and the times to come, was based on the assumption that “religion, gender and national origin” (Alsultany 5) made the Arab Muslim Americans and non-Americans the enemy of a whole nation—an enemy to the humankind.

Islam also came under vicious attacks and was portrayed as the religion of fanatics and terror. None more so than Pope Francis’s offensive remarks about the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his method in teaching Islam when the Pope quoted a 14th-century Christian emperor who said that the teaching of the Prophet (peace be upon him) was “evil and inhumane” (Harding). On similar yet more fanatic footsteps followed pastor Terry Jones who wanted to burn the Qur’an in the ninth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks because Muslims wanted to build an Islamic center near the place of the accident.

Al-Qaida terrorists and the Western terrorists changed even the lives of Westerners, for even Western societies are victims. Obviously, they did not endure the humiliation nor prosecution that the Arab Muslim people did but they are victims of terrorist-politicians and channels they elected and watched. American politicians lied to their people about every war they fought. First, Lyndon Johnson created a lie about the Gulf of Tonkin incident in 1964 to invade Vietnam (Guttenplan); the wars and coup d’état that America masterminded in Latin America, starting with the rising star of Salvador Allende in Chile in 1973 and lastly war in

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Iraq. One powerful story of how the media and terror-politicians change the life of the American people is that of Welton Sekzer, retired policeman and a Vietnam lied-to-veteran, who asked for the names of his fallen sons in the attacks on WTC to be put on the first bombs that took the lives of innocent children in Iraq (*Why we fight*). The look on his face when Bush junior finally admitted that there was no link between Iraq and the September eleventh attackers.

It would be a distortion to paint and to give only the hostile acts of government, agencies and certain Americans. Some of the American women wore a scarf as an act of support to the Muslim and Arab community (Alsultany 4). The self-financed documentaries produced by Michael Moor (*Fahrenheit 9/11*) and Robert Greenwald (*Why We Fight*) were illuminating and eye-opening on the shady, manipulation and lies by the Bush administration.

The war images coming from Iraq were profitable for big studios, used by terror-politicians to advance their agendas and consumed by enraged consumerist society. Especially the footage coming from the Abu Ghraib prison where, knowing how precious and priceless, decency, respect, honor and religion means for Arab People; American soldiers stripped Iraqi detainees, electrocuted them, water-boarded them and put them on top of each other for hours and hours each day for years. The themes of torture, horrors of war and its colossal failure will become the themes of television and Hollywood productions. Big and small screens productions displayed the 9/11 attacks and the ups and downs of the “war on terror” especially from 2001 to 2010.

2.3. Neo-Orientalism in the Entertainment Industry

The Orientalist writing and the terrorist attacks that hit the west created and cemented an idea in the imagination of Westerners who read, witnessed or saw them; the medieval stereotype of barbarity would be sealed in the minds of these people. David Hume argues, in his *An Enquiry Concerning Human Nature*, that “Whenever any object is presented to the memory or senses...it...carries the imagination, which is usually conjoined to it” (39). This is perhaps why that whenever a western mind hears: Islam, Muslim or Arab is always linked to terror and barbarity. Neo-Orientalist entertainment capitalizes on this fact.

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The distorted image of Arabs and Muslims in the second decade of the twenty-first century found in motion pictures and television shows is what this work calls Neo-Orientalist entertainment. The images and stereotypes created by these works are strangely familiar and close to the idea of Bhabha's stereotype and the need for one; an ambivalent image and a stereotype that was shoved down repeatedly down the throat of Westerners depending on their mood and need like a weird fetish (quoted in Huddart 27). However, where Bhabha's drive for is a colonial attitude, Neo-Orientalism drive is cultural and religious; and its entertainment sets its goal to profits from this hatred.

Modern society sees that there is something genuinely entertaining in seeing "other" people being chopped to pieces, being blown-up or being stoned to death. Death-spectacles by modern standards are entertaining for the audience and profitable for the studios. Indeed, the highest rated television Neo-Orientalist shows such as *Homeland*, *Jack Ryan*, etc. and motion pictures like *Lone Survivor*, *London has Fallen*, etc. use Oriental characters to bring the dire version and the death-spectacle needed for the show. The audience can see the most graphic, exotic and brutal scene one can imagine. Yet, all this is swept under the rug of entertainment. Muslims in Neo-Orientalism are used for the shock-and-awe scenes; a tool to create a dystopian vision of the world. It is thought more authentic to bring a brown-looking character to ruthlessly blow American people up, than a white-supremacist; although the latter has more chance of actually committing a terrorist attack.

Networks continue to broadcast terror and making a spectacle out of it. New data collected by Columbia and Georgia Universities conclude that the media attention given to terrorist attacks in America carried out by Muslims receive 357% times more media coverage than white or right-wing terrorists even though white-right-wing terrorists carried out twice as many bloody attacks from 2006 to 2015 (Chalabi). This shows the media are breaking the oath promised to its audience but this work would argue that the blame resides on the American society shoulders. It makes more sense for the American romantic vision of seeing the world if the attacks are carried out by the same people they were fighting since times immemorial.

The works that deal with the Oriental stereotype have been received with a great success in the box office and the television. For example, *Bodyguard*, *Jack Ryan* has been renewed for a second season and *Homeland* that has always dealt with Oriental threat has been renewed for eight seasons. Movies that introduced the stereotypical Oriental villain have

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also found success as: *Lone Survivor*, *London Has Fallen* and *Sicario: Day of the Soldado* brought millions to their studios. This can illustrate the difference between Neo-Orientalism and media Imperialism. Hollywood studios do not care about having an agenda behind their production as long as it is profitable for the studios and very much entertaining. The Oriental elements: Islam, the oppressing of the Arab women and the fanaticism and terrorist attack of the Oriental male tend to get more attention.

The casting of the Muslim, the Arab in Hollywood or in television is a zero-sum-equation. The casting has witnessed some improvement, as studios in the big and small screen had a change of heart and some culture sensitivity but, what is the difference if an Arab is playing the role of one, if his only role is: screaming Allah Akbar, blowing himself or before shopping other people heads-off? Although small screen productions like: *Homeland*, *Bodyguard* and *Jack Ryan* (analyzed below) give more screen and dialogue time to the Arab antagonist in their episodes, it is still the rageful Arab who is trying to make a spectacle out of killing people.

Many of these shows escape criticism from American and British Anti-discrimination Committees. But using the idea of casting of a “Good-Arab” character as opposed to the tens of “Bad- Arabs” in the Neo-Orientalist movie and shows is a cheap way to defend the prejudicial tendency. These characters are used more than often as scapegoat for producer to create a more fanatical vision about Arabs and Muslims. Besides, Ella Shohat and Robert Stam claim that this way of grounding, encompassing and reducing the myriad question about culture and representation in a fight between Good and Evil shifts these pillar questions to the morals of an individual (quoted in Alsultany 14). Media conglomerates also joined in the making and profiting from covering Muslim topics.

The focus on American entertainment and policy is not haphazard. One of Samuel P. Huntington’s predictions in his critically acclaimed book *The Clash of Civilizations* is that the West would be dependent on the US to hold on and to defend the western identity (22), if there ever existed one. There is no need to venture on the scope of power, reach and influence that America has nowadays. In the entertainment industry there is no other place in the planet that generates more revenues and acclaimed shows like Hollywood. In 2017, Hollywood brought more than 43 billion dollars (Robb).

Neo-Orientalism is not restricted to fictitious motion pictures and television shows; conservative governments and media can be considered as part of the Neo-Orientalist

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Entertainment. Mainly because they operate in the same manner as television shows and movies: taking facts, then distorting, changing and bending them to make vivid in the mind of their supporters, the image of the terrorist other. Consequently, both the right-wing governments and the media profit from this entertaining distortion of facts. Politicians will use racist slurs, anti-Islam and Muslim propaganda to rally extremists behind them and advance their agenda. Samuel P. Huntington argued in his *Clash of Civilizations* that the great division among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be culture (23). Politicians took aim at the new target of Neo-Orientalism: immigrant. But in the first decade of the twenty-first century, the weapon that terror-politicians used is fear of the other after the terrorist attacks, in order to scare people into joining their ranks and standing against ‘the violent Islam and Muslims’. In the second decade, they used immigration and the fear of the homegrown terrorist to rally their supporters, against human beings coming from the last part of the world: scared, hungry and in desperate need for shelter.

Fox News continued its right-wing anti-Muslim propaganda with its popular shows: the *O’Reilly Factor* and *Fox & Friends*. Bill O’Reilly’s show was cancelled in 2017, due to the latter’s misconduct, harassment and abuse of several women but the show was on air long enough (1996-2017) to damage Muslims image around the world and in America. O’Reilly backed the war on Iraq and asked everybody who was against it to “Shut-up!” He tried to demonize Obama by alluding that he has deep religious ties with the religion of Islam (*The O’Reilly Factor*). Those two shows still provide their viewers with the anti-Muslims propaganda dosage they need. In 2016, Robert Duggart plotted and recruited right-wing members to go assault and kill the Muslim community in Islamerg (a small Muslim community in Delaware county), New York. The day the recruitment started was after a piece that *Fox & Friends* ran about American Muslims training in Delaware with machine guns and live ammunition (*White Fright*).

Fox News continues to attack Muslims around the world in an entertaining manner mainly because it makes fiction stories about the Muslim people where the latter are the villains and the white-conservatives are the hero. The last fiction that was made in *Fox News* channel reports that the immigrants coming from Honduras (the media called it The Immigrant Caravan) had amongst them hundreds of Middle Easterners (Fedschun). *Fox News* also went after American-Muslims and Muslim representatives in Congress. Jeanine Pirro in

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her show *Justice* attacks the Muslim congresswoman Ilhan Omar for wearing a hijab and made a distorted ominous illustration of the sharia law (Ohlheiser).

Terror-politicians are still an important factor in Neo-Orientalism since they are creating a reality-based-fiction about the Orient; most notably about immigrants coming in. The matter of immigration is a pillar and a catalyst in Neo-Orientalist Entertainment. The West is no longer using Shakespeare's plays, *the Arabian Nights* or popular fiction. The West is streaming live images of the September Ninth attacks, the Seventh of July attacks, the November Paris Attacks etc. and stories that Arabs were celebrating the deaths of the World Trade Center. In the second decade of the twenty-first century, politicians use immigrants and the idea of *homegrown* terrorists as a threat to the style of life and religion that the West hold dear.

Before being president, Donald Trump claimed on many occasions that he saw “thousands and thousands of people cheering while the building was coming down. Thousands of people were cheering.” (Kessler), One of his first executive decisions, as president, was the ban of immigrant from Muslim majority countries (BBC Editors). In 2018, when the Honduran immigrants were crossing Mexico on foot, Trump started ranting and going to rallies, claiming to his right-wing conservative supporters that Middle Easterners were amongst these immigrants coming from Honduras (Higgins) and nowadays he is attacking Ilhan Omara, a Muslim Congresswoman. In Britain, Nigel Farage, a British politician, analyst and the leader of UK independence Party (the Brexit Party), uses terror-politics to scare British people from the threat of Muslim immigrants and to vote for leaving the EU saying that Muslim immigrants “hate us and want to kill us.” (Mason). Mary Le Pen, a French presidential nominee stated that the life style of Arabs is threatening the very existence of French identity and therefore must be banned (Le Point Editors). The populist Italian prime minister, Matteo Salvini and his right-wing parties are refusing to allow small ships carrying immigrants to disembark on their shores and vilifying the image of the immigrants and inciting hate crimes (Scarsi).

All this hate, separation and nationalism have real consequences not only Muslims or Arabs but on all minorities. All this hate for the other is done in front of everybody's eyes in an entertaining fictional manner, yet it came true; the Muslim ban, the rise of racism, against immigrants in Italy (Gallego). This hatred is all around the world as is shown above in France, Britain and other European countries. People are like audiences; at best they are passive to the

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social problems going around them and at worst they blame them on these immigrants that are bringing this hate and crime to them.

Neo-Orientalist Entertainment with its films and shows are contributing to this phenomenon and sometimes scenes and images about Muslim-Americans and Arabs are so horrific that they end up endorsing and impacting policy makers. Neo-Orientalism relies on shockingly violent scenes to tell stories about the barbarity and savageness of the Arabs, a method used by the European colonizers in the 19th and 20th century. This colonial discourse is used in many war movies but, the most profitable and famous one is Clint Eastwood's *American Sniper*.

2.3.1. *American Sniper*.

Hollywood studios reaction to 9/11 attacks and the “War on Terror” was jeopardized from the start because as *The New York Times* reported, after two months from the terrorist attack of September Eleventh, “Top executives from Hollywood’s movie studio, television networks...met with Karl Rove, senior adviser of the Bush administration” (Kellner). While many studios showed the horrors and illegitimacy of the war, other movies chose a pro-war stand. As Douglass Kellner remarks, by 2006, plots and themes related to war and terror were dominating Hollywood newest releases (118). The depiction of Arabs differed depending on the revelation and how war was going on. Kellner lists many movies with international-terror subtext like *Mission Impossible* franchise, *Left Behind* franchise, J.J. Abrams produced *Cloverfield* and so many others (118-24).

Alfonso Cuàron critically-acclaimed movie *Children of Men*, nominated for 3 Academy Awards, is set in dystopian-polluted Britain in 2027. The movie is a masterpiece and its very shockingly humanistic message reminds people to stand against nationalist government and leaders. But the movie takes a biased, defaming approach to Islam and Muslims. In the opening of the movie, a report states “the Muslim community demands an end to the armies’ occupation of mosques” and the movie starts with a terrorist explosion in a cafe killing everybody in it. When the protagonist Theo Faron (played by Clive Owen) was asked who did it, he replied “Islamic? Fishers? fuck knows”. Why the need to bring Islam to a dystopian world? Does Islam, with the belief of the audience that it is brutal, set a dystopian mood and make the movie more authentic?

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Terror spectacle made its way to myriad of Hollywood movies, but none more so as the blockbuster *War of the Worlds*, starring Hollywood biggest name, Tom Cruise, and directed by a legendary director Steven Spielberg. The movie, as Kellner argues, is an allegory of the attack of September Eleventh. The Aliens resurrecting and breaching their way from the ground from within can be as an allegory to war on the sleeper cells in America by vice president Dick Cheney. The movie had so many similarities with the 9/11 attacks with the falling building, chaos and death in the streets, that many of the audience could not finish the movie and walked out of it (“War of the Worlds’ draws on 9/11 anxieties”).

Even Marvel and DC studios (studios that make Superman, Hulk, Thor...) reacted to the war. In Marvel’s Disney studio’s *Iron Man* (2008), the handsome, charismatic and super-rich Tony Stark (played by Robert Downey Junior) is shooting his way out from the captivity of the religious fanatics in Afghanistan. DC Warner Brothers studios’ *Batman Origins* shows young Bruce Wayne (played by Christian Bale) trying to stop an international terrorist group trying to detonate dirty bomb in Gotham city; a subtext for the anxiety of a terror attack in the time of the invasion of Iraq.

Douglass Kellner wrote that “Media spectacle demonstrate who has power and who is powerless, who is allowed to force and violence and who is not” (7). This is what the movie *American Sniper* does best; a bunch of powerful, highly trained soldiers with sophisticated artillery in the quest of bringing down a whole weaker culture and evil religion. The movie subtly tries to make the comparison between the corrupt; Arab religion, male, female, land and family standers with those of that make America great; God, country and family. The whole movie tries to make a case and a comparison between all what is American and the lack-off in Iraq. Eastwood depicts this by constantly taking ambivalent scenes.

Director Clint Eastwood and screen writer Jason Hall brought to the big screen the story of the most lethal sniper in American history. The film is an adaptation of a successful autobiography, *American Sniper*, selling 1.2 million copies, by Chris Kyle *et al.* The movie under study earned 350 million dollars domestically and another 197 million worldwide (Box Office Mojo); it ended-up being the highest grossing movie of 2014 (Business Insider). The movie follows the four tours of Chris Kyle in Iraq, and his struggle and hardships back home, in trying to balance and save his marriage, but at the same trying to fulfill his duty as American soldier. Eastwood makes sure that the audience will stay seated long enough to finish his movie by delivering an opening scene that shocks the audience.

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The opening sequences of the film are the most influential. The movie opens with sound of al-Adhan as it is slowly overwhelmed by a tank moving on the wreckage of a destroyed street. Clint Eastwood has a wide shot to highlight the destruction of the street to show the American marines barging-in; slamming doors open and that their maneuvers are being watched and protected by the American sniper Chris Kyle (played by Bradley Cooper). Clint Eastwood's camera moves to give the audience a look through the sniper's telescope. A hostile-looking male watching in disdain the bargaining of the convoy and making a phone call. Few second later, a woman wearing Niqab and a kid no more than 10, in djellaba, come out of a house few yards away from the convoy of American soldiers. Then, ominous thrilling music starts playing as the sniper communicates what he is seeing. The ominous music gets louder as the veiled woman murmurs some words before giving the kid an "RKG grenade". The kid sprints towards the convoy; the ominous music stops, the deep breath takes its place as he locks his sight to his kid-target and squeezes the trigger and shoots.

Clint Eastwood gives a flash back, so that the audience gets to know the protagonist Chris Kyle in less than four minutes. Kyle was raised in Texas, to a Christian religious family of four. Raised by a tough Christian father who teaches him how to shoot, Kyle would continue his adulthood in Texas trying to be a cowboy, but that dream ends shortly and abruptly after suffering an injury in his hand. Realizing that his days as a cowboy are over and after seeing a news report about the deadly attacks on the United States embassy in Tanzania, in 1998, Clint Eastwood returns to the opening scene but, this time the woman wearing Niqab takes the grenade and rushes towards the American soldiers. Kyle takes a second shot that penetrated the chest of the running veiled lady. His first kills in the movie, the first killed Clint Eastwood chooses to show are a little boy and a veiled woman.

Mustapha, a Syrian sniper (played by Sammy Sheik), who came to fight the Americans in Iraq and the "Butcher" (played by Mido Hamada), a member of al-Qaida who terrorizes and kills everyone with a drill, are the antagonists in the movie, since they are the threat and the target of the protagonist. But similarly Jeff Kyle, brother of Chris (played by Keir O'Donnell) is an antagonist. He is deployed to Iraq shortly after his brother, but unlike Kyle, Jeff loses hope for what his mission and the invasion of Iraq, half through the movie he says "Fuck this country". He can be seen as an opposing force to the staunch, patriotic and biblical belief of Chris about and his mission to eradicate evil because, in Kyle's words "there

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is evil here”. To a movie that has a pro-war stand and legitimizes the war on Iraq, to a character that believes in the war, unbelievers in the cause are seen as enemies.

Clint Eastwood’s movie, feels like a nostalgic adaptation of Charles Dickens’ *Tale of Two Cities* where one part of place is civilized, beautiful and enlightened land and the other part is barbaric, hideous and ignorant land “the new wild West of the old Middle East” as one soldier puts it. Iraq is depicted as war zone; there is always danger lurking, there is always someone or something evil happening in this land; from kids, snipers, veiled women with grenades, suicide bombers and mine-planters. Every single individual or location in Iraq is labeled dangerous, anti-American and or terrorist harbor. Yet in contrast, Texas is very much a peaceful and civilized place.

The way *American Sniper* depicts the Arab male is something of a 19th-century phantasy. The male Arabs in the movie are all terrorists, suicide bombers, human-butchers, Syrian snipers or are on the verge of killing innocent American marines. The one Arab-male who does not fit the terrorist image is sheikh Al-Obeidi (played by an Iranian actor called Navid Neghban). He is an old, bearded, fat and greedy sheikh who is willing to give up information about the terrorist militia, only after he is paid handsomely. By contrast, Eastwood gives valuable on-screen-time to get to know the story of American male soldiers and to recognize them and to know their background story. The motion picture in its entirety is a story about a sniper and the lives of the American marine. Eastwood is satisfied with the angry, fat, greedy and terroristic Arab as background story for his male Arabs. For instance, the “Butcher”, a member of al-Qassam terrorist group (played by Mido Hamada), has no background history. The audience sees him in a horrific scene, putting a hole in a little boy’s head with a drill and screaming “you speak to them [Americans] you die with them”. The depiction of the Arab-women is not any better; as the movie traps her in the same manner as the medieval writings did.

The Arab women in the movie have no lines; they do not speak. Yet, Eastwood uses them everywhere. We see Arab Muslim women wearing veil carrying grenades or their right-hands butchered. The audience sees the American women represented by Chris Kyle’s wife, Taya (played by Sienna Miller). She is safe, far away from any threat, beautiful and wearing clothes that show her body, while in the movie, Arab women are seen-but-not-heard. The only women who have some time in the movie are: the woman taking a grenade from her Niqab and trying to blow the Americans marines, before being immediately shot in the chest by

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Chris Kyle or the one that “the Butcher” saws her right hand for a reason the movie did not disclose. In the end of the movie, Chris tells his son “Y’all look out after our women, okay?” while no Arab Muslim male is capable or thinking of looking after the Arab Muslim women. They are all alone, afraid and being horrified either as terrorist, or being disfigured and mutilated by one. Fatma, a relative of sheikh Al-Obeid is the only other woman who has some brief on screen time. She is summoned by her father to show her right hand mutilated by a terrorist. By contrast, writer Jason Hall and director Clint Eastwood gave Taya tens of pages of dialogue and substantial on-screen time.

The movie also targets the Muslim religion. It takes aim and shoots at the Islamic religion. There is always a danger lurking with the sound of Al-Adhan, signaling the time of prayer and inviting Muslims to the mosque. In the movie, Al Adhan is used as symbol of danger; each time a sound comes from the mosque; it is followed directly by ominous sound and a danger to the American soldiers. First, al Adhan was used in the opening scene where the kid and his veiled mother were trying to blow the American marines. The second time Al-Adhan came was when Mustapha killed an American marine. In one scene, Chris Kyle is interrogated by his peers for killing someone who was presumably holding the Qur’an. Chris lashes out saying “I don’t know what the Qur’an looks like”. In the first act, there is a scene in a church where everything is so peaceful. By contrast, there is no scene depicting a mosque but, every time the Adhan sound summons worshippers, death comes to the American soldiers. The movie also takes aim to glorify the American sacred beliefs, specifically the family.

The theme of the American family is omnipresent during the whole two-hours and fifteen minutes of the theoretical release. Chris Kyle and Taya try to save their marriage and raise their children. The movie gives substantial time and scenes to this quest. In the first act, Chris Kyle’s parents and brother are depicted going to the church and dinning together. The whole movie through its three acts is a struggle and a joy in Kyle’s house. Yet in the Arab Iraqi households, families are terrorists or living daily in an environment of terror. The Iraqi household is shown briefly in two scenes in disarray and in terror. The first Iraqi household is breached by a hammer, the man of the house, sheikh Al-Obeidi is punched in the face and continuously being sworn at by American in front of his family. The second household is again breached and the male in the house is a terrorist and harbors terrorist weapons.

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The movie is a twenty-first century attempt of colonization or trying to justify it. The movie confirms every stereotype that has been discussed above; from the terrorist male, the oppressed women and the evil land. Every stereotype that was ever written or adapted to a screen is there: men who have beards and they look and do hideous actions: from killing, butchering and slaughtering foreigners, having no family, no human standards and nothing worth living for. *American Sniper* for the most part feels just like a two-hour of humiliation of Arab people separated by attacks on Islam.

Eastwood wanted the movie to be like American propaganda of the seventies and eighties against the Soviet threat. The artillery in the movie is used to show the might, lethality and precision; the weapons that the Iraqi terrorists are holding or firing are Russian made weapons which one would not find in the infamous autobiography. Clint Eastwood wanted the movie to show American mighty artillery against Russian one. Throughout the whole movie, Iraqi “insurgents”, “savages” as Bradley called them in the movie are holding or firing the most famous Russian weapons; from Kalashnikov to RPGs (Rocket-Propelled Grenade). Both of these weapons were made by the Soviet Union in the twentieth century. For the infamous first shot that Kyle took, the one that took the life of the Niqab woman in the movie, Bradley Cooper whispers in the radio “she’s got an RKG Russian grenade” whereas in the autobiography, Kyle describes the bomb to his superior; and the latter radio-contacts him saying “that’s a Chinese grenade” (Kyle 13).

The movie is a right-wing conservative propaganda in its most sophisticated and profitable form ever. Religious related scenes and dialogues are everywhere in the movie. In the first act, time is given to show that the Texan citizens, Kyle’s parents and Kyle himself are devoted Christians. Chris Kyle is tattooed with “a crusader cross”. In his second tour, he is asked by a General to put “the fear of God into these [Iraqis] savages”. The movie is propaganda for the war on Iraq and The National Rifle Association (NRA) as American manufactured guns are seen everywhere; little boys are taught to use guns, guns are worn, seen in houses everywhere. In the beginning of the movie, Chris Kyle’s father utters an argument frequently said by NRA representative and supporters. The movie ventures in a colonial discourse seen only by the colonial propaganda in the twentieth century.

Reality was quite different. Clint Eastwood took the liberty in changing and dramatizing important facts but that is not new. Directors would shield themselves, when they dramatize or change element in a real-life story, behind “this work is based on a true story”.

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Eastwood does not bother himself with the semantics; he does not admit the fact that he took the liberty in dramatizing and changing or adding many elements not found in the autobiography. The shocking opening scene where Kyle takes the life of a little kid and a woman wearing Niqab never happened according to the book. Kyle takes the life of the woman but, there is no little kid, he never took the life of a little kid in the autobiography (Kyle 14). The hideous scene where an Arab named “the Butcher” takes the life of another little kid with a drill also never happened, mainly because he never met him (Slate).

The heroic calling that the movie seems to suggest, when Kyle sees the news report about the Bombings in Dar El Salam, never happened. He directly decides to take revenge, like so many comic books super-heroes, which never happened in reality (Ibid). Moreover, the hero’s nemesis and his purpose in the movie: Mustafa and the Butcher; have never been met by Kyle according to his memoirs.

After the release of the film in theaters, it was received with mixed reviews, but the film brought with it something more threatening to the Arabs in America; Arabs were at the receiving-end of many attacks. The American-Arab Anti-discrimination Committee (ADC) wrote to Clint Eastwood and to Bradley Cooper that the “majority of the threats we have seen over the few days are the result of how Arab and Muslims are depicted in *American Sniper*” (BBC Editors). The movie ended up being the highest gross-profit movie in 2015 thanks to its Neo-Orientalist aspects.

2.3.2. Oriental Stereotypes in Movies

The Stereotypes of Arab people in Neo-Orientalist entertainment bring new ideas and images to the archival collection of degrading images produced by Westerners. But, alarmingly, these stereotypes share a common ground with Bhabha’s theory of stereotype in Colonial Discourse (itself influenced by Edward Said’s work on Orientalism). Bhabha believes that colonizers produce stereotypical images to incage the identity of their subject and to deny them progress (quoted in Huddart 25). Oriental stereotyping in Neo-Orientalist entertainment reflects Bhabha’s idea by encaging Arab people in old savage stereotype but, additionally, it takes aim at a new target, immigrants and Orientals born in Western lands. Neo-Orientalist entertainment’s biggest achievement is inciting fear of immigrants and Arabs who are born or have a Western identity by successfully bringing to life the idea of a “homegrown” terrorist.

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The latest motion picture that brings to life the idea of homegrown threat is *Sicario: Day of the Soldado*. *Day of the Soldado* is a sequel to director Denis Villeneuve's 2015 critically acclaimed and Academy Award nominee film *Sicario*. Both the original and the sequel follow DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency) agents: Alejandro and Matt, played by Benicio Del Toro and Josh Brolin, respectively, in their bloody war against Cartel drug dealers in Mexico. In the original screenplay, writer Taylor Sheridan did not introduce or deal with any Orient character, and no one expected to see one, since the installment takes place in Mexico. Yet in the sequel, the talented writer admitted wanting to have a darker version of the original. This justifies the short, yet shocking presence of Oriental characters, in a movie about drug cartel leaders in Mexico.

In the sequel writer Taylor Sheridan and the Italian director Stefano Sollima wanted to create a darker, bloodier and unforgiving film. The opening scene in *Day of the Soldado* is one of the most shocking openers in recent cinema history. The movie opens with American border patrol security agents surrounding a flock of immigrants in the Mexican border. An immigrant male breaks from the flock; he does not go very far as he is surrounded by agents, the camera captures his face as he raises his hands to the sky and murmurs "AL-hamdulillah Allah Akbar". He slowly turns around to face the agents and—blows himself.

The horror does not stop there. The camera of Stefano cuts quickly to other search patrols who find three praying rogues. The camera cuts back to Kansas City mall as three males descend from a Chevrolet; they enter the civilized mall where two Muslim males blow themselves. The camera moves slowly to show a frightened mom grabbing her terrified little daughter and heading to the nearest exit but there is a tall Muslim male murmuring something. She begs him telling him as she and her little daughter make slow steps towards the exit "please you don't have to do thi—" and just when they were reaching the exit to freedom and safety from the mall, the Arab Muslim male turns them to dust as he blows himself. The only use for Arab or Muslim characters in Neo-Orientalist entertainment, in this movie and others, is to give a gloomy and dark aspect to movies and shows. They are used to create vivid and authentic terror scenes that the audience hears about daily since the only people committing terror attacks are Muslim Arabs.

Columbia Pictures *Lone Survivor* is a less profitable version of *American Sniper*. Director Peter Berg and Marc Wahlberg adapted the autobiography of the soldier Marcus Luttrell. The events that took place in the movie are not in an Oriental land but the movie

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delivers a defamatory narrative on Islam and Muslims. The motion picture has every element of a Neo-Orientalist entertainment: the white-American hero, the struggle between good and evil, and the barbaric Muslims and the seen-not-heard Muslim women.

The movie relies on making a spectacle out of death to capture the audience. At the first scenes, a Taliban leader is shown dragging down a suspected Afghanistan cooperator with the Americans. The Taliban terrorist drags the “Good Muslim” down the street, makes him kneel down, put his head on a tree trunk, while the terrorist Tarik, played by Sammy Sheik (who played the role of the ruthless sniper terrorist in Clint Eastwood’s *American Sniper*) takes out a huge scimitar and smashes the “Good Muslim’s” head saying “Allah-Akbar!”. Blood is pouring everywhere, the scimitar comes right back at the head of the “Good Muslim” again and again. The Muslim terrorist, Tarik, bashes the head of the “Good Muslim” repeating those two words: “Allah-Akbar!” On similar footsteps, Gerard Butler’s 2016 *London Has Fallen* follows.

Although it was not received with the same financial or critical success of *American Sniper*, *Lone Survivor* or *Sicario: day of the Soldado*, *London Has Fallen* ventures in the same stereotypes that these movies display. *London Has Fallen* follows secret service agent Mike Banning played by Gerard Butler who tries to put an end to the terrorist attacks on London, by stopping the antagonist with strangely Arab name Aamir Barkawi, played by the Israeli actor Alon Aboutboul; who is blowing up every London touristic destination from Big Ben, London Bridge to Buckingham Palace.

Bhabha calls for looking for the purpose behind the creation of a stereotype. In the case of Oriental stereotypes, it seems very much shallow. Rare are the shows or movies that can provide a deeper look into an Oriental and even, with sheer grace when producer or writers decide to give some extra line to a character or shots to the Oriental land, it just circles back to the same: raging, screaming, angry males. Even in highly celebrated TV dramas, the defaming stereotype continues.

2.3.3. Tom Clancy’s *Jack Ryan*

Amazon’s Tom Clancy’s *Jack Ryan* is an adaptation of the famous character in the award winning novels of writer Tom Clancy. The series follows Jack Ryan, as a CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) financial analyst, played by John Krasinsky and his partner James Greer, played by Wendell Pierce. In the eight part of the season, CIA agents go on the hunt for a Lebanese terrorist. To better analyze the Oriental imagery in the series, the show will be

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compared with Showtime's *Homeland* (season one) and BBC's *Bodyguard*. *Homeland* season one follows Carrie Mathison (Claire Danes) a homeland security agent on the quest to uncover a terrorist attack on the US soil. The BBC drama follows Metropolitan police officer and bodyguard of the Home Secretary minister David Budd (played by Richard Madden) on a mission to find the culprit in many suicide attacks destroying London city. All the three shows have enjoyed a worldwide success. Showtime's *Homeland* won five Golden Globes and has been on air since 2011 and 2019 will bring its eighth and final season. *Bodyguard* in its final episode drew more than 11 million viewers, making the show, "the most watched BBC drama since 2008" (BBC Editors). Amazon's *Jack Ryan* is moving forward as the show that aired in 2018 was renewed for two more seasons on Amazon.

One key part of the Neo-Orientalist entertainment is to revive old myths and stereotypes about the Orient and one persistent Oriental imagery used in these shows is the oppression of the Oriental Muslim women. The most important and effecting individuals in the Oriental life are work done by females. Yet, all these shows strive to disdain and manipulate the image of Arab Muslim women and how she is treated in the Oriental land. Muslim women are abused in Amazon's series by the Oriental males. As the series regular, Hanin (Dina Shihabi), wife of the terrorist Suleiman, was offered by her father as sex slave. In all episodes of the show, Hanin is trying to run either from her terrorist husband or worst, his Moroccan terrorist/rapist/pedophilic aid. Other women in the *Jack Ryan* show are similarly treated and abused by Arab males. In episode six, the events of the episode take place in Turkey. Women in Turkey are used also as sex slaves, heroin addicts and treated without dignity, respect nor honor.

BBC's *Bodyguard* features Nadia (although her original country India is not a Muslim majority country; Anjali Mohindra plays a Muslim woman married to a Muslim terrorist). In episode four, of the six parts show, Nadia tells the horrendous stories of how she was oppressed and locked-in by her male husband. There are no Muslim women characters regularly appearing in *Homeland*, the only one that was given on screen time is Fara Sheraz, an Iranian CIA agent, played by Indian actress. Fara is violently stabbed to death by a Muslim terrorist.

What the BBC drama *Bodyguard* did with its antagonist Nadia, is very much unprecedented and dangerous. Making a Muslim woman the soulless antagonist of a show is a new height in defaming the Orient, its religion and practices. In the first five parts of the

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show, Nadia is seen as the brainwashed weak woman who has been used and recruited by a despotic husband (as all husbands in the Orient are known to be despotic). The show does not give her a background, what it gives her instead is the old terrorist clash of civilization narrative as Nadia answered in the final minutes of the sixth and final episode to the reasons behind her killing spree. She stated that it was done to “none believers, criminals”.

The representation of the Muslim male terrorist in these critically acclaimed shows is not any better; as all Oriental Muslim males are the antagonists of these shows – most notably in *Homeland* and *Jack Ryan*. In *Homeland*, the viewer is introduced to the most barbaric antagonist in recent television history: a Muslim male called Abu Nazir, played by the Iranian actor Navid Negahban (he was playing Sheikh Al-Obodi in Clint Eastwood movie *American Sniper*). As Abu Nazir is seen brainwashing characters and ordering the most horrific acts imaginable, ranging from torture, killing, humiliation and mass murder. In Amazon’s *Jack Ryan* Suleiman, played by the Israeli actor Ali Suliman, is more tone-down terrorist (mainly because the show used a “Muslim councilor”) but he is still seen killing innocent people and plotting for mass murder. All the shows venture into some of the mean Islamic stereotypes.

All three TV shows delve into stereotypes to make their audience feel their authenticity. Suleiman, Abu Nazir, and the Muslim males appearing in *Bodyguard* all are mean, bearded looking males on the verge of bringing Islamic terror to the infidels. Even the extras in the show playing Muslims are bearded extremists, further solidifying the terrorist intention of all Arab bearded males. In episode four Carry says jokingly “what wouldn’t I give for a little retail-intelligence, disenchanted mom! An Islamist kid half-way through the bomb belt!” In the second episode of Amazon’s *Jack Ryan: French Connection*, a bearded and mean looking Arabs ruthlessly stabs to death a priest in an alley.

Throughout its history, Hollywood has had a trouble with masculinity. On one hand, the need to cast in the lead role the most attractive, good looking and masculine protagonist as lead for the show or the film; on the other hand, casting the most heinous, ill fitted and shaped antagonist to be the villain. This is clearly seen in all the three shows, all the Muslim male antagonists appearing in the show are no match for the clear fit, beauty and masculinity of the leading male actors John Krisinsky, Richard Madden and Damian Lewis (*Homeland*).

All three shows venture to decimate Islam and Muslims, and to paint the Muslim religion as evil and vile, destroying everything and everybody—but most notably, the destruction of Islam always falls on Christianity and Christians. One of the most insidious

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scenes in recent television history, and most astonishing and shocking scene in *Jack Ryan*, occurs in episode three: *The Wolf*; where supposedly Arab men enter a church filled with worshipers and leave some suitcases in the church that contain chemical gas. After leaving they seal the door of the church and detonate the bombs. Worshipers are seen on the screen slowly and painfully screaming and choking to death. But the most horrifying scene of all is when people gather around the church calling and screaming for their loved ones. In the closing shot of this horrible scene the phones of the deceased are ringing near their dead, cold and motionless bodies. There is no one alive to answer them.

In the BBC drama, the show ventures in Islamophobic attitude from the start, as Nadia and her accomplice try to blow up a train full of civilian children, elderly and women. She is seen wearing a Niqab and wearing a bomb-vest on top of it, ready to send everyone to the next life. The whole premise of the first six seasons of *Homeland* is an attack on Islam and Muslims. In the first season, it shows that all Muslim characters are either suicidal bombers, bomb makers, financing terrorists or Americans brainwashed to adhere to the faith of the terrorists and doing terrorist acts in the name of the evil faith. Even Muslim religious symbols like mosques are used. In episode eight: *Achilles Heel*, a mosque harbors and is presumably, the establishment where Americans get brainwashed and converted to the evil religion; in episode nine: *Crossfire* an imam (played by Sammy Sheik, the villainous sniper from the Clint Eastwood movie) is seen harboring terrorists and lying to the public about it. There is not a single character in the whole first season, not even in the six seasons of the show (all first six seasons are dealing with Islam and Muslims, season seven and eight shifted the focus) where the audience is introduced to a single respected character. The series protagonist sergeant Nicholas Brody (Damian Lewis) is brainwashed by Abu Nazir to Islam to carry on his terrorist actions, Sergeant Tom Walker (Chris Chalk) is reflected to the same process, and blows a bomb in a park full of civilians. In episode 10: *Representative Brody*, Mansour Al-Zahrani (played by the American-born actor Ramsey Faragallah) is a Saudi diplomat and a homosexual terrorist in his spare time, Nasser Faris playing a terrorist tailor and making bomb vests. All male Arabs are either terrorists, or planning to be so and Islam is the evil doctrine that is guiding them towards these evil deeds.

Homeland was labeled by Laila Al-Arian “TV’s most Islamophobic show” in a *Salon* news site piece. The show earns that title, but that is not a surprise. In the first decade of the 21st century, the most Islamophobic show was Fox’s *24*. The creators of Showtime’s hit

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Homeland: Alex Gansa and Howard Gordon served as long time producers of *24*. The show succeeds in making a solid case for racial profiling of Muslim and brown people, since every character in that show that is not white is a potential terrorist. In the second season, when the CIA agents were searching for potential terrorists that have visited or communicated with the terrorist Brody, Saul (Mandy Patinkin) stated that the agents should start with Africans, Middle Easterners, “the dark-skinned ones” (Al-Arian).

Homegrown terror, as its name indicates, means terrorists born in Western countries and they either planned or executed terrorist attacks on their land. The origin of the term homegrown terror is hard to track, but the American media started using widely since the attacks of 9/11. Western media and terror-politicians exploited rigorously the idea of homegrown terror and the shows exploit it too. In BBC’s *Bodyguard*, the terrorist Nadia represents an example of the homegrown terrorist as she has a British identity and she planned and executed terrorist attacks against her country. In the second episode, Nadia manufactured a bomb and ordered it to be blown in a primary school park, full of children. She makes another bomb that killed tens of people in the third episode. Practically the whole show is about a Niqab-wearing immigrant Muslim woman trying to blow the whole of Britain into dust.

Amazon’s *Jack Ryan* similarly explores the idea of homegrown terror, not just in America though but worst, in the most common immigrant destination in Europe: France. In the second episode: *French Connection*, the show starts exploring Arab Muslim majority neighborhoods like Belle Ville in Paris or Seine-Saint-Denis, 93, and what is found there is an ugly picture about Oriental immigrants and Islam. In the *French Connection* episode, French Police force raids a house in a street with a majority of Muslim Arabs, and is countered with Arabs firing Russian machineguns, Kalashnikovs and bomb vest. In the last scene of the raiding, a Muslim Arab woman wearing a hijab and a bomb vest is cornered by the French police. A French officer shoots her in the head, and she blows the whole building. This scene has a lot in common with the opening scenes in episode one of *Bodyguard*: both terrorist are immigrants, wearing some kind of Islamic dress, scared and ordered to wear the explosive vest and left behind by the Muslim male.

In Showtime’s *Homeland* the whole five seasons are about homegrown Islamic terrorists trying and committing terror in America. The show is so Islamophobic that *The Washington Post* deemed it “the most bigoted show on television” (Durkay). All Muslims in

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the first seasons are homegrown terrorists: sergeant Brody and Tom Walker are brainwashed to Islam, Tom blows a bomb along with a lot of civilians in episode 10: *Representative Brody*. A more dangerous and important theme that is explored by the Amazon and Showtime shows is torture.

Homeland does not shy away from the use of torture scenes as entertainment. In *Blind Spot* the fifth episode of the first season of *Homeland*, the opening scenes are dimly lighted, signifying that we are no longer in America, a character is kidnapped in front of his young child. The character is recognized as the right hand of Abu Nazir, the big bad villain of the show; he is taken to a safe house in America and imprisoned there. The prisoner is caged in a small room, stripped of his trousers and each time he closes his eyes from tiredness, hard metal rock music is played in the small room. Brody (Damian Lewis) confirms the rank of the prisoner and adds "he beat me with a stick wrapped in barb wire and he pissed on me". In the pilot of Amazon's *Jack Ryan*, both Ryan and Greer go to an American-run prison in Yemen, where detainees are forbidden water and food. *Homeland* used torture more frequently in later seasons which is sinister. This is done on purpose because it justifies the humiliation and torture of human beings. It enshrines and shifts the debate of torture, as the show illustrates that the both struggling powers: the Americans and Muslims are torturing their hostage.

The Oriental land is central to the shows in question, especially in Amazon's *Jack Ryan* and *Homeland*. In the Amazon show, Oriental lands like Syria, Iraq and Yemen are depicted like no man's lands, run by outlaws, militias and terrorists. Bekaa Valley, in Lebanon is shown in the opening scenes of the show, before it is bombarded by airplanes (they are supposed to be Israeli aircrafts, since Bekaa valley was bombarded by Israel in 1983 in Operation Mole Cricket). The only thing that is shown from Al-Mnajeer city in Syria is its castle that is harboring terrorists. The village of Al Bab is shown in episode six: *Sources and Methods* as a village ruled by militia. One of the most beautiful countries in the Orient or even in the world, is turned into something hideous; an unrecognizable Syria. Aden, Yemen, is a capital run by outlaws, guns and militias are everywhere; a place where terrorists do their dealings, or a prison where Americans keep their most wanted terrorists. Showtime's *Homeland*, in the first season, shows only a prison in Iraq where corrupt prison guards are about to lynch a terrorist to death.

There are rare moments in *Jack Ryan* in which the show highlights the struggle of Muslims in France and attacks government policies. In one exchange between Director Sue

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Joyce (Blaire Brown) from the French police with Ryan, she elaborates on the daily problems of Muslims in France by saying “we have an entire generation of Muslims living here who have no jobs no prospect”. Ryan responds “but he [Suleiman] got a degree. He got out”. “You think a piece of papers changes the way the world sees you... in America you can be African and American, you can be Mexican-American, Italian-American, Chinese-American! But in France there’re no Hyphenates. You’re either French or you are not”. But even these arguments can be made to stand against immigration, since the French government has no plans for them and the French civilians are struggling with them.

All these shows venture in creating and reprising some of the old stereotypes and creating a threat of every single man and women adhering to Islam and coming from an Oriental land. These images target a majority of citizens and potential citizens—especially with thousands of immigrant coming to European shores, running from wars, dictators and looking for better opportunities to raise their children. Shows like the BBC *Bodyguard*, are really dangerous, especially since the number of Islamophobic acts and Muslim harassment are souring. The monitoring group Tell Mama recorded more than 1.201 attacks on Muslims, in year 2017 (Marsh).

On the same level of dangerousness walks Amazon’s *Jack Ryan*. The images that the show is feeding its viewers about Arab Muslims and immigrants in general are just like pouring gasoline on fire. The status of Arabs and immigrants is really dangerous and sensitive, it is literally a matter of life and death, and these shows air these sensitive topics in an entertaining way. These terror shows are used by far-right parties like Le Pen’s Front National in France and their hate for everything non-European or French. These terror images are a political card.

Since its release, Showtime’s *Homeland* has been trying to degrade and to enrage Islam and Muslims in the same terrorist other, attacking Islam by showing that everybody that is adhering to it is a terrorist and small minded oppressor. The establishments of Islam like mosques are a terrorist hiding ground. All Muslim males are terrorists, potential ones or harboring them. Muslim women are still the weak oppressed women from the Dark Ages plays. Layla Al-Arian, in her *Salon* article, gives more condemning evidence about the show’s other themes from Islamophobia, racial profiling to homegrown terrorism.

Tom Clancy’s *Jack Ryan* and other shows use violence to arrest their case. Western art has a history of using violent and atrocious scenes, but especially when dealing with the

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Oriental people and land. Violence and gore scenes are common, torture scenes are powerful and have impact on how Western viewers see the Oriental people. The way these shows use violence and torture is really sinister, mainly by making these images and themes so common, that when the audience are supposed to feel disgust and condemnation, when subjected to these images in the news, they feel apathy.

2.3.4. Neo-Orientalist Stereotypes on the Small Screen

The directors and writers play on the nostalgic and subconscious mind of their viewers' attitude towards people who are Middle Easterners or resembling them. Then the audience will develop the idea in their mind thanks to stereotyping.

In the first episode of the fourth season of Showtime's highly successful television drama *Billions*, the producers build their whole episode to bring about one of the old imageries of the Arab male. In the opening sequence the audience sees Wags (played by David Costabile) in a night club trying to convince Farhad, a secretary of a Sheikh (played by an American, Amir Arison), to invest in their company. Farhad states that the conversations should continue with the Sheikh in the embassy because "he is having his own after party". In a quick shot, the audience is shown a sign of the embassy where the Sheikh presumably works and where he is having his after party. The sign reads: 'Embassy and General Consulate of the Arab State of Qadir'. In the embassy of "Qadir" the audience sees the Sheikh who is identifiable simply because he is wearing a shemagh and he is surrounded by hookers. The embassy is transformed into something resembling more a nightclub than an embassy. That is not the worst part, the episode would continue with some of the worst anecdotes and hints about the barbarity of Islam and Muslims.

This technic is not new, since the show is fiction and everything that is created in it, from story, characters and events, are considered as fictional. The idea and the imagery of the Middle Eastern male that is so corrupt and lustful is not new, it was found in movies in the twentieth century as mentioned before; with similar plots that include male Middle Easterners, corruption, unbelievable wealth and lust. Yet, *Billions* is more sophisticated and sinister because it shows the modern day need and reach for Middle Eastern capital in the American business, swelling the negative Oriental stereotype.

Another highly anticipated fifth season of a television show that captured audience both in America and around the world is making a comeback after seven years of delay: FX's

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Prison Break aired in 2017. The show that in its four first seasons was aired in the first decade (2005-2009) follows the famous Michael Scofield (Wentworth Miller) trying to save his brother and break free from many prisons and from the hands of evil corporations. The show is making a highly anticipated comeback. The only difference is that Michael is trying to break free from evil Oriental people and land in Yemen. Miles (Rockmond Dunbar) a series regular and protagonist keeps illustrating the apocalyptic vision of this Oriental land; “in Yemen it doesn’t come any worst...it’s no place for a white-man especially one with an American passport”...etc.

The first thing that this show tries successfully to do is to give a lively scary picture of the Oriental land, specifically Yemen. The season starts there, in that ominous far, far away land. Till the day of the writings of this work, Yemen is still mortally struggling with foreign invasion and civil wars. The show capitalizes on that fact and creates a dystopian, corrupt and ruthless environment and setting. The country in the shows has ISIS, Hizb-Allah and Yemeni insurgents fighting to install the infamous and subjugating “sharia law”. Yemen is shown as a no man’s land; a land of insurgents, rapists, terrorist and the occasional “good” Arab character.

The cast that represent Arab characters could not be farther from being Arab. The only character that has substantial on-screen time is a woman named Sheba, played by an Israeli actress named Inbar Levi. She represents the “good” Arab in the show as opposed to the tens of “bad” Arabs that are constantly trying to rape the Arab women (including Sheba in one infamous scene) or kill Michael and his friends. In the first episode of the fifth season a Yemeni taxi driver, played by an Argentinian (Marcelo Tubert) is driving Lincoln (Dominic Purcell), brother of Scofield, to a setup. Another Yemeni, Omar, is a scammer, played by a British actor (Akin Ghazi).

Spanish studios also produced television shows with Oriental imagery; most notably, Spanish channel five *El Principe* and Netflix’s: *Elite*. Although the shows could not have been more different in terms of plot, both of these shows venture to give degrading stereotypes for their leading Arab characters. Both Arab characters are drug dealers: in channel five’s *El Principe* Mexican actor Rubén Cortada plays Faruq, a drug lord and mafia warlord. In Netflix’s *Elite* Omar Ayuso plays Omar, a smalltime drug dealer.

Another significant stereotype is the violence and gore scenes appearing on television shows and their effect on the Western societies, but most importantly, on Muslim societies

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living in those lands. All these shows use violent scenes to capture and to send a message about the Orient. Shows and movies discussed above use gore scenes in their production and depiction of Arab, and that has a very lasting impact on viewers' consciousness and their response when dealing and communicating with Arab people.

The roles that they are cast in consist in making a spectacle out of killing the other. In contrast, the white male is the hero and everything he is doing, including killing, is acceptable. The narrative of violence, killing and torture is acceptable, as long as the act of killing is done by a white male. These images, because of their brutality, inflict and effect how Westerners deal with people looking like or adhering to Islam.

Shows like *Homeland*, *Bodyguard* and *Jack Ryan* focus on torture. In the whole first season of *Homeland*, in the season's pilot, sergeant Brody (Damian Lewis) is trying to recuperate from that trauma of being hostage to the barbaric Muslims. After he is found by American troops, Brody takes off his shirt and his body is full of bruises of torture. There is an infamous scene in the first season where Brody and his friend and captive sergeant Tom Walker (Chris Chalk) are forced to fight to death; each one punching the other, with bare hands until they are senseless. All the while, Muslim are screaming and cheering like they are in a boxing arena. Other scenes show Brody hung to the ceiling and also being beaten senseless, being pissed at or being subjected to psychological torture.

What is dangerous about shows that use violent and torture scenes is airing these image as entertainment and for the sake of entertainment. Naomi Klein, in her book *The Shock Doctrine*, highlights the torture and its methods that Iraqi detainees suffered on the hands of the American troops. Yet these TV shows venture in making torture fun and used only by the Muslims. John McCarthy, who was prisoner in Beirut in the time of the Lebanese civil war, criticized *Homeland* for the constant use of torture scenes; "I do fear we're not fully appreciating the absolute of what someone's going through there. Anyone who has been severely beaten wouldn't see that as entertainment" (Singh).

A similar scale of violence continues in *Jack Ryan*. On the fourth episode: *the Wolf*, the viewer can see two bearded brown Muslim detonating a dirty bomb in a church full of worshipers, or other violent action scenes in the second episode: *French Connection*. *Bodyguard* depicts a Muslim woman wearing Niqab recruiting Muslim-looking men (men with beards) to kill citizens and children.

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The use of violence can only be for one reason, to scare people from joining or communicating with anything Oriental. These violent scenes and the propaganda for violence against Muslim are not only seen in fictitious television shows, but even in the rhetoric of most television programs. The viewers of these images, through their constant subjugation to these scenes, risk losing their humanity and sympathy towards events taking place around them. The violence on the small screen creates a violent society. These scenes of violent death, torture and crimes against religion, against humanity are neither normal nor entertaining. The American society and youth are subjugate to these atrocious scenes, instead of shows that bind religions and cultures, these shows with their violent content are making killing and torture seem fun and normal and they are helping to widen the gap between East and West.

2.4. Oriental Contribution

Oriental ignorance, indifference, bloody past and present are element contributing in Neo-Orientalism entertainment seen today. The only reason for the: gloomy picture, male tyronny and ruthless images and R-rated scenes, shows and movies—is because the Arab land is full of violence and tyrannical males.

Edward Said, Frantz Fanon and other respected colonial theorists wrote books on the atrocities, policies and heritage of the colonizers in the Orient. Yet, the first thing Oriental people did was go to war with their next in kin. The stereotypes accumulated through the 20th and 21st centuries from male tyranny and dictatorship, Oriental ignorance and indifference, women's oppression and many others. European imagination went wild in creating Oriental stereotypes, but it did succeed in describing many Arab flaws, even fiction takes its inspiration from reality. What follows is a list of Oriental responsibilities that contributed to the Neo-Orientalist imagery seen these days, from the Orient bloody past to the recent catastrophies.

One of the reasons for the actually existence of Arabs and Muslims in myriad western movies is because of Arab's bloody history.

One of the deadliest civil wars was between brothers in Lebanon. The civil war reached its most atrocious level with the massacre of Sabra and Shatila, where the Israelis paved the way for the Lebanese Christian militia of the Kataeb party, to enter the camps Sabra and Shatila; where thousands of Palestinians lived, on Sep. 16, 1982 to slaughter, torture, rape

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and kill hundreds and maybe even thousands of Palestinians. The critically acclaimed director Denis Villeneuve recreated the bloody events in his 2010 *Incedies* master piece.

It was not only Lebanon that had civil war. Yemen had many wars between the south and the north, Sudan ended a civil war that lasted decades between the South and the North. The bloody civil unrest that happened in Algeria between conservatives and generals, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the tension between Egypt and Libya, the myriad and bloody coup d'état in the Arab world. Samuel P. Huntington summarized what happened in the Arab world as “decolonization has occurred and colonial wars of liberation have been replaced by conflict among the liberated peoples” (34). Thousands of Oriental lives were taken in vain and decades of meaningless struggle for power. Western producers and directors would not have the material nor the inspiration of the myriad war movies they produced, if the Arab land was peaceful land. One major Oriental responsibility for what is happening in the Orient, is the Orientals shameful way of treating women.

The very existence of on screen Arab and Muslim oppressors, the tyrannical male and the theme of the oppressed women is real and justified, one just have to look how Muslims treat there women.

In 2017, Reuters named Cairo the worst megacity for a woman to live in (Kanso). It is the capital of Egypt, the Muslim Arab country. 99% of the women interviewed by the United Nations in 2013 reported some kind of sexual harassment. Divorced women had it worst, 47% of them reported house abuse. These are the backbone of the society, and they are treated as sex objects like audience sees in western films criticized in this work. In 2009, a survey conducted in Morocco found that more than 62% of women experience some sort of sexual harassment: physical, psychological, sexual or economical abuse (Al-Jazeera Editors). Economical abuse is when women are forced to give what they have, because they are scared of what the Arab male might do. 60% percent of the women in Tunisia reported that they were abused domestically and 50% of them reported that they have witnessed some kind of sexual harassment (Lilia). These are the only three countries that had the decency to actually do a survey, but the problem is all over the Arab world. Statistics are hard to combine in North Africa and the Arab world in general, all countries are so corrupt that is hard to find or believe surveys done in there. What is sure is that the numbers are higher than what was reported. It takes unbelievable strength and courage for women to admit that they have been abused, because Oriental society would think less of them and call them names that will hurt

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their integrity and honor. Many of these events go unchecked and receive little attention, because of the corruption and biased media that the Orient has.

Western society can count on few decent people to expose the war in Iraq, Libya, Yemen, and Syria. Decent people like Michael Moore, Naomi Klein (writer of the *Shock Doctrine*) and Chris Hedges to name a few. There are no decent press or cable networks showing the war happening in the Arab world or the Arab reality. The only reporter who is decent enough to shed light on the despotic rule and ruling in the Arab land was killed, mutilated and cut to pieces in his country's embassy. After killing the reporter, Saudi regime bought the silence of his children, by giving them mansions and dizzying monthly allowances (Kirkpatrick).

The infamous dumbness, backwardness seen in the twentieth and twenty-first century motion pictures is real mainly because of the level of education Arab youth receive. The only way of boycotting and shedding light on the heinous distortion of Islam and the Prophet (Peace be upon him) is to have a generation able to recognize and defend them—but this will not happen under this level of education.

In 2013, Brookings (an American research group conducting research about education and social problems worldwide) gave the findings of its research about the problem and the dilemma of Arab education. The research found that Arab youth are missing and not getting the foundation for a productive life (Ghanem). Orientals praise themselves and their shallow educational system, but there is no authentic survey or manner of measuring it. What is there is an overwhelming evidence that it is failing. Fida Adely, argues that most studies concentrate on the literacy rate, which is a good thing, but “literacy rate are bad proxy for quality” mainly because it only shows “increased access of education” (Georgetown University). In 2018 Ilham Nasser, a Professor and researcher in the International Institution of Islamic Thought, says about the level of education in the Arab world that “the United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development program and others suggested a grim picture” of education in the Arab world, in comparison with the Western education (Arab Center).

Arab Muslims holding African immigrants in cages to sell them is barbarity (Elbagir), selling and auctioning human beings because the color of their skin is black. Treating people who have nothing and have come thousands of miles seeking better life as in the slavery ages in Africa is not happening only in Libya where African immigrants are seen as secondary

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humans, it is all over North Africa. Edward Said and Bhabha were denouncing and rebuking the savage depiction by Western writers, but is not letting Syrian and southern immigrants in the street or worst, in cages, savage too?

The Western Saharawi citizens are enduring as humiliation and torture in Morocco is inhumane, even white-supremacist colonizers would not dare do that. Yet the flesh, dignity and honor of the Western Saharawi citizens is stepped on and violated daily in the occupied territories of Western Sahara (Amnesty International). Dictators and their militia can only grow in an environment where ignorance flourishes, the Oriental quality of education has produced a generation of ignorant people, but they have graduation certificates!

The Arab entertainment is also distorting the image of Islam and Muslims. Speaking of Arab movies means only the Egyptian productions; they have better quality in terms of screen play, themes and just better reception and worldwide distribution. The acclaimed director Khaled Youssef got worldwide releases and won awards. The movies he directed like *Hena Mysara* and *Chaos, this is*; shed light on the torture and killings happening in the Egyptian prisons and the corruption of the Egyptian police all while giving an unapologetic look on the crisis, corruption and zeal of the Egyptian society. But Khaled Youssef and the Egyptian studios as a whole produce movies full of nakedness and lust and that is really dangerous. It plays on the mind and emotion of the Arab world and the Egyptian male and women around the Arab world would have to face the distortion of their image, not only from Western books and movies, but also from Arab productions.

Not only studios and famous directors are contributing to the distortion of the Image of the Orient, but also the Oriental people themselves. Arab audience sits around and changes to channels like MBC 2 and sees Muslim people on the screen being shot, tortured and killed. Yet they feel nothing, or feel entertained. Movies like: *Iron Man*, *Zero Dark Thirty* or *American Sniper* all have scenes where bearded brown men are shot at, tortured and killed. The Saudi company either is passive to the movies it buys and airs or just does not care. Arab audience and viewers have no conscious or jealousy towards the humiliation their identity and religion are getting in these movies.

2.5. Breaking the Myth

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It is not going to be easy, probably impossible, to create a less negative imagery of the Orient, with all that the Orient represents; the history, manners or just culture in general, considering the historical animosity between the East and the West. The religious animosity cannot be forgiven or forgotten with religious hatred, biased media, terror-politicians, rightwing governments fueling and profiting from brain washing their citizens in the West and awful conditions, ignorance and corruption in the Orient. Breaking the myth of the Orient after Neo-Orientalism and creating an environment of acceptance seem difficult these days.

Entertainment in general, media outlets and terror-politicians succeeded both in disparaging the Arab Muslim image and managed to get rich along the way. It is bewildering that it took Orientalist writers centuries to create the image of the lustful savage Arab that Said and Bhabha's work are staunchly rebuking while it took Neo-Orientalist western media and entertainment only a decade to link Islam with terrorism and Muslims with terrorists. Hollywood needs to be responsible and knowledgeable for the images it is sending to the world—especially images with Muslims in them because these motion pictures; their stories, heroes and villains speak and connect with millions of viewers around the world. However, second generation Arabs who are active now in Hollywood can provide a very much needed change to the mythical savagery of everything Oriental. Ramy Malek's 2018 Academy Award for best actor for his performance as Freddie Mercury in *Bohemian Rhapsody* is a new milestone conquered for Arabs representation in Hollywood.

In 2017 movie enthusiasts could see a different kind of Muslim immigrant in Amazon's film *The Big Sick*; co-written and starring Kumail Nanjiani, a second generation Pakistani immigrant. The movie and Nanjiani received critically acclaimed reviews. The movie continued to receive an Academy Award nomination. In addition to movies, Westerners tuned in to watch many television shows written, produced and starring immigrants who were either Muslims or from a Muslim majority country. Sam Esmail, a second generation born to Egyptian immigrants, produced, wrote and directed *MR. ROBOT*, a critically acclaimed show that won two Golden Globes. Aziz Ansari, born to Muslim immigrant parents from India, has also created, produced, written and directed a critically acclaimed show *Master of None*; winner of one Golden Globe.

These actors, writers and directors are the alternative images given to their audience and the world after the recurrence of Islamophobia theme in the shows and movie mentioned previously. In the DVD version of Michael Moore, *Fahrenheit 9/11*, Muslim immigrant

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comedians are doing standup comedy. If these actors can get their audience to laugh just for a split second and forget all the madness and religious hate going around the world, then Arab people are only few movies and shows away from breaking the ugly myth that is constantly pursuing them.

The 2017 film *Coexisté* by the French director and comedian Fabrice Eboué offers a comedic, yet at the same dramatic and realistic take on the religious hatred between Islam, Christianity and Judaism. The film has all the elements needed to create a fresh perspective on Muslims on the big screen and to break the Neo-Orientalist myth about them. The film features the story of a music producer (Fabric Eboué) and his band of religious musicians: an Imam (Ramzy Boudia), a priest (Guillaume de Tonquédec) and rabbi (Jonathan Cohen). The premise of the idea and the film can be really effective, as the film deals with all the bad blood, mistakes, misconceptions, hypocrisy and racism of the adherers of the three Godly faiths. But when dealing with the character of the Imam, Ramzy Boudia is alcoholic, lustful and zealous. At least, it shows the crisis of faith that immigrants face when living in a non-Muslim country. Compared with the terrorist stereotype, the drunken, women's-man idea of *Coexiste* is not far behind.

In addition, Hulu's *Ramy*, is supposed to be the perfect television show to break the myth of the Orientals on the small screen. The show explores the daily life of *Ramy* and his struggle to find balance between his Islamic culture and the seductive life in America. The show has most of the themes that can help Westerners understand immigrant Muslim Arabs, religion, women and just simply being Arab in a non-Arab land and for the most part it succeeds. The show makes a good deal of effort to show the hypocrisy of the Arab world when dealing with male and female, especially given the Arab women stereotypes in the Oriental lands. The show succeeds in this thanks to the screen play created and starred by: Ramy Youssef and the unapologetic performance of his sister on screen Dena (May Calamawy). The show delves in the hypocrisy of the Arab culture in favoring males and having more restriction on females.

What is scary and dangerous about *Ramy* though is how the show depicts the Arab female immigrant. The show is so apologetic about the Arab culture and tries so hard to make Arab Muslim women just like the Western ones. In the first episode, Ramy is having intimate time with Nour, an Arab woman (Dina Shahbi, actress in *Jack Ryan*). Though it provides a different narrative for the weak, oppressed women that are constantly in Western shows,

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instead of protecting the Arab Muslim identity, the show just tries to make them act, look and feel like western women, and that is not the way to break a stereotype. The show cannot break heinous stereotypes with a more heinous, soulless stereotype.

Netflix's *Elite* also generates a breakthrough from the old myth only to stumble on another stereotype. Just like all European countries with colonial heritage, Spain, was and still is a destination for Arab immigrants. In Netflix's *Elite*, what makes the Orient and its identity, religion, family and culture is what is impeding the lead actor Nadia (Mina El Hammani) from having a better and more prosperous life in Spain.

Hollywood is a large part of the Neo-Orientalist problem but there is some beacons of hope. The young Arab generation has started to be aware of the awful representation of Islam in the American shows, so they started change. Arab Graphite artists were contacted by one of the most Islamophobic show: *Homeland*; to write some pro-Assad slogans on the walls so that the scene in the refugee camps in Lebanon would be more authentic (to show that even refugees are pro-Assad). Instead, the graphite artist wrote in Arabic lines like these: '*Homeland* is joke', 'Homeland is Not a series' (Phipps). Quickly, the audience and the media started noticing, and the show received many complaints which forced it to take a different narrative. The show in season six took such a radical U-turn that the most racist and Islamophobic American channel *Fox News* took notice, highlighting the frightening and disappointing change in narrative by pointing that "'*Homeland*' takes a left turn? New season focuses on Muslim civil rights" (Glines).

Amazon's *Jack Ryan*, the show that gave its audience the feeling that it was filmed all over the Middle East; from Aden, Yemen to Syria was actually filmed in one northern African country: Morocco (Patton). Other Neo-Orientalist movies like *American Sniper*, which is supposed to be set and filmed in Iraq, was actually shot in Morocco. The movies and shows provide millions of dollars to the country, and that is a really good alternative source for the economy of Morocco. Besides, the location of these scenes, transportation and acting provide temporarily jobs for citizens where the scene is being shot. But neither the Moroccan government nor the citizens seem to care about the image reflected about them and the rest of the Arab world. The awful reality of the country does not represent the whole of the Orient, citizens must be aware of the aftermath and the image they are sending to the rest of the world.

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Arab or Muslim actors need not try to create or act to show the West they are just like them, instead they need to strive for making their own identity. Hollywood has to start to be aware of the effect and reach of its message. Doctor Shaheen noted that Hollywood films have “blended the old stereotype from ‘over there’ with the new stereotypes from ‘over here’” (Rose). Hollywood has to go beyond its primal urge, generating revenues at the box office, and start paying attention to the image it is sending to the world, especially the image it is trying to send to the Arab world. But Arab countries also need to pay attention to the content and message that these studios are conveying about the Arab world.

2.6. Conclusion

Neo-Orientalism brings to the big and small screens a more sophisticated and more real defamation of the Orient, its land, people and religion. Neo-Orientalist entertainment distorts the image of the Orient and its people, but it also takes a new aim that was not included in Edward Said’s Orientalism. Immigrants among others are the primary target and recipient of Neo-Orientalist propaganda and its life-threatening effect, as terror-politicians and rightwing governments in Europe and America vilify Muslim immigrants coming in to their land. Feeding, profiting and airing this clash between the Orient and the West are biased rightwing channels that distort and create made-up facts to vilify Muslims and to prolong the clash between it and the West.

The films and the TV shows that this work has dealt with build the premise of their characters around culture ambivalence between the East and West. The counter-terror dramas highlighted in this work: *24*, *Sleeper cell*, *Jack Ryan*, *Homeland* and others are the goal for terror-politicians like Trump, Marine Le Pen and Matteo Salvini mainly because these shows do the dirty works of politicians for them, scaring their citizens into voting for their far-right political agenda. When fear reigns the world, there is no place for peace and love.

The horrors that happened in the first decade of the twenty-first century, from the September attacks, the “war on terror” and its implication on both American society and the Arab world, will come to shape their lives in a second decade characterized by right-wing government, religious intolerance and society oppressed by freedom, globalization and social networks. Both West and East share responsibility for what happened. No individual, nation

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nor country is clean slate; everyone has trespassed on the other's liberty. Now the world can start its process of asking forgiveness and work together. If no one belongs to any group; no one is indebted to feel nothing but acceptances and love towards the other. The young Arab generation needs to be aware of the deep dark hole that it is in, so that perhaps three or four generations from now the Arab world can get back on its feet.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The all defamatory war on the Orient, its people and religion that is witnessed today started off thousands of years ago. When dismantling and investigating the origin of the shared hatred between the East and the West, it seems that the religious crimes and wars committed thousands of years ago are still weighing on the way the West and the East look at each other.

The designs, idea and characters of Orientalist art on the Western stage, through the centuries, was a tragic story between the powers of good and those of evil. This choice of dealing with the Orient in that manner, was not hazardous—but a necessary and rewarding. The Orientalist creation of a romantic fight between good and evil, was used so often, that Westerners started believing it, adopting the idea of being the defenders of liberty, decency and protectors of good in the world. In making themselves the heroes of their own story, a villain was needed that encompassed everything the Western righteous culture stands against—so Arabs and Muslims were designed to the vile and villainous other.

The romantic vision of the world was the driving force of many Orientalist writings and writers. In the early days, the making of this clash was cheap; all it took is a wooden stage, few male actors and brilliant screen writing like Shakespeare and Marlowe. The production of Oriental entertainment did not cost much either, sand, a few ugly bearded men and women, dancing and wearing see through pantaloons. At beginning of the twentieth century, the Arab lands were just an exotic fiction. But through the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty first, the new Western power that mattered and affected the Orient was America. Therefore, much interference in the Arab land and hundreds of cheap production in Hollywood studios will shape how Americans and the rest of the Western World would see the Arab people.

What was in the beginning of the twenty century cheap productions, with thin plot that dealt with the exoticism and the savagery of this far, far away land became by the end of the twentieth-century a new form of Orientalism. America with its politicians, media and entertainment and after many bloody encounters with Oriental powers will rally all their forces to make a scarecrow image of the Orient and its people, both abroad and in the West.

General Conclusion

With the bloody beginnings of the twenty-first century after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the idea of the far away exotic and ruthless other would dramatically change to become a Neo-Orientalist image. Politician and media outlets took advantage of a country and people in grief, to attack the Arab world ruthlessly without remorse nor consciousness. The Iraqi civilians would pay, hundreds of thousands of dead women and children in vain. Terror-politicians and rightwing media outlets were the beneficiaries, but Hollywood seized the opportunity to make of war criminals heroes and make of innocent people the wretched villains.

The Hollywood production of the first decade would have the worst effect on Muslim living in America and abroad. The counter terrorism narrative that was made by television shows and motion pictures would revive and make vivid the terrorist and wretched image of Muslims. Counter-terrorism narrative seen in entertainment after the 9/11 attack created a Neo-Orientalist stereotype of the Arab male. Both in films like *American Sniper* and TV shows as Amazon's *Jack Ryan*, Hollywood would cast Latin Americans or any brown individual they can to play the bearded, mean-looking and anti-American Arab to try and commit mass murder and terror attacks.

Arabs in the Orient were contributors in this awful stereotype. The Orient and its people share half of the blame for the awful representation seen on the screen. In order to have a generation capable of denouncing and counter arguing what is being said and shown on television screens, the Orient has to be conscious of the deep black hole that it is in, starting with reconciling and admitting the bloody history and awful mistakes done in past centuries. Arab people need also to know the chaotic and awful level of education given to their citizens. The Orient needs to start treating, protecting and giving women the respect, protection needed. Surveys must be compulsory in the Orient, the Arab nation needs to know where they stand in terms of unemployment, abuse and level and quality of education.

Arab immigrants in America and around the world suffered and still suffer for the Neo-Orientalist lies that terror-politicians, Fox News and entertainments manufacture. The lies and stereotypes created in that decade turned the lives of Arabs upside down. The Arab Muslim immigrants have suffered, especially in the days and years after the 9/11 attacks when Islamophobia reached levels never witnessed before. Arabs and Muslims endured many hate crimes. Politically terror politicians like Trump and others are eliminating, obstructing and

General Conclusion

impeding their number one enemy: immigrants, people running out of horrors, with nothing, because everything was taken from them.

The real breakthrough and the winning scenario for the Oriental people is to have a conscious generation, but perhaps not the present one. The nowadays Arab generation, especially that of North Africa cannot achieve the necessary change; mainly because of the quality of education it received, the colossal failures and awful incidents, actions and choices that past generations committed, like civil wars and the acceptance of past generations to be ruled by dictators. However, the present generation is not willing to admit or to see the theft of their future and dreams by both the West and the disastrous education, economy and life in the Orient.

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