

REINVENTING THE 'NATIVE OTHER' IN EARLY HOLLYWOOD: THE MOROCCAN WOMAN BETWEEN NATIVE RESISTANCE AND ORIENTALIST EPISTEME IN ROBERT FLOREY'S *OUTPOST IN MOROCCO* (1949)¹

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การเชื่อมโยงระหว่างภาพยนตร์อเมริกันกับประเทศโมร็อกโกเริ่มขึ้นในช่วงต้นของคริสต์ศตวรรษที่ 20 เมื่อแอฟริกาเหนืออยู่ในความสนใจของทั้งทวีปยุโรปและทวีปอเมริกา นักเขียนวรรณกรรมการเดินทางชาวตะวันตกมักเขียนขบการเล่าเรื่องที่เน้นความมหัศจรรย์และสภาพเหนือจริงมาสร้างเรื่องราวเกี่ยวกับ "ดินแดนอีกด้านหนึ่ง" ของโลก โดยที่

¹ การประกอบสร้าง "คนพื้นถิ่นที่เป็นอื่น" ใหม่ในภาพยนตร์ฮอลลีวูดช่วงแรก: หญิงโมร็อกโกระหว่างการต้านทานของคนพื้นถิ่นกับกรอบการมองแบบบูรพคติในภาพยนตร์เรื่อง *Outpost in Morocco* (1949) โดย ร็อบบี้ ฟลอรี

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ตะวันตกถูกจัดวางให้มีตำแหน่งทางวัฒนธรรมและศีลธรรมที่สูงส่งกว่า การเปลี่ยนจากเรื่องเล่าแบบตัวบทสู่เรื่องเล่าแบบภาพไม่ได้ลดหรือการเมืองเรื่องการนำเสนอวัฒนธรรมที่ซ่อนเร้นไว้ซึ่งอคติแบบบูรพคตินิยมหรือจักรวรรดินิยมมากนัก ในช่วงเวลาระหว่างปี 1930 กับปี 1956 จะเห็นการผลิตภาพเรื่องราวประเทศโมร็อกโกเป็นจำนวนมาก ซึ่งประกอบกันเป็นคลังและเป็นเรื่องราวเกี่ยวกับภาพโลกตะวันออกจากสายตาของฮอลลีวูดด้วยกัน บทความนี้มุ่งสำรวจและตรวจสอบการต่อรองอันตรงพลวัตและปฏิสัมพันธ์ที่สลับกันไ้ระหว่างเพศสถานะ กิจการอาณานิคม และอุดมการณ์แห่งบูรพคตินิยมในภาพยนตร์เรื่อง *Outpost in Morocco* (1949) โดยร็อบบี้ ฟลอรี ซึ่งนับเป็นภาพยนตร์ในยุคแรกของฮอลลีวูด ฉากที่เกี่ยวข้องจากภาพยนตร์เรื่องนี้แสดงให้เห็นว่าประเทศโมร็อกโกและตัวละครชาวโมร็อกโกถูกกำกับอยู่ในการนำเสนอตัวละครตามแบบฉบับอเมริกันอย่างไร บทความนี้จึงมุ่งวิเคราะห์ รื้อสร้างและยกตัวอย่างวิธีและกลยุทธ์การนำเสนอภาพทางวัฒนธรรมของผู้หญิงโมร็อกโก (แบบผิดๆ) ของฮอลลีวูด แม้ว่าภาพเหมารวมต่างๆ จะถูกพัฒนาขึ้นจากภายในองค์กรสร้างภาพที่ใหญ่ที่สุดของสหรัฐอเมริกา แต่ภาพยนตร์ยังคงเป็นพื้นที่ที่นำเสนอการรื้อสร้างและการกอบกู้อำนาจของคนพื้นถิ่นและขอบเขตความสามารถในการต่อต้านของคนพื้นถิ่นอย่างแท้จริง งานศึกษานี้จึงขอเสนอ "สัญญาแห่งการต่อต้านทางภาพ" ที่ซึ่งก้องถูกพลิกกลับเพื่อมอบตำแหน่งแห่งอภิสิทธิ์และอำนาจให้กับหญิงโมร็อกโก

Abstract

*The link between the American cinema and Morocco was established during the early twentieth century when North Africa became a central concern of both Europe and America. Western travel writers drew on generic conventions centered on wonder and the fantastic to fashion stories about the 'other side' of the world in which the West was positioned as morally and culturally superior to the East. The shift from textual to visual narratives did little to dismantle the imperialistic and Orientalist politics of cultural representation. The period between 1930 and 1956 witnessed considerable visual production on Morocco, which constituted not only a fertile haven but also a little story of Hollywood's Orient. This paper explores and examines the dynamic negotiation and the interchangeable interplay of gender, colonialist enterprise and Orientalist ideology in one of Hollywood's early films: Robert Florey's *Outpost in Morocco* (1949). Relevant scenes from this movie display how Morocco and Moroccan subjects were subjected to a distinctively American characterization. The paper proposes to analyze, deconstruct and illustrate some of Hollywood's poetics and strategies in the cultural (mis)representation of Moroccan women. Although a number of stereotypical clichés have been developed from within America's biggest image-making machine, the screen still offers valid ground for the (re)construction and retrieval of a native agency and genuine scope for native resistance. The study offers, in practical terms, a few 'signs of spectacular resistance,' whereby the camera is reversed to position the Moroccan woman in sequences of privilege and power.*

Introduction

The link between the American cinema and Morocco was established during the early twentieth century when North Africa became a central concern of both Europe and America. Western travel writers drew on generic conventions centered on wonder and fantastic to fashion stories about the 'other side' of the world in which the West was positioned as morally and culturally superior to the East. The shift from textual to visual narratives did little to dismantle the imperialistic and Orientalist politics of cultural representation. The period between 1930 and 1956 witnessed considerable visual production on Morocco, which constituted not only a fertile haven but also a little story of Hollywood's Orient. The aim of Hollywood's colonialist films was to insert a Western presence into lands occupied by people seen as ethnic others. The presence of the French legion in North Africa, and particularly in Morocco, played a major role in shaping Hollywood's interest in the region. Many other political realities also came into play. America's interest and involvement in North Africa, particularly in Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco, was rationalized by the imperative of militaristic intervention during World War II. In the process, Morocco was subjected to a distinctively American characterization. As the U.S. troops landed there General George S. Patten wrote, "Casablanca is a city which combines Hollywood and the Bible"³ (10).

³ See also Brian Edwards' *Morocco Bound: Disorienting America's Maghreb, from Casablanca to the Marrakech Express*, particularly the chapter entitled "American Orientalism: Taking Casablanca," pp. 29-77.

In Patton's eyes Casablanca presented itself as the perfect site for Orientalist fantasies that could entertain the American audience during wartime. Hollywood movies that deal with Morocco have usually emphasized the way in which Western subjects are made to appear superior while Moroccans are subjected to demeaning stereotypes. Early American productions such as *Morocco* (1930), *Casablanca* (1942), *Road to Morocco* (1942), and *The Desert Song* (1953), to mention but a few, are replete with scenes of stereotypical representation. This paper explores and examines the dynamic negotiation of the colonialist enterprise, Orientalist ideology and strategies of native resistance in Robert Florey's *Outpost in Morocco* (1939). The director is a significant French-American film expressionist whose filmic production heyday was from 1930s to 1940s. Many of his films in the United States were influenced by the European filmmaking Avant-garde expressionist style because he had worked as an assistant director in Europe. His first 'experimental' movie *The Life and the Death of 9413: a Hollywood Extra* (1928), displayed, according to Martin A. Gardner (40), how his cinematic style was inspired by the expressionism of the German film school.⁴ Florey was also an assistant director to Josef Von Sternberg, whose film *Morocco* was released in 1930. This may justify his interest in making *Outpost in Morocco* in 1949.

Relevant sequences from the film under

⁴ Martin A. Gardner, *The Marx Brothers as Social Critics: Satire and Comic Nihilism in Their Films* (North Carolina: McFarland and Company, Inc. Publishers, 2009), p. 40.

analysis display how Morocco and Moroccan subjects were subjected to a stereotypical characterization. The choice of this particular visual text is rationalized by the featuring extent and by its significant pertinence to my argument premised on the fact that the Moroccan female protagonists, in early American films, turn to occupy the focus of the plot by trespassing on the lines of subjugation. No matter how the Orientalist ideology strives to malignantly cast aspersions on native subjectivity, the Moroccan female character Cara (Marie Windsor) promisingly displays impressive signals of reaction and counterbalance. I can safely argue that the native protagonist somehow manages to break up the systematic unity of the stereotyping patterns of the film. It is impressive that the screen offers a valid ground and genuine scope for the (re)construction and retrieval of a native agency. This article aims to uncover, in practical terms, a few "signs of spectacular resistance,"⁵ whereby the camera is reversed to position the Moroccan woman in sequences of privilege and power.

Orientalist Episteme and Poetics of the Camera

Being bound to the context of early film, the world condition of World Wars I and II justifies the notion of escapism as an outlet for a burdened Western audience to be palliated, while the desire for capitalism, on the other hand, rationalizes the concepts of

⁵ This expression is borrowed from the title of one of professor Bekkaoui's books: *Signs of Spectacular Resistance: The Spanish Moor and British Orientalism* 1998, which also inspired a great deal of this article.

profitability and propaganda. Indeed, these ideological dimensions draw a symmetrical association between Hollywood's vision and its politics of implementation. It is impossible to ignore how Hollywood succeeded in constructing a discrepancy between the East and the West mainly through strategies of Orientalist episteme such as exoticisation, eroticization, namelessness, and sexual gaze. The more exotic a movie was the more appealing and profit-producing it became. The exoticisation process is efficient in mutilating people's histories and social 'realities.' The distorted history of the 'Other' becomes an 'alternative history' for the 'Self'. The displaying of movies, so James Clifford argues, was meant to "present alternative histories that are rooted in political agendas [...] and that aim at the construction of alternative futures for the United States and the Arab world respectively" (Lina Khatib 4). Cinema's essential role lies, on the one hand, in being an ideological, representational and colonial means, and on the other hand, in maintaining power in terms of cultural production, which remains at "the heart of representation of the [...] Middle East" (1) In fact, the power of cinema to produce a cultural and racial 'Other' has not been confined solely to the Middle East but has been extended to a wide variety of non-Western minorities, including even Black Americans, especially those that reside in the United States, and also native Indians living on the myth of the frontier.

It is through various poetics of cultural production that Hollywood managed to conquer the Middle East and North Africa. This was a cinematically performed conquest by which a multitude of slyly wry

images and platitudes were generated. Almost all Western films, including Hollywood's, are, Jack Shaheen asserts, fraught with "live images on big screens that go beyond a thousand words in perpetuating stereotypes and clichés" (Jack Shaheen 171) If 'a picture is worth a thousand words', a motion picture would certainly be so powerful as to convey a thousand images that could produce a Western, stereotypical mind. Such visual enslavement could be viewed as one of Hollywood's colonial processes to subdue Western spectatorship. Obviously, Hollywood movies subjugate the audiences and contribute to the shaping and guiding of Western attitudes towards a culturally and racially constructed 'Other', Hollywood proves to be indeed a conquering 'instructor.' Shaheen views this filmic enterprise as

... the most effective teacher of young... it is the authoritative creator of commonly shared attitudes and feelings... [it is] the leading source of propagandistic images that damage and isolate some citizens and can destroy the possibility of ever achieving genuine democratic relationships among us. (viii)

Film and didacticism constitutes the basic theme of Shaheen's straightforward argument, and Hollywood particularly is a mighty school for especially the most vital generations of society. It holds an authority excellent in disseminating 'common sense' attitudes to form an 'imagined community' whereby viewers, more likely young ones as more vulnerable, are subdued to the ideological lectures of the film industry.

Colonial Cinema and the Lecherous Side of the Legion

The late nineteenth century through the first half of the twentieth century marked the pinnacles of the imperial movement and the beginnings of cinema. This fact was sure to be not unrelated to an ideological happenstance with the advancement of Western image-making industry. Colonial ideology was obviously embedded as both the pretext and purpose of early cinematic intentions. The movie under examination belongs to an era when the country was under an established Protectorate. Explicitly, the genre of French foreign legion films is not only inextricably linked to, but also obviously perpetuates, colonial discourse on Morocco. It is true that America did not practise colonialism in Morocco, but I believe that its imperial and Orientalist seeds could be sensed through the enhancement of political and ideological interests in the region. On the visual basis, suffice to say that by producing American visual remakes of French movies such as *Beau Geste* (1939), Hollywood comfortably assured protection and back-up to its military outposts, and was, albeit tacitly, implicated within the wicked misdeed of imperialism. Speaking of Western cinema and colonialism, Ella Shohat and Robert Stam write:

The dominant European/American form of cinema not only inherited and disseminated colonial discourse, but also created a system of domination through monopolistic control of film distribution and exhibition in much of Africa, Asia, and Latin America [...] colonial cinema thus mapped history not

only for domestic audiences but also for the world. (103)

Colonialism allowed for a privilege of Western cinema to represent the 'Other' in pictures, sound and light. Early Western films, indeed, left no room for what was believed to be the rest of the world to take part in making these visual depictions. The West wrote, produced, and thus, possessed power to bring histories pliable according to whimsical Western motives. An interesting part of the colonial film agenda was to set up and propagate Western ideals through the diffusion of "colonialist and patriarchal ideologies" (Bernstein and Studlar 5). The imperial and colonial aspect of cinema contributed to the enhancement of visual entertainment and made it more pleasurable and amusing than countless other pieces of literature. "Unlike the novel," Shohat and Stam argue, "the cinema is not premised on literacy, as a popular entertainment, it is more accessible than literature [...] there was a mass public for imperial filmic fictions" (103). It is true that the previous textual forms of art held poetics of representational ideology. Yet it was actually the audio-visual advancement prerogative that heightened these poetics when the empire opted for employing the camera. Indeed "the camera was hired to document the tentacular extensions of empire" (Shohat and Stam 104). The cinematic apparatus fulfilled not only the, seemingly positive, task of documentation, but it was also a medium that was efficiently machinated in colonialism.

In Florey's movie, along with the literary load of the term 'outpost' bearing connotations of legion, military, soldiery and,

more ideologically, colonialism and imperialism, Morocco is geographically viewed as a strategic outpost itself in the far West of North Africa, and it is ideologically and symbolically seen as a little imaginary story of the far Orient. *Outpost in Morocco* (1949) fulfills a few paradigmatic implications and expectations of Western cinema. Films of that ilk turn this art into a visual tool that does not only confirm and perpetuate colonial encroachments in North Africa but also one that legitimizes and validates a discourse of complicity between Western empires in the territories of the 'Other.' Florey's film is a pure legion genre that articulates an official accolade for the French Foreign Legion. While Edith Wharton's *In Morocco*⁶ is a textual glorification of the French mission in the country, Florey's *Outpost in Morocco* is a visual transmission of the colonial mission to reach wider, especially foreign, audiences.

As a recurrent topos of Orientalism, Hollywood verifies that all stories on the Orient are romanticized to amply appeal to the viewer and cover up the tacit ideology that is, actually, purported by the American film industry. *Outpost in Morocco* contains such evidence as well. It (con)fuses themes of legion and war with fantasies of interracial romance. It negotiates the formulations of sex and sexuality and how they help to serve the legion, and hence, the plotting of the narrative. In addition to 'legendizing' the epics of the French colonial experience in Morocco and, by

⁶ I would like to note that Edith Wharton might be taken as one of the early figures to symbolize the discourse of political complicity between the American and French empires over Morocco.

implication, the Western superiority and authority over a racially denigrated 'Other,' Florey's movie significantly addresses how native females could be taken as a means prepared and pleased to scout for information on their own spaces, homes and compatriots, which renders them to mere ovules of domestic destructiveness.

Although they exude a military aura, colonial films require the presence of a "successful Roman hero [who is] able to overcome the dangers imaged in the Oriental woman" (John Maier 41). The Roman hero, in this regard, is featured through worldly Captain Paul Gerard (George Raft), whose presence in the story represents Western knowledge and expertise not only in the world of wars, but also in the world of love and romance. In compliance with Abdelkader Benali's imaging of the French colonizer, Captain Gerard typifies the "French capacity of controlling its empire"⁷ (49-50) by orchestrating the situation of the convoy with the aim of accomplishing the desired colonial outcomes of the legion. So, how did the 'Subaltern' speak back?

Native Princess Subjugates the 'White' Legionnaire

The movie opens with the urgent need for a special convoy to Bel-Rashad, where the emir (Eduard Franz) and his men reside. Because it is a long way from the outpost and Cara is the only daughter of the emir, it has become incumbent upon Colonel Pascal

⁷ It is worth mentioning that the Moroccan film critic Abdelkader Benali relies on an early set of French films as the substance of analysis for his book *Le Cinema Colonial au Maghreb*.

(John Litel) to pick out a professional legionnaire who is adequate enough to better escort the princess to her father. For an easier mission to Bel-Rashad, there must be a woman who will serve as a bridge to inspect the confidential planning of the Emir and his men. To scout for information, Gerard relies on the emir's daughter. The Orientalist and colonialist discourse most often entangles Oriental women in the plot for they hold a deliberate readiness and eagerness to conspire with the White man against the 'Brown' man. Hence, despite her privileged social status as a princess, Cara is ultimately utilized into this secret frame-up. Colonel Pascal gives the captain the romantic license to seduce the princess. Gerard avows: "Yes, my duties have taken me to many *strange* places."⁸ Gerard is known in Tangier, Fez, Casablanca, and Larache. It is significant that the real towns of Morocco where he has been seducing Moroccan women are named. With Gerard's sexual prowess, these places have turned into prostituted spaces. Gerard is a seducer of women.

When the convoy sets off to Bel-Rashad, only two native females are left on screen: Cara and her servant whose depicted in the middle of a desert with 'insinuating danger.' The camera transforms Morocco into a plain stretch of land indispersed by few oases, and with hardly any population. The only subjects depicted are a few impoverished shepherds haplessly saluting the passing convoy. The two females are portrayed as queens who are well protected and escorted

⁸ The 'White' captain boasts by exaggerating his familiarity with the Moroccan space, which proves the traditional Orientalist topos that the Western man/legionnaire is well informed of the Other's territory.

by a legion caravan under the leadership of Captain Gerard. This scene converges with Shohat's claim that "colonized people, like women, require the guidance and protection of a colonial patriarchal figure" (40).

As a White male legionnaire assuming the role of 'protector,' Gerard personifies the genuine 'colonial patriarchal figure' by concealing what the mission is actually for. With the presence of the White hero, the two native females seem to enjoy full security in the middle of the Moroccan desert. The irony is that the Moroccan subjects that populate the desert are supposed to be the impending threat. The Moroccan 'self' turns into a domestic enemy that jeopardizes the safety of the native women and only the Western soldiers are able to triumph over it. Except for the Moroccan spahis cavalry, almost no Arab male seems to join the convoy because, as Jack Shaheen argues, one of the Orientalist motifs dictated in Hollywood is that "as a Moroccan woman is infatuated with a legionnaire, Arabs are terminated" (23). This image, however, plays against the grain. On the way, the princess, in her equipage, turns into a Master character in the course of subjugating the 'White' captain. She seems to be leading the convoy now, resting and departing when, where and as she pleases. Gerard's authority starts to beshaken as Cara returns his orders and alters his schedule. To demonstrate my claim, I see the following dialogue of ample pertinence:

Gerard: [to Bamboule] Are we ready to start?

Bamboule: All but the lady, as you might expect Sir, [Gerard gets to Cara and her maiden].

Maiden: Shush! She always rests after lunch [speaking about the princess]

Gerard: I'm sorry but we have to start in ten minutes.

Cara: [disturbed by Gerard, she wakes up and utters] the dancer!!!!

Gerard: [reminding her of his current duty] And the Captain in charge [of] this convoy, Paul Gerard.

Cara: [quickly stands up] refusing to stop when I asked it in that miserable lunch, I'll not have my convoy run like this... *You're impertinent!*⁹

The princess's swift responses and posture are indicative of significant signs towards the power of reaction. Cara seems to gain more presence in the narrative, permeating the space of the screen. The above dialogue is pictured in a close-up sequence [figure 1], visually placing Cara on an equal footing with Gerard. The native female resists Gerard's orders with imperturbable confidence affirming that the whole convoy belongs to her. Gerard, the 'protector,' the symbol of colonial power, envisages a complete domination of colonized objects authenticating "the idea that Orientalism operated not only as military rule, but also simultaneously as a discourse of domination" Robert Young 38). Hollywood movies are not exempt from such "strategic essentialism" to borrow Spivak's expression, (Gayatri Spivak 204). The native woman Cara, however, returns Gerard's strategy of silencing by imposing a 'presence of

⁹ This sequence starts at minute 13.30' in the film. (DVD).

personality' on the plot. Regardless of colonial military violence, princess Cara epitomizes a Moroccan model that is capable of self-representation. This powerful aura of a native female character is even well articulated on the second stop of the convoy. The princess betrays symptoms of striving resistance to intentions of dominance and influence. The film certainly invites critical viewers to mull over this very particular exchange that is of exceptional prominence and pertinence between the colonial Gerard and the anti-colonial Cara:

Cara: Tell me, do you think we're safe here?

Gerard: As much as can be expected!

Cara: You French! You don't trust us much, do you?

Gerard: Where did you get that idea?

Cara: My father.

Gerard: Yes. I imagine talking to him would be quite an experience.

Cara: You might find some of his views quite different from yours.

Gerard: So many minds, so many opinions!

Cara: And yours of course are the correct ones.

Gerard: Why not? [Blatantly]

Cara: I'm afraid you're a conceited man Captain! [Stands up] and conceit is the last refuge of scoundrel [Leaves off to go to her tent], good night.¹⁰

¹⁰ See minute 16.20'', the sequence displays the native princess's self-confidence and charismatic impulse in divulging the arrogance of the colonizer.

Cara's rhetorical question on 'safety' is but an ironic hint to sensitize the Western legionnaire to his exaggerated feelings of reliance as a security provider. Gerard's 'conceit' somehow alludes to a form of vanity and the burden of colonialism inflicted on Morocco by the French. Her question is also an allegory for the Western philanthropic discourse based on the premise of not only civilizing but also, in the first place, securing and fortifying the Moroccan space and subjects. Via this sequence, the viewer is preliminarily solicited to constitute a first impression on the emir of *Bel-Rashad*, as an 'extreme' icon of resistance to colonialism.

What the conversation also divulges is a divergence of view between the emir and the colonizer: "you might find some of his [the emir's] views quite different from yours," and the blatant stereotypes that Western perception always consider to be error-free. Yet, Princess Cara is represented in such boldness and audacity challenging Gerard's arrogance and impudence. She dares accuse him of conceit and 'scoundrelism.' Cara gains power by returning the inflicted words. The scene is plainly visualized through wider framing of posture: she stands up, indicts/warns him for conceit and goes into her tent leaving him alone with ample anxiety, disturbance and perturbation. Such close-ups [see figure 1] render the space of cinema, the screen in particular, an excellent site where "Orientalist ideology is subverted rather than confirmed" (Bekkaoui n. pag.).

These feelings of unsettlement of the White man are visually projected when the White legionnaire jots down his daily records for Colonel Pascal. On the second day he

reports: "Conditions cool and *unsettled*. Advancement *slow* but expected to make headway soon."¹¹ Such a hesitant report reflects the inner state of the legionnaire whose eulogized prowess starts to decay before the native woman, positioning the Western masculinity as a subject of criticism in early American film. Princess Cara, particularly, enjoys a conscious position as the nucleus of the story centering the plot, permeating the screen and more conspicuously, delivering lessons on modesty and respect to the Western man: "I'm afraid you're a conceited man, and so often, conceit is the last refuge of a scoundrel."¹² Simply, "the edifice of colonial authority" (Bekkaoui 68) is initially forced to tremble and ultimately crumble. Said's assumption of "strategic location" (Said 20) is challenged in the narrative; it is the Moroccan character Cara, and not Gerard anymore, that takes over the 'strategically located' voice in the film.

Towards the end of the movie, a remarkable travelling close-up displays her as a magnificently valorous equestrienne [figure 2] endeavoring to stop war, which is indeed one of the scarce representations of Moroccan women positively and recognizably in early Hollywood films. Along with paying tribute to Moroccan female characters, such scenes debunk the Orientalist passivity that victimizes native

¹¹ Minute 17.18, the report about 'unsettled conditions' is composed immediately after the impressive exchange between the colonizer and the native lady.

¹² Minute 17.08, the scene significantly displays the native woman in a standing posture while the 'White' man remains seated. The lady enters her tent leaving the soldier by himself.

collectivities. Ultimately, 'lovely' Cara dies. The French, or rather, Gerard in person is given orders to explode the dynamite next to the fort. He himself brings about her death. Shaheen comments on this tragically closing scene: "Arab potentates gather around victorious French officers. Declaring loyalty and friendship to France, the Arabs turn in their rifles"(361). The French 'mission civilisatrice' continues to exist after massacring a group of Moroccans including the innocent protagonist Cara. These 'decimation' scenes clarify, in Aimé Césaire's succinct expression, "how colonization works to *decivilize* the colonizer, to *brutalize* him in the true sense of the word, to degrade him, to awaken him to buried instincts, to covetousness, violence, race hatred, and moral relativism" (35). The ironic dimension of the film is exacerbated through the killing of the rational side of the plot. Regardless of its credible portrayal of a dauntless and determined Arab/Berber woman, the film must terminate such oriental accolades. Also, Cara has to meet this tragic end because "In colonial master narratives, the Other of colonial discourse cannot be a hero, [and] neither can [s]he be an epitome of success stories beyond [her] own geographical territories" (Lhoussain Simour 355).¹³

¹³ Professor Lhoussain Simour's article tells the story of the Moorish Al-Zemmouri, whose tragic end at the hands of the Zuni Indians in America's Southwest marks off a historical amnesia in terms of early West-East encounter accounts. I am hereby adapting his statement to my context. See also Simour's book *Recollecting History beyond Borders: Captives, Acrobats, Dancers, and the Moroccan-American Narrative of Encounters*, 2014.

Conclusion

The native Princess Cara is a filmic antithesis that stands for Morocco's epic females, who stood side by side with the male militants in resistance to the French encroachment. Cara speaks for Oriental females that participate in problematizing gender formulations in the legion film genre. By exhibiting symptoms of Western frailty in a multiplicity of sequences, the native authority seems ultimately to be recovered, reconstructed and voiced out. In terms of native female representation, I believe that *Outpost in Morocco* is, on some occasions, shunning the Orientalist topos of negation and defamation. Princess Cara is neither silenced nor negated. She is named, voiced, and resistant. The princess is visually elevated both in space and time. Along with occupying the center of the plot, her appearance is reiterated so much so that she obscures the other featuring Western females, namely the colonial ladies.

By the end of the movie, the princess assumes the role of a peace process negotiator, a brave cavalry woman, and a reconciler. In contravention of filmic ideology, the Moroccan princess proves to hold ideals of wisdom and rationality and becomes an iconized symbol of truce aspiring for the suspension of hostilities between France and Morocco and, by extension, between the West and the East. One form of ambivalence in the colonial discourse is reflected through captain Gerard's controversial attitude. Why does he gallantly release the princess if he has to end her life by the end? Such Western colonial contradictions "create a grand hypocrisy that hides acts of violent control under a façade

of humanitarianism, also known as the 'white man's burden'" (Bailey Jones 25). His brutal act, especially towards Cara, alters his protagonistic role that it becomes devoid of its heroic privileges and the whole burden of colonialism is "[thrown] back on the colonizer" (Saree Makdisi 535). Similarly, this biased representation is manifest elsewhere in the film when showing the bodies of the French barbarically killed while no massacre of the Berber people is exposed to the viewer. We are allowed to see only one side of the conflict. On the other hand, it seems that Florey's movie score points to paying tribute to the Moroccan

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