



Colonial/Orientalist Discourse in Western Campaign against Qatar 2022 World Cup

Mohammed Bennis

Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Dhar El Mahraz, Fez, Morocco

Lahoucine Aammari,

Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Dhar El Mahraz, Fez, Morocco

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Abstract

The image of Muslims in Western media has always been systematically tainted by virulent stereotypes, vituperating ideologies, and fallacious (mis)representations that manifestly echo how power relations regulate Western media's political agenda. Despite intermittent calls for inter-faith and civilization dialogue, orientalist and discursive practices about Muslims still persist which undeniably confirm that Eurocentrism is still haunting Western consciousness, exacerbating further the cultural and epistemological gap between East and West. The process of othering Muslims through Western media texts, narratives, and cartoons is blatant evidence of Western hegemony that seeks to freeze the Orient/Muslims in a permanent state of lethargy and disseminate Western assumed superiority. Western consciousness has been structured to internalize and normalize the superiority and the centeredness of the West, relegating at the same time the Orient to a peripheral position. In this context, the recent event of the FIFA World Cup 2022 held in Qatar is groundbreaking evidence of the continuity of Orientalism. Qatar, the Arab and Muslim nation, has been the target of a vitriolic Western campaign that churns out the same colonial stereotypes about the Orient, being represented as the land of desert corruption, ignorance and uncouthness, hence unfit for Western standards of democracy and human rights. It is, therefore, morally incumbent on the West only to hold such a prestigious event as the World Cup! It is the West's duty to civilize the backward other! The echo of the infamous "mission civilisatrice" is still looming over! This paper seeks, therefore, through a postcolonial perspective, to expose, analyze, and debunk Western media discourse/campaign on Qatar World Cup by delving into selected samples of newspaper articles and cartoons.

1. INTRODUCTION

The relationship between East and West has never been stable or based on mutual understanding and smooth communication. There have always been political, ideological cultural and epistemological clashes. When we look at Western historiography, cultural, literary narratives and media outlets, we are often struck by Western biased, stereotypical and fallacious representations of the Orient and Orientals; these representations are animated and

nurtured by the West's unshakable assumption of its civilizational superiority which has become a cultural paradigm that seeks to polarize the world into the cliched binary opposition of the White vs the non-White Other. Western political agenda, throughout history, has been cogently crafted/constructed to perpetuate white hegemony and relegate the Other to a marginal/subaltern position. The West cannot define its existence outside this parochial/essentialist discourse. Westerners have automatically internalized their alleged superiority which has been vested with their supposedly unquestionable legitimacy. Western colonial/ neo-colonial practices and political institutions have been entangled in this process of legitimizing discourses of power and dominance over the so-called Third World Nations, and the Orient in particular.

Edward Said has already investigated and dismantled Western discursive practices in his book *Orientalism*. For Said, "Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said, 1978, 14). Certainly, the Orient was restructured, described, settled, discussed and analyzed to legitimize Western dominance. What is striking in Said's description of Orientalism is that the Orient is taught; that is, in our view, the West has designed a pedagogy for the Orient that seeks to reinvent it, rewrite it and reconstruct it to keep control over it and deplete it from its core historical and cultural attributes.

The Orient has been reconstructed to dovetail with the Western agenda and to teach Westerners that Orientals are far behind Western epistemology, moral values, human rights, and democracy. The Orient is taught as the land of backwardness, savagery, extremism, oppression, and uncouthness. In Orientalist discourse, Orientals are born with a moral and civilizational deficit that drives them far away from Westerners and condemns them to a state of inertia/stagnation. Arabs/Orientals are de-historicized, denied of their cultural and epistemological diversity, rewritten, or more accurately, written out of history, as if they were congenitally incapable of civilization (Ashcroft, et al., 2003). Orientalists have constructed their own "truth" and "reality" of the Orient, an established reality that pertains to what we call the pedagogy of Orientalism (Ashcroft, et al., 2003).

To gain more insight into Orientalism, we can evoke Michel Foucault, who related human knowledge to power. Knowledge for Foucault induces power, in the sense that knowledge is implemented to exercise power which Gayatri Spivak calls "epistemic violence"

(Spivak, 2010). Viewing Orientalism from this perspective would lead us to assume that Orientalists have established a system of knowledge/pedagogy to exert power over the Orient and fix it within a set of colonial/stereotypical tropes and myths. As Said pointed out, the Orient has been “framed by a whole set of forces that brought the Orient into Western learning, Western consciousness, and later, Western Empire...” (Said, 1978, 88).

The rhetoric of the Empire still looms over the West’s relations with the Orient. In a world saturated with digital technology, the Empire has taken a new turn. The rules and representations of Empire have been profoundly imbued with digital media and social networks, in particular. Western journalists, freelancers, bloggers, YouTubers, cartoonists, to cite but few, are all engaged in the same orientalist process fostered by early anthropologists, colonial writers, travellers, missionaries, artists, historiographers, and politicians, that is, all those who took it upon their shoulders to promote and circulate colonialist discourse. These writings, accounts and narratives participated in generating a colonial culture that has found its continuation in today’s digital tools and platforms.

Colonial culture has practically been a defining constituent of Western conceptions and visions of the Orient. Informed scholars, political elite or laymen, almost share the same discursive tropes about the Orient and Orientals. In this context, in his book *Making Colonial Culture*, Edward Berenson exclaims whether ordinary citizens supported the Empire. “Did ordinary citizens support the empire? Did a broad public respond to the plethora of colonialist propaganda, ideas, and images that circulated in the era of high imperialism... Although a few historians have maintained that empire enjoyed widespread support, until recently the consensus in French and British literature has been that imperialism interested elite group...” (Berenson, 2004, 54). Absolutely not! We believe that the colonial rhetoric/repertoire is a Western culture that structures Western consciousness despite geography, gender or class. Some are engaged in direct stereotypical practice which is referred to as manifest orientalism, as we will see later in the Western campaign on Qatar FIFA World Cup. Others internalize these attitudes, known as latent orientalism. Western cultural and epistemological representations are structured to perpetuate the civilizational gap between the Middle East and North Africa and to maintain what Said calls “Western positional superiority” (Said, 1978, 122).

Based on the above arguments, we believe a true and genuine dialogue between East and West is practically impossible. Narrowing the culturally-constructed gap is incumbent on the West, not East, for the obvious reason that it is the West which has always been engaged

in exacerbating the binary opposition between “us” and “them” which is deeply instilled into Western consciousness. It is Western epistemology which has fixed the Orient in a set of stereotypes that still persist in post-colonial societies. It is Western media which determines how the West views the Oriental Other. Commenting on Said’s book *Covering Islam*, Fareed Khan points out that Said “rationally argues that while racial or religious misrepresentations of any other cultural or religious group by the media would be found unacceptable in Western society, the media and Western academics have no qualms reviving and perpetuating discredited ‘Orientalist’ views” (Khan, 1997, 1; see also Zheni 2020; Mohsen & Nirmal, 2022). It is crystal clear that Western media shows no scruples when it comes to covering the Orient, Arabs and Muslims as whole. Orientalist views dating back to pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods are systematically disseminated by Western media which provides the lenses from which Western laymen see the Orient.

Said’s conscientious endeavour to correct the image of Muslims in the West has had a scanty impact on Western societies. Apart from the limited scope of academia, the generally stereotypical view of Islam still dominates in the West. In his article, “post-orientalism and geo-politics,” Muqtader Khan argues that despite post-colonial attempts to provide “a more authentic vision of Islam and a more nuanced picture of the Muslim world... the orientalist perspective still dominates the policy sphere and continues to shape American foreign policy” (Khan, 2022, 127). Western media does not only shape foreign policy but more pervasively the whole public opinion, especially when it comes to Muslims. All that the West knows about the East is borrowed from the media with its stereotypical images and representations of Islam and Muslims.

The Western general public is basically the product of its media political and cultural agenda. Media is a powerful apparatus that disseminates propagandistic and discursive portrayals of the Other that most people in the West take for granted. In this context, Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky clearly underline the propagandistic strand of media: “The mass media serve as a system for communicating messages and symbols for the general populace. It is their function to amuse, entertain, and inform, and to inculcate individuals with values, beliefs, and codes of behaviour that will integrate them into the institutional structures of a larger society... to fulfil this role, requires systematic propaganda” (Herman and Chomsky, 1988, 1). A very lucid description, indeed, of the shaping power of media which inculcates people with messages and symbols that frame their views and visions about, not only their societies but also the Other as well. As Edwards Said rightly points out, media texts and

messages are not “raw”, “unmediated” or “objective” (Said, 1978). They are rather heavily loaded with a well-crafted agenda that structures individuals’ consciousness.

A deconstructive method is, then, needed, to lay bare the semantic symbolism encoded in media texts, especially those which target Arabs and Muslims. It is seriously incumbent on informed researchers and scholars to radically expose these highly biased misconceptions about the Orient, analyse their contents and dismantle them as mere cliched, fallacious and stereotypical tropes. These tropes represent a style of thought that is based on a fundamental ontological and epistemological distinction between “Occident” and “Orient” (Syed, 2021, 1). Orientalist writings and media images have been systematically engaged in circulating this ideologically constructed distinction which constitutes an obstacle for Western individuals to conceive the Orient outside the process of othering. The Western public is unrevealingly swayed by its media apparatus which frames the “Arab Mind” (Rejwan, 2016) in a mythologized repertoire that has kept its validity even in the post-orientalism period (see also Thouraya Zheni 2019).

We argue that the gist of Orientalism has remained constant; it is the medium and form which have changed. In line with this argument, we believe that orientalist representations have further gained momentum with the sweeping normalization of digital culture. The velocity and accessibility of social networks have participated in consolidating these representations in the Western mind. Thanks to these new modes of transmission, people can lavishly consume orientalist images, and share and disseminate them through digital platforms, endowing them with more visibility and omnipresence in the Western consciousness. Stale stereotypical depictions of Arabs as backward, uncivilized, impulsive, and extremist, which were fostered by the early Hollywood movie industry, have been transferred online. YouTube platform, for example, is replete with the same hackneyed representations of Arabs, which naturally merge with American foreign policy and media-makers geopolitical agenda. In light of this premise, the image of the Arab/Muslim other has been radically reframed and digitally mediated (Schmidt, 2014). The ongoing alignment between media scholarship and orientalism stays uncontested. Some Western academics have manipulated the media to disseminate their monolithically biased doctrines about Arabs and Muslims: “media scholarship is marked by the use of binary terminology, collective terms and generalities, a one-sided relationship between the ‘West’ and the ‘non-West’, and the notion of superiority of Anglo-American research” (Rangi, 2021, 67). Orientalism, as a culture, has been substantially researched, taught and instilled in the Western mind and its mainstream culture.

2. Qatar 2022 FIFA World Cup: From Football to Orientalism

The event of the 2022 FIFA World Cup held in the Arab/Muslim nation Qatar has drawn massive interest since the day Qatar was awarded the opportunity to host the event. This immeasurable interest in the event was first attributed to the fact that an Arab country is designed to hold a highly prestigious football event for the first time in history. Most Arab nations jubilated and expressed their joy at this unprecedented event in the Arab world, assuming that perhaps power relations between East and West have started to recede, paving the way for more balanced and equitable relations. After all, the FIFA World Cup was always in the hands of powerful and hegemonic nations; sport itself could be considered a semiotic signifier of power dynamics that have systematically determined East and West encounters in colonial and post-colonial ages. Qatar World Cup was thought to be a precious opportunity for dialogue and communication between religions, races, languages, and cultures in the heart of an Arab and Muslim nation. In fact, no other event, being cultural, political, economic or religious can rally or gather such an incredible human diversity, apart from football. This is why the “2022 Qatar World Cup was supposed to be a time for intercultural communication and appreciation”, and people from Africa and Asia “bonded together over football” (Alsheikh, 2023, 34).

The Qatari nation’s bid was not for football only. It transcended the limited scope of this sporting event to take a wider spectrum that would narrow the cultural gap between East and West. The challenge was to rectify misunderstandings, misconceptions and prejudices that have always been thwarting and obfuscating a potential dialogue between East and West. The aim was also to mediatize a positive and constructive image of Arab/Muslim cultural, geographical and civilizational diversity, besides openness to other cultures, races and languages. The image Qatar disseminated about the Arab world was an image that radically contrasts with Western stale images that are heavily tarnished with ridiculous stereotypes and ludicrous tropes. Indeed, colossal and meaningful changes were conducted by Qatar in terms of infrastructure and society to urge the West to adopt an objective stance *vis-à-vis* the East, outside parochialism, Eurocentrism and exoticism. We have to acknowledge that a mega sporting event is not only about sport; it is also “entangled in a variety of socio-historical forces” (Ume, 2021, 65). The ways Qatar was engaged in the preparation of the event, clearly attests to the fact that football is not only about football; it is also underpinned by cultural, ideological, stereotypical and political contexts.

In light of what has been advanced so far, we believe that the thick metaphorical wall between East and West persists. The West is not yet disposed to see beyond, what Said calls,

its “positional superiority” (Said, 1978). Qatar World Cup event was under a massive media onslaught by some Western journalists, scholars and laymen, taking the claim of human rights as a pretext to manifest their latent racism, Islamophobia and biased writings and narratives. Subjective reports, biased newspaper articles and ideologically loaded cartoons about Qatar, Islam and Muslims still proliferate on electronic platforms.

To illustrate the Western media attack on Qatar, we will start with a substantial review of newspaper articles, reports, and social media comments. In 2014, Nick Miller issued an article in which he plainly called for the 2022 World Cup “to be taken away from Qatar,” advancing six “compelling” reasons to justify his claim. These seemingly groundless reasons revolve around extreme heat, human rights, homophobia, infrastructure, disruption to the European Leagues, and workers (Miller, 2014). The reasons advanced by Nick Miller can be interpreted as mere pretexts which reflect the West’s deeply seated colonial doctrines about Arab/Muslim cultures and geography. The reference to the weather reflects Eurocentric hypocrisy in the sense that the Orient is often idolized for its supposedly exoticized nature with its vast Sahara Desert and imagined landscape. When it comes to gratifying Western dream-like desires, the Orient is represented as bliss for them, but for a sporting event, it becomes an obstacle. The image of the Orient has always been vacillating between fascination and repulsion, which stresses Homi K. Bhabha’s concept of colonial “ambivalence” (Bhabha, 1983, 125). There is, indeed, a kind of psychological fluctuation between the *Arabian Nights* like vision, and conversely another image of the uncivilized backward Orient.

The claim of human rights in the Arab World is often taken as a crucible to perpetuate the so-called moral superiority of the West. The alleged universality of human rights does exclude contextual diversity and differences between nations with their distinct beliefs, doctrines, creeds and cultures. We have to unequivocally confess that the concept of human rights was tailored to dovetail with Western standards, which, in our view, deplete it from the assumption of universality. Most Western societies are shaped by a strong belief in secularism and freedom of faith. The Arab/Muslim societies, however, are guided by the Islamic principles which play a primordial role in the structure of their daily activities, cultures and institutions. In this sense, human rights cannot be imported, imposed or packaged like a commercial transaction. For example, the Arab/Muslim world is by nature, religion and culture incapable of accepting, let alone normalizing, homosexuality and its LGBT organizations, as it is common in the West. Transposing human rights by political, ideological and media apparatuses is in itself against the core principle of human rights.

In fact, the West's obsession with human rights in the Arab world through Qatar World Cup is another building block of the spirit of Orientalism. Some of Media has been ferociously engaged in mobilizing Western consciousness against the so-called backward and reactionary East. It has constituted a system of ideology "driven by the doctrine of Western centralism and nourished by the discourse of the media, which undertakes the task of transmitting it to Western popular culture... that stores a mental image of a lost, backward and reactionary East (Teller Report, 2022, 102). Media-biased coverage of Qatar World Cup leaves no doubt of the persistence of the discourse of Orientalism that has deeply thawed in the Western mind since the pre-colonial age.

This outrageous media storming on Qatar has gone far beyond the scope of football as a sporting event. It has become a systematically orchestrated scheme against an Arab/Muslim country that has dismantled/destabilized Western/Eurocentric hegemonic discourses of superiority and otherness. Football World Cup is deemed to be in the hands of big, powerful and civilized nations. The West could not swallow that an event with such a worldwide magnitude and proportions had been transferred to the hands of the backward Other. Some Western press, consequently, has launched a virulent and abusive backlash against Qatar, which obviously draws on Orientalist repertoire. For example, in the Australian online newspaper *Brisbane Times Online*, Dan Silkstone unashamedly exclaims: "The World Cup in 2022 will be hosted by Qatar—a tiny emirate of few people, little sporting pedigree and a FIFA world ranking of 113. A nation in name, but a city-state in practice, one that will challenge in almost every way the traditional notion of what a World Cup is and how it is run" (Silkstone, 2010). Such a prejudicial and extremely biased attitude reflects Western monolithism that sinks deeply into the manifest colonialist culture. The West is incapable of admitting that the alleged Arab/uncivilized Other has progressively moved to the centre, to a position of power, challenging the West's doctrine of absolute supremacy.

Western attack on Qatar verges on mordant and venomous discourse that mostly borrows from Hollywood's lexicon about Arabs. In Germany, for example, the popular newspaper *Bild* unscrupulously claims that "FIFA sold the 2022 World Cup to the Sheikhs-Qatarstrophe. This is how the word was spelt yesterday. The only explanation for this decision is that FIFA sold the World Cup to the Sheikhs of the mini-state in the desert. There is no other explanation. It was always clear that money rules in Zurich" (Factbox, 2010). In England, Columnist Martin Samuel wrote in the *Daily Mail*, "The World Cup is a competition that is, essentially forged in corruption, which is why it goes to countries that are essentially corrupt" (Samuel, 2010). In France, the allegedly avant-gardist newspaper *Liberation* pursues the same

ideologized editorial line by exclaiming “How can such a small country with no sporting tradition organize such an important event? On several points, demographic, economic, environmental, sporting and touristic, the choice makes you wonder” (2023).

Stale terms such as “Sheikhs”, “desert” and “corruption” do structure the Western mind which has been entangled into reiterating the same smear-image about Arabs. The West’s mostly-cherished slogans of human rights, plurality, diversity and democracy dwindle to mere vacuous and inscrutable notions that do not reflect the true image of the Orient, but an image which reminisces of what Edward Said calls “imagined geographies” (Said, 1978). The West conceives the East as a land of exoticism, backwardness, desert and *Arabian-Nights* dreams, an East that has frozen in a certain time of history, and, thus, cannot reach out to the civilized West. As Said points out in *Covering Islam*, the West has always been keen on promoting “Western self-image” and power over the Orient (Said, 2000, 194).

3. Western Cartoons on Qatar World Cup: When Art Correlates with Orientalism

Western cartoonists have been engaged in the same reviling campaign against Qatar, not only as host for the World Cup but also as an Arab and Muslim nation. A big heap of cartoons filled large spaces in Western newspapers, featuring images of death, human rights abuse, bribery, corruption, blood spots, skulls, bloody Sheikhs, and homophobia, to cite but a few; in fact, all that would fuel Western outrage against Qatar was lavishly circulated by Western cartoonists. Despite their seemingly humorous scope, cartoons are not ‘raw’, ‘objective’ or ‘unbiased’ images; they are carriers of a well-crafted ideology, policy, editorial line or, more accurately, a political agenda. In this context, Victoria McCollum rightly observes that cartoons are not space fillers, benign or harmless images; recently, people have come to realize the “enduring power of the political cartoon” (McCollum, 2022).

As pointed out earlier, the Western campaign against Qatar is not only about football. It is more about Arab culture, geography and faith that the West has been stereotypically snubbing. Western cartoons about Qatar World Cup do not only reflect the opinion of their makers, but they mostly release Western public opinion that is densely shaped by the hegemonic forces of their media apparatus. Cartoons “are some of the best signifiers of the concerns of the average person... They aim to cut deep via their clever execution of symbolism, exaggeration, irony, labelling, proportion, pun, satire, and analogy” (McCollum, 2022, 210). Indeed, Western cartoons about Qatar cut incisively deep into public opinion with their discursively satirical and inflated content, seeking to relapse into hectic and prejudicial images about Arabs that have been lavishly consumed by the Western mind for ages.

Since Qatar was awarded the organization of the World Cup, there has been a cartoon frenzy in most popular Western media outlets and platforms. The cartoonists' zeal to smear the beautiful game of football is beyond proportions! For example, Nicolas Jennings' cartoon in the British popular newspaper *The Guardian* features the net replete with workers' skulls and helmets, which is a direct condemnation of the supposedly human rights abuse in Qatar. Repulsive images of death and blood saturate Western press and social media. In the cartoon movement blog, a zombie-like cartoon displays a ghastly and appalling skull image tarnished with blood; once again, the cartoon's symbolism is unambiguously alluding to the workers who died during the construction of the World Cup stadiums.

Western cartoons' onslaught on Qatar has stooped into resuscitating colonial and Orientalist tropes that are unwaveringly instilled in Western consciousness. A French cartoon in *Le Canard Enchaîné* features ugly and repulsive Arab faces representing Qatar national football team players as terrorists on their way to bomb themselves. This despicable cartoon stuffed with guns, rocket launchers and explosive belts, leaves no doubt that Islamophobia is already normalized in Western culture, buttressed by the West's bombastic assumptions of democracy and freedom of the press. It is unthinkable how could some Western cartoonists display such an immeasurable amount of racism and hatred towards Arabs and Muslims as a whole. Another cartoon shows an Asian worker crucified on the World Cup, which is a religiously laden image that unscrupulously resuscitates the crusades wars between Muslims and Christians, making, in our view, a possible interfaith dialogue a mere illusion.

As a leitmotif in this paper, Qatar World Cup was not only about football. Politics cut deep into the core meaning of this sporting event. Before their match against Japan, Germany's team players decided to cover their mouths as a sign of protest against wearing rainbow-coloured armbands which represent LGBT and homosexual organizations. This act must be interpreted within the process of transposing the Western concept of human rights on the Other, denying iniquitously his social, cultural and religious differences. Blinded by its assumed superiority, the West is incapable of thinking outside its parochial vision of the Orient that was forged throughout the ages by travel narratives, ethnography, colonial literature, paintings, photography and the cinema industry. In his brilliant analysis of Orientalism, Said rightly points out that "Orientalism can be discussed, analysed as the corporate institution of dealing with the Orient-dealing with it by making a statement about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it...; in short, Orientalism is a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said, 1978, 11). The World Cup event has yielded sufficient proof of the continuation of Orientalist discourses and practices.

After all, if we engage in a postcolonial analysis of the Western campaign against Qatar, we will be able to elicit the latent discourse behind the claim of human rights. Commenting on the British press campaign on Qatar World Cup, Thomas Griffin draws on Bhabha's concept of 'mimicry' by arguing that "Qatar success in mimicking many of the cultural attributes of the West has transformed it into a viable threat which must be controlled" (Griffin, 2017, 170). By hosting a mega sporting event of global dimension, the Western centralism that has long been promoted, propagated and sustained by policymakers, writers, artists and the media, is deemed to be challenged by a "tiny" Arab/Muslim "city-state". The FIFA World Cup must not be left in the "hands of the other"! The Other-Orient- must be brought under control, and surveillance, to borrow from Michel Foucault's Panopticon theory (Foucault, 1977). The mega and highly advanced infrastructure, Qatar and the Gulf nations have constructed, disrupts the cultural imagery and narratives that fix the Orient in a permanent state of backwardness and exoticism which dates back to the colonial tropes about the imaginary land of *Arabia*. The modern picture of the Orient stays inimically at odds with the West's representational constructivism; power is steadily shifting from the centre to the periphery; the "Other could no longer be viewed as a savage, an uncontrollable, impulsive..." (Griffin, 2017, 175). The success of the 2022 version of the World Cup attests to the fact that Qatar has progressively managed to embrace attributes of modernity without breaking away from its core cultural and religious values. The image Qatar has shown to the world attests to the fact that Orientalist discourse is mere simulacrum (Griffin, 2017, 179), a product of the Western mind.

4. CONCLUSION

We can conclude by confirming that the last decade since Qatar was awarded the organization of the World Cup in 2010 is a period of revision of and reflection on orientalist discourse. The West, through its media, policymakers and public opinion, has been heavily entangled in reframing and disseminating the same clichéd representations about the Orient with its geography, people and cultures. The eighteenth-and-nineteenth-century Orientalist tropes that were fabricated by cultural anthropologists, travel writers, and photographers continue to structure the Western mind and shape its views of the Orient. It is so paradoxical that despite the sweeping rise of globalization with its social, cultural, economic and technological ramifications, Western-centric discourse *vis-à-vis* the Orient persists, stooping to hate and smear images, as it has been clearly illustrated through the Western campaign against Qatar.

If globalization is supposed to narrow geographical distance and enhance intercultural communication, it has blatantly failed to rise to these core values. Instead, Western media has

been extravagantly engaged in globalizing death and blood images to smudge the Orient in the eyes of Western individuals and to make them recoil into stale and insipid stereotypes about the Orient. In this context, Samuel Huntington reminds us that the West won the world not by superiority of its ideas or values or religion but by its superiority in applying organized violence” (Qtd. in Schmidt, 2014, 142). The hate and smear newspaper articles and cartoons that Western media has extensively disseminated about Qatar, are to be interpreted within the scope of “organized violence” or more accurately “epistemic violence” which reflects the extent to which the West is altogether inflexible about sustaining its “positional superiority.” The Orient must not rise from its cultural and civilizational slumber according to the Western mind. It must permanently linger into its slothfulness and primitivity to stand as a reflexive stage/mirror (Lacan, 2006) of Western cultural and moral superiority. The West has always believed in its exceptionalism and the superiority and uniqueness of its cultural values, as “being different from the societies to the East” (Ferguson, 2004, 128).

Based on what has been advanced, we believe an intercultural dialogue/communication between East and West is practically impossible. Qatar World Cup event has yielded concrete evidence of the enduring continuation of Orientalist discourse which still excavates from pre-colonial and colonial repertoire that freezes the Orient in Said’s notion of “imagined geography.” Qatar's staggering success in promoting a modern image of the Orient is striking evidence of the West’s moral breakdown/failure. The Image of Messi wearing the Arab traditional garment is wittingly fraught with symbolism: modernity is vested with oriental locality.

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