

**‘From a Land, from a Faraway Place.’ The
Other, Orientalism, and Selected Re-tellings
of ‘Aladdin’.**

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Bachelor of Arts (Writing and Publishing)

Bachelor of Arts (Honours)

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of
degree requirements.

Faculty of Arts and Education

Deakin University

November 2015

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I would like to express my greatest appreciation to those who helped me along the way at Deakin University: the staff and library, and special thanks to my supervisor who had provided me guidance throughout the journey.

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"My research question for this study is:
"In what ways does the story of Aladdin, in various forms, rely on notions of Otherness in its positioning of the implied reader or viewer, especially in relation to Orientalism and constructions of East and West?"

The study is based on Edward Said's theory of Orientalism & notions of the other and looks at how this is represented in various versions of the text, 'Aladdin'. It covers an introduction into the history of Arabian Nights, a chapter on traditional forms of story, Disney, as well as other short stories and blogs.

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Introduction

In my thesis, I will be researching different forms of 'Aladdin', as well as the themes, ideas and theory surrounding the use of the story from *The Arabian Nights*, which was added to the collection by Antoine Galland around the eighteenth century (Irwin, pp. 16-17). The name 'Aladdin' has been used in different ways, for example, a name of the popular film: Disney's *Aladdin*, from which the quotation in the title of the project is taken, the name for a blog: *Aladdin 4D* (Aladdin4D, 2015) and even as a business name: *Aladdin Client services* (BlackRock, 2015). In *Aladdin4D*, their tagline reads 'Rub the lamp, render the magic', the lamp being a symbol of powerful enchantment, which will be further explained later. On the other hand, *Aladdin Client Services* makes no mention of any of the themes and ideas present in the story. It could possibly be that the name 'Aladdin' itself is unique on its own and possibly that business owners see it as a positive image which will draw people to their company. Upon researching the name, I have come across two different websites, one that was more extensive than the other. On the first, "Aladdin" means to be 'faithful' (SheKnows, 2013-2014), whilst on the other, "Aladdin" provided a number of meanings, including: 'Virtuous, pious, god-fearing, and devoted to God'. It is considered an indirect Qur'anic name for boys and is written in Arabic as علاء الدين (QuranClub, 2011-2015). In summary, the name represents 'excellence of the faith', supremacy of the faith', in other words, a person named "Aladdin" is 'a strong and virtuous man and is the cause for the success and greatness of his religion'. It is a name formed from Alaa' (supremacy) and Al-Deen (the faith, which refers to Islam) (QuranClub, 2011-2015).

My research question for this study is: In what way does the story of 'Aladdin', in various forms, rely on notions of Otherness in its positioning of the implied reader or viewer, especially in relation to Orientalism and constructions of East and West. In my project, I will be discussing various versions of 'Aladdin', which include traditional forms of story, short stories and blogs and Disney. I will also be comparing and analysing these in depth. I believe my project will be useful so that people are more aware of the different versions of the story and how

they are positioned to understand notions of the Orient and also of the Other. Disney may be the popular version nowadays, but there is much more to how the story came to be. I hope that the audience will realise that behind popular stories, lies a complex history and that there are reasons behind the many changes 'Aladdin' had undergone.

The tools which will help me in the project include Edward Said's definition of Orientalism, and various notions of the Other, as well as other theory by Stith Thompson and Marina Warner. 'Aladdin' is one of the many stories compiled in *The Arabian Nights*, which is also known as the *Thousand Nights and a Night* or *Kitàb 'alf layla wa-layla* in Arabic (Mondschein, p. vii). It is popular in both the Eastern and Western world, but more so in the West, perhaps due to the fact it allows the reader 'a window into the foreign, exotic world' of the Other (Mondschein, p. vii). Orientalism is a recurring theme throughout *The Arabian Nights*, with *Aladdin* to be specific. French translator Antoine Galland's, fascination with *The Arabian Nights* begins with questions he asked himself. He wondered why Europeans were 'so interested in the Islamic world' (Irwin, p. 15). He had come to realise that Islamic literature in itself was 'self-sufficient', it was rich and was high in quality (Irwin, p. 15). The reason for this fascination is quite obvious: it is due to the concept of orientalism found in that Islamic world.

Edward Said, in his book *Orientalism* (1977), analyses as to how the East is incorrectly represented in the West, as well as how the term, 'Orientalism' is structured. He believes the term was largely created by Europeans themselves and defines Orientalism as a 'way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience' (Said, p. 1). In other words, the Orient has helped to define Europe. The Orient, also known as the 'Other' or 'East', is defined as being '...strange...and yet familiar...' (Stephens and McCallum, p. 229). Lisa Lowe explains that the Orient 'consists of an uneven matrix of orientalist situations across different cultural and historical sites' and 'each of these orientalisms is internally complex and unstable' (Lowe, 1991, p. 5, quoted in Stephens and McCallum, p. 229). To put it another way, the word 'Orient' in itself is complicated. Stephens and

McCallum also write that in *The Arabian Nights*, the idea of the Orient is 'another medieval fantasy world, already constructed as a fantastic Other by that medieval world itself, subsequently reconstructed as a fantastic Other by the modern west' (p. 230). The Orient here, is the 'Other', because it is seen as different due to its exoticism, as well as its foreign setting, customs and human behaviour (Said, pp. 2-3).

The Arabian Nights' exotic influences can be found today, as it is shown to be the source of inspiration of the American Dream. In *How the Arabian Nights Inspired the American Dream*, by Susan Nance, she argues that the years between 1790 and 1935 were significant as many people chose to act as though they had come from the East (Nance, p. 1). This viewpoint was in line with the 'consumer capitalist ideology' which defined the promised American dream (Nance, p. 2). Consumer capitalist ideology relates to how people viewed the East as one with abundance and contentment, which is representative of the Other, and imitating the lavishness of the East.

Throughout the nineteenth century, *The Arabian Nights* short story collection continued to be read in the United States, especially in urban, rural, and frontier parts. Those readers, including Anglo-Americans, commented that they had been 'highly excited' as a result of reading the Nights (Nance, p. 19). Initially, it was the Muslim world and *The Arabian Nights* that Americans looked up to for 'luxurious consumption and transformation that served as metaphors for democratic capitalism' (Nance, p. 20). In other words, it was through reading *The Arabian Nights* that Americans felt their 'acquisitive desires brought to life' (Nance, p. 20). It was then instilled into their minds, that the only way to achieve 'self-fulfilment and personal expression' is through abundance (Nance, p. 20). This proves how much 'Aladdin' has become a part of the American people, that it played a key role in touching lives and inspiring the dream through its exoticism and being an example of what the Other contains.

Both Warner and Thompson view *The Arabian Nights* as a text that is magical in one way or another. Warner regards the Nights as a text of 'charming powers' (Warner, p. 27). She views the text as one that 'inspires a way of thinking about

writing and the making of literature as forms of exchange across time' (Warner, p. 27), for example, 'dream journeys', where the maker 'fuses what is being made, until the artefact exercises in return its own fashioning force' (Warner, p. 27). In her novel: *Stranger Magic*, she uses *The Arabian Nights* as an example of one of the world's greatest pieces of literature. The magical concepts used in the stories, such as the genies and flying carpets, are in her view, stimulating and provide a source of inspiration to the reader. She believes that once a reader is immersed into the stories, they would have the feeling of being transported 'from the plane of reality to the level of the creative, imaginative and the fantastic' (Khan, 2015). This is another way of referring to another world that one could only imagine what the East contains.

Stith Thompson, firstly, recognises *The Arabian Nights* as a 'novella', as they are 'widely told by the unlettered, especially by the peoples of the Near East' (Thompson, p. 8). Thompson also describes 'Aladdin' as a story of magic objects. He writes that 'a general pattern is found in nearly all stories of magic objects', which is the 'manner in which the objects are acquired, the use of the objects by the hero, the loss (usually the theft), and the final recovery' (Thompson, p. 70). In these type of stories, the existence of such 'marvellous objects' is taken for granted (Thompson, p. 78). This is seen when Aladdin finds the lamp in an underground chamber, realises its magical properties upon rubbing it, obtaining castle and wife, and then losing his fortune upon theft of the lamp, until the lamp is restored finally by means of another magic object (Thompson, p. 71). Thompson believes that the tale, 'Aladdin', has never become a true oral tale because it's 'life has been dependent on the popularity of *The Arabian Nights*' (p. 71). It was believed for a while that 'Aladdin' was not part of *The Arabian Nights*, and a fabrication made by Antoine Galland, but this uncertainty has now been dismissed. Yet, there is still doubt surrounding as to whether 'Aladdin' has ever been 'a part of the actual folklore of any country' (Thompson, p. 71). This raises the question of whether it is necessary to place the story of 'Aladdin' in an Eastern setting.

The frame narrative of the story, *The Arabian Nights* is dictated by Scheherazade (a legendary Arabic queen and storyteller of One thousand and

One Nights) tales (Makdisi, Nussbaum, pp. 8-59). The storyteller, Scheherazade, used the power of telling *The Arabian Nights* in order to protect herself and her sisters from the Sultan's fate (Warner, p. 27). *The Arabian Nights* originate from oral tradition and there is no known 'authorship' that can be credited for collecting all of these stories. The stories of the *Nights*, have simply been passed down from manuscript to manuscript. The earliest copy found, however, is from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries AD. Mondschein argues that it may have probably originated as early as the ninth century, which is when the stories were translated into Arabic by around the year 850. However, the largest collection found, containing 1, 000 stories, comes from Egypt. Scholars who have studied its originating roots have found that it points to Indo Persian folk tales, the sophisticated literary traditions of Baghdad, Medieval Egypt, and Classical Greece (Mondschein, p. ix).

The *Nights*' oral and literary tradition may even go back to the days of the pharaohs in Ancient Egypt (Mondschein, p. ix). However, the *Nights*' seems to have been influenced, from a historical perspective, by the East and West, going back and forth (Mondschein, p. ix). It is fair to say that *The Arabian Nights* is a work influenced by all cultures who have come into contact with the Muslim world, through sources older than history itself and finishing its completed volume by AD 1500. This is why some of the elements reflect the realities of the Muslim world, even a reflection of the 'original unity' coming from the first generations after the life of Muhammed (Mondschein, pp. x-xi). The first time the *Nights* were translated into a European language was in the year 1703-14, in French, by Antoine Galland and soon was translated into English. Galland is known as the 'creator of the *Nights* for the West'. Since identifying the earliest version of *The Arabian Nights* is not clear cut, I believe the sentence must be rephrased as the 'earliest known' written translation of *The Arabian Nights* series, which would be Antoine Galland, a French translator. Galland's version of the story, 'Aladdin', along with fourteen other stories, was written down, for him, by a Maronite Christian Arab from Aleppo, named "Hanna", who was introduced to him in 1709 (Irwin, pp.16-17). It is also interesting to note that Galland did get a hold of an Arabic manuscript, but this has now disappeared. Thus, the first written earliest text remains in French (Arata, 2015).

The most influential translators came from the Victorian era, both for children and adults (Mondschein, p. xii). This is when Richard Burton comes in, who wrote his translation in 1885-1886, and was not intended to be read by the wider public. It was a very expensive translation at the time, with 1, 000 copies printed (Mondschein, p. xii). John Payne, the second major English translator after Edward Lane, produced his '500 copies' between the years 1882-1884, this is after Edward Lane's 'popular translation' between the years 1839-1841 (Mondschein, p. xii). Finally, Sir Richard Burton followed John Payne with his own translation in 1885-1886 (Mondschein, p. xii). Payne's is considered the first complete translation but was heavily censored. He removed what was deemed offensive to the Victorian era. On the other hand, Burton does the opposite by emphasising the exoticism and eroticism in the stories (Zott, 2004). Edward Lane, however, aimed to produce a text which reflects a work of 'scholarly quality'. His writing, therefore, reflects the 'late-Romantic' comparative philology and ethnography (Arata, 2015). Like Payne, he also chose to censor his texts when necessary. John Payne's and Richard Burton's aim in their translations was done due to their audience of private subscribers (Irwin, 2011). Richard Burton remains as one of the most famous translators or 'infamous' due to having added further information or 'footnotes' explaining oriental sexual customs for his readers. The reason why he is criticised is due to the fact his work is seen as partly plagiarised from John Payne (Mondschein, p. xii). Though I believe each translator who has come after Galland, has copied each other to some degree due to the fact that they have based their translations on Galland's.

Before *The Arabian Nights* was well known in English, a French translation was published, by Galland, between the years of 1704 and 1717 A.D. was titled 'Les Mille et une Nuits' and contained a total of twelve volumes (Tate, 1999). Galland was known as 'a born story teller' who 'had a flair for a good story and a knack of re-telling it well' (Hozien, 2013). It is also important to realise that Hanna Diab played a major role, as an informer, in Galland's translation of the Nights. From the total of fourteen stories, seven of these appeared in the later edition of the Nights (Irwin, p. 17). Though, Galland then used the opportunity by adding further detail to these stories. For example, he tried to make a point in

changing these stories, so that a moral lesson can be learnt from each one. Though, it is said to have not been successful (Marzolph, p. 22). He also aimed to create a more “Oriental theme” through his descriptions, and statements of habits and customs found in Eastern, Islamic culture. For example, the statement “Que Dieu vous conserve”, which means “May God protect you” or “se prosternent le front sur le tapis”, which translates to “they prostrate themselves, heads bowed to the carpet [3: 104, 123, 288, 367] (Marzolph, p. 23). His idea of creating an Orientalist environment, I believe, has been his more successful part. In addition to this, Galland also took an extra step by explaining certain terms that the reader may not understand.

However, Galland was limited in providing a description of an authentic image of the ‘material world of Islam’, due to rules he had to follow under “French classical aesthetics’ (Marzolph, p. 21). These rules of ‘literary creativity’, only allowed descriptions in abstract terms (Marzolph, p. 30). This means that a reader will never fully grasp a complete description of the Orient in *The Arabian Nights*. He could only describe the Oriental environment as seen ‘from the inside’ (Marzolph, 30). At least, in Galland’s version. Arabic texts were often filled with details of ‘palaces, their dwellers, and the multifarious dishes they enjoyed’ (Marzolph, p. 24) and it may probably be the case that one must know the Arabic language to receive a full understanding of the Orientalism present in the Arabian Nights. Marzolph argues that there are three elements which contribute to the environment created by Galland: the mosque, the caravansary and the public bath. For example, in “Aladdin” he quotes: ““He took him also to the grandest and most celebrated mosques, to the Khans where the foreign merchants lodged, and through every part of the sultan’s palace which he had liberty to enter”” (Galland 3:73; Beaumont 3: 302, quoted in Marzolph, p. 24).

As for the Arabic version of the *Nights*’, it is believed that the manuscript was published in 1888 by ‘Hermann Zotenberg. This text was preserved in the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris, France and was originally believed to be a copy of a lost manuscript from Baghdad in 1703 (Marzolph, 332). Other than Arabic, it is well known that selected stories in *The Arabian Nights* have been translated into Urdu for a long time, including the story of ‘Aladdin’ (Marzolph, 332). However, this Arabic version did not go well, and its popularity was decreased

among the Arabs in the twentieth century. *The Arabian Nights* received its criticism on grounds of morality in a survey conducted in 1974 (Pinault, p. 3), titled "A Look at Our Folk Literature". Iflah 'Umar al-Adalbi quotes that it 'exceeds all bounds in some of its stories in portraying immorality, debauchery and perversion' (Pinault, p. 3). In May 1985, a court in Egypt ordered that the copies of a recent edition of the *Nights*' be permanently removed. The new edition was printed in Beirut and Brig. Adly al-Kosheiry (head of morals department of Interior Ministry), explained that the reason for the court order was due to the fact that the book was likely 'a threat to the morals of Egypt's youth' (Pinault, p. 3). Though there were others who had come into defence of this ban, such as Salwa al-Inani who published an essay describing the Arabian Nights as one of the great works of world literature. She quotes: 'Let us take a united, educated and cultural stance' (Pinault, p. 3). It is also worth noting that in the nineteenth century, despite having four different versions of the *Nights*' written in Arabic, they weren't considered a work of scholarly quality. It is questionable as to why the Arabic language, being the language of the East, is rejected as non-scholarly. Irwin gives reasons for this, describing these works as 'not all that well written' and 'unpolished' (Irwin, p. 14). It had to be Antoine Galland who took the first major step in discovering, translating and making these popular throughout Europe.

The common events seen throughout the traditional forms of 'Aladdin' begin with the narrator stating that Aladdin was born to a poor tailor, it is set in China and the magician from inner Morocco, and that the lamp is found to sit inside a cave or 'cavern'. *The Arabian Nights* has been translated by Westerners from time to time and can be labelled as both a work of Arabic and Western culture. Take the Twin Books *Aladdin* (1994), for example, which is intended for pre-schoolers with a story cut down to just eight pages, omitting the magician, the ring genie, and the Wazir wanting to marry his son to the princess. The effect of this elimination is that the story becomes a 'Cinderland narrative', where the hero wins 'twin outcomes or folktale: the money and the royal bride', interests that fall under the Western metaethic (Stephens and McCallum, pp. 234-235), Stephens and McCallum define the Western metaethic as 'express(ing) a culture-specific idea of transcendence and not a universal' (Stephen's and

McCallum, p. 7). In other words, the Western metaethic is a particular overarching 'cultural or narrative schema' (Stephens and McCallum, p. 6) which has developed in European cultures, or cultures based on these (Stephens and McCallum, p. 7). Due to *The Arabian Nights*' discovery in Europe, through French translations and then the later translations which followed after Galland, one may argue that *The Arabian Nights* were a creation made by the West. Especially, since those researchers who had come after Galland are more 'telling about Western attitudes towards the Oriental' rather than using the original themes and ideas found in *The Arabian Nights* (Vermeulen, Smet, p. 156). But to argue that this is the case, is another argument altogether and is up to the reader to decide.

In the next chapter of my thesis, chapter one, I will be focusing on comparing and analysing 'traditional forms of story'. These are translations of *The Arabian Nights* by Sir Richard Burton and Antoine Galland. I chose Richard Burton's version of *The Arabian Nights* to compare, because he is regarded as a well-known scholar in terms of the English version of the story, the story is easy to find and read, and I am also curious as to why he was criticised for some of his translations. However, he is not the first scholar to have the *Nights*' translated into English. As mentioned previously, Galland is known as the 'creator of the Nights of the west'. Galland's style has been used in various translations, such as in 1839-4 by Edward Lane, where Sallis describes this style as 'beautiful and very modified' (Sallis, p. 3). Along with the elements of Orientalism, and Romanticism, this is why *The Arabian Nights* had managed to keep its popularity for more than a century and it is well worth analysing Galland's translation for this reason.

In chapter two, I will be analysing Disney's version of *Aladdin*, this includes the film, its elements and themes attached to it, for example, how the West has shaped Disney's *Aladdin*, along with its main characters. I will also be looking at the songs played in the film, which includes the opening song, as they have significant relevance to constructions of the Other in relation to the Orient. Chapter three is based on analysing other versions of *Aladdin*. I have started with three different short stories as well as blog short story, and again compare

these and the different ideas each of the authors have chosen to incorporate, yet still relate to the Other in some way. In analysing, these three very different forms of text, it is realised that common themes and ideas are consistent throughout, whilst others are not and it leaves open on the question of what a true representation of the East may look like, and whether it is actually possible.

Chapter 1: Traditional Forms of Story

In this chapter, I will be comparing two traditional forms of the story of “Aladdin”. These are “The Arabian Nights”, by Antoine Galland and “Aladdin and the wonderful lamp” by Richard Burton. As mentioned previously, these two have been chosen as they are both very famous translations for the different styles and ways used to depict the Orient through their writing, as well as how rich in meaning these translations are.

I will begin with Galland’s version, it being the first known translation of the West and it could be concluded as the original version of ‘Aladdin’. Towards the view of a twenty-first century reader, such as myself, the translation uses complex terms such as ‘vegabound’, which is to describe Aladdin, as ‘a person who wanders from place to place without a job’, rather than using the term ‘street rat’ for example. The effect of this is a text which exudes a style that is to be taken seriously, as the language in itself is older English and it is special due to older language being rich.

The story is set in China, and introduces the audience to a tailor, named Mustafa, who is Aladdin’s father. He eventually dies from an illness due to the pain brought on by not being able to raise his son properly (Galland, p. 2). In a short few months, he was dead. Aladdin, at fifteen years of age, meets the Magician for the first time and the Magician introduces himself to Aladdin’s mother as Mustafa’s brother. This scene is more prominent in Galland’s translation than to Burton’s, where emotions are exaggerated. He is shown to bow at the Sofa, where Mustafa had sat, and cries. Aladdin’s mother even wants him to sit in his place. It shows, that even with strangers, the customs of the East are very generous and welcoming, which positions the reader to view the East in a positive light, but it is also tense for the reader, knowing that this is the Magician in disguise.

Readers get a first taste of the Orient through the “Uncle”, who takes Aladdin out to see the finer sights of town. The “Uncle” introduced Aladdin to merchants, and what people in respectable positions do for a living, as well as the many

gardens and sights that were described. For example, he leads Aladdin 'out a gate that led to some large and handsome houses, or rather magnificent palaces, to each of which there was a beautiful garden, in which they had the liberty of walking' (Galland, p. 12). With each passing palace they had come to, Aladdin would further exclaim 'O uncle, here is one much more beautiful than those we have before seen' (Galland, p. 12). This shows that the land of the East has more hidden riches that are yet to be seen, representing the Other as one that is infinite.

The turning point of the story is eventually when the Magician leads Aladdin between the two mountains, and reveals by magic, an opening of a 'square stone of about a foot and a half across, placed horizontally, with a brass ring, fixed in the centre, for the purpose of lifting up' (Galland, p. 14). Even the entrance in itself is described in such detail, even more so with the fruits he describes in the hidden garden he descends into the cave, describing them as 'extraordinary fruit', further emphasising what this means that 'some were white, others sparkling, and transparent, like crystal, some were red and of different shades, other green, blue violet; some of a yellowish hue' (Galland, p. 18). He captures that moment, despite Aladdin not being aware of their value, as these fruits serve him good later on in the story. The fruits are also a symbolism of future riches, they play a role in enticing the Sultan through 'instant gratification of desire' (Stephens and McCallum, p. 231).

Galland tends to be more dramatic with his characters than other writers such as Burton. In this scene, at the cave, for example, the Magician is shown the extent of his bad temper by giving Aladdin, who was about to run away 'a blow so violent as to beat him down, and very nearly knocked some of his teeth out, as it appeared from the blood that ran from his mouth' (Galland, p. 14), as well as the Sultan, irritated at the Princess's confusion, threatens her with his 'sabre', quoting 'either tell me what you this conceal, or I will instantly strike off your head' (Galland, p. 69). This is before another dramatic incident when the Sultan orders thirty of his horseman to bring Aladdin in chains, with the intention of executing him (Galland, p. 116). A further example relates to the genie of the lamp. When Aladdin's mother begins to clean the lamp for the first time that a 'hideous and gigantic Genius rose out of the ground before her and cried with a

voice as loud as thunder', making the mother eventually fall down into 'a fainting fit' (Galland, p. 27-28). It was revealed later, however, that the harder one rubs the lamp, the more aggressive the genie would appear. This added drama, and extent of emotions being applied draws in the readers, and to some of these main characters, makes them appear raw and real and adds more to what it means to grow up in the East. It is one that contains barbaric cruelties (Stephens and McCallum, p. 231).

At the cave, the Magician's thoughts were intensified, thoughts that were unknown in other versions of 'Aladdin', such as Burton's and Disney's. For example, it is revealed that he was 'in such a haste to put an end to poor Aladdin' because he was afraid that 'while contesting the matter with him, some person might come, and make that public which he wished to be quite secret, that he completely failed in his object', however, he planned to sacrifice Aladdin anyway so that he may not have 'existing witnesses of his being in possession of the lamp (Galland, p. 20). Hence, the descriptions of the Magician's thoughts position the reader to regard him as evil.

The effects of religion seems to play more of a role in Galland's version in contrast to Burton's. Even though in Burton's version, words such as 'Salam Aleykhom' and 'Inshaala' are used, there is not much action going on in relation to religion. For example, in the scene when Aladdin is trapped inside the cave for two days without eating and drinking, it was on the third day that Aladdin suddenly 'lifted up his hands, and joining them, as in the act of prayer, he wholly resigned himself to the will of God', uttering, 'There is no strength or power but in the high and great God' (Galland, p. 22). Ironically, without even thinking, the action of having his hands joined rubbed at the ring, revealing the Genius of the ring. This shows the role of God at play, as it is strange that being trapped for three days, that Aladdin never thought of taking advantage of the ring on his finger, given by the Magician, just in case he was in trouble. It just happened that the ring was rubbed during prayer. The extent of another world in Galland's version is not only limited to the supernatural forces of the Genius, but there is a higher power ruling over all. It assumes the reader as one who is sympathetic to faiths of the Abrahamic religions, therefore, Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

The characters are shown to be 'God fearing' in this version, especially with Aladdin's mother upon discovering the genie by wanting Aladdin to put the lamp and ring away due to them being 'demons, and our prophet has told us so' (Galland, pp. 30-31). Aladdin lives in a very conservative society and partly the reason as to why he falls in love with the Princess at first sight is due to never before seeing a woman without a veil, apart from his mother. He also initially thought all women looked like his mother too, as Galland quotes 'Aladdin had no sooner beheld the princess Badroulboudour, than he forgot that he had ever supposed that all women were similar to his mother' (Galland, p. 38). The grand entrance the Princess makes on her way to the public bath, whilst Aladdin hid behind 'the door of the bath' (Galland, pp. 37-38), is described in the following, precise, detail: 'her eyes were large, well placed, and full of fire, ye the expression of her countenance was sweet and modest, her nose was properly proportioned, and pretty, her mouth small, her lips like vermilion and beautifully formed' (Galland, p. 38). The description itself almost brings the princess to life, her eyes, being 'full of fire', suggest some measure of independence and her countenance as being 'sweet and modest', suggest that there may be more to her than what appears upon the first meeting.

One of the biggest differences between Galland's version of "Aladdin" and other traditional forms of "Aladdin", is the way he makes more of the frame narrative of Scheherazade, the current Sultana, being the one to have retold the story of 'Aladdin' to Schahriar. Galland has a lengthier approach at the end of the story, as opposed to Burton's. In saying this, Scheherazade further points out the two lessons to be learned: Firstly, that the African magician was unworthy, which is the reason why he could not enjoy the abundance he grasped unlike Aladdin, however, who rose from poverty and only asked what was necessary to attain the end he wished for; Secondly, the Sultan (Princess's father), shows that he is a character of a good, just and equitable monarch who ran the risk of being dethroned by an act of injustice (when he about to execute Aladdin) (Galland, pp. 151-152). The epilogue of the story introduces the next story, as well as a lesson that readers can take away from 'Aladdin', which serves as a caution to those who encounter wealth, power and status.

“Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp”, by Sir Richard Burton, is shorter than Galland’s version. The language is different from Forster’s translation of Galland’s as Burton was dramatic at times, such as ‘thy liking’, ‘tis a disgrace’ and ‘thysel’ (Burton, p. 294). Burton has similar characters to Galland’s, though some that are named differently. For example, the genie of the ring is called the ‘Ifreet’ and the lamp’s genie is just named as the ‘jinni’; the magician has a number of names, one being the ‘Darwaysh’, ‘Maghrabi’, ‘Maroccan’, ‘Moorman’ and also an ‘Afrikiyah proper’; the grand Vizier is known as the ‘Wazir’ as well as the Princess’s name being spelt differently, but with a similar pronunciation, from ‘Badroulboudour’ to ‘Badr al-Budur’. The Magician’s different names, reflect the Magician having various different personalities and appearance, in line with a character who is very manipulative and wicked in nature, indicative of the Other as one with ‘sudden, irrational, and barbaric cruelties’ (Stephens and McCallum, p. 231).

The key plot events of both stories are similar, though details were slightly different and changed. In the beginning of the story, Aladdin is described as a ‘scapegrace and a ne’er-do-well’ (Burton, p. 289). As a result, his father, a Tailor dies. Burton describes this event very bluntly, that ‘the tailor sickened and died’ (Burton, p. 289), without indication of how long he had lasted being sick. To have the little details left out portrays that it is a not so significant event. In Galland’s version, the minor details were added to this event, which in effect, is likely to stir emotion in the reader, and thus highlighting its significance.

In the event, when the Magician, or ‘Maghrabi’ comes to greet Aladdin’s mother, he is shown to be excessively emotional, to the extent that he ‘kissed the floor crying’ (Burton, p. 292). For him to do so, shows how much of a convincing act the Magician was willing to play. He cries ‘Ah, how scant is my satisfaction and how luckless is my lot, for that I have lost thee, O my brother, O vein of my eye!’ (Burton, p. 292). He expresses much intimacy in terms of his deceased brother with this line. To call him ‘O my brother, O vein of my eye’, from my own experience, is a very respectable and intimate line used in Arabian customs to show how close of a relationship you have with a particular person, that they are a strong part of you. To be part of an ‘eye’ indicates to be part of the soul, as the saying goes that ‘eyes are windows to the soul’. This is not the first time

Burton uses popular Arabian phrases of respect. Earlier in the story, when Aladdin is asked by the Magician to show him the way to his house, Aladdin replies straight 'On my head and mine eyes be it, O my uncle' (Burton, p. 291). Its meaning, from my own experience, translates to showing complete submission to one's elders in a very respectable manner. Burton's technique of using such foreign Arabian phrases is different, it mixes much of the East, together with China and Arabia, creating a multifaceted type of East. With the exception of a few Arabic terms, such as 'Alhamdollilah', which he translates this as 'Praise be to Allah' (Burton, p. 298), phrases do not serve much use to a reader who does not possess Arabian knowledge as one must understand the meanings behind these phrases to truly appreciate it. However, with the addition of these phrases and terms, it reinforces the idea of the Orient as being foreign through its setting, customs and human behaviour (Said, pp. 2-3).

The gardens that both Aladdin and the Magician passed on their way to the magical cave are also shown to be extravagant. They were described as a 'mighty grand garden which was nearhand, a place that the heart delighted and the sight belighted; for that its swift-running rills flowed amidst the flowers and the waters jetted from the jaws of lions moulded in yellow brass like unto gold', as well as Aladdin being 'nigh to fly with delight as seeing sights he had never seen in all his born days' (Burton, p. 297). Here, it appears that Burton takes advantage of verbs such as 'jetted' and 'swift-running' (Burton, p. 297) to describe this scene and this helps to bring the garden to life, something that helps readers to be able to feel the Orient being described in an exotic and pleasurable way.

The conflict between the Magician and Aladdin at the Cave, which led the Magician to shut the cave, was due to only being full of 'wrath exceeding and cut of all his hopes of winning it' (the lamp) (Burton, p. 302). It is again blunt, unlike Galland who provided more reasons for why he shut the cave. In this section of the story, Burton does one aspect differently, which he provides a background descriptions and origins of the Magician. For he example, it is described as the Magician being an 'Afrikiyah proper' born in the 'Inner Sunsetland', who was addicted to witchcraft from his earliest age (Burton, p. 302). This also positions the reader to see the magician as Other. It was then through this

practice for over forty years that he soon came to discover the treasure of the lamp. With this brief background story behind the Magician, it comes to show how patient his character is and how skilled he is at his work. It also implies that the 'wonderful lamp' is truly wondrous and a powerful object for the Magician to travel so far. Burton sums this lamp as being 'surpassed by any man on earth, either in high degree or in wealth and opulence; nor could the mightiest monarch of the universe attain to the all sufficiency of this Lamp with its might of magical lens' (Burton, p. 303). Here, Burton is emphasising the lamp as being an extremely important aspect of what the Orientalism represents, that it has much potential to serve great abundance.

The first appearance of the Princess also differs from Galland's translation of 'Aladdin'. In Burton's version, this section of the story was further exaggerated with the King threatening the 'death penalty' onto who didn't listen to his order for everyone to shut down their shops and return to their houses. The princess, on her way to the 'Hammam', which is another word to describe a public bath, is described by one who sings a verse with the following: 'Magic Kohl enchanteth the glances so bright of her: We pluck roses in posies from cheeks rosy bright of her: Of night's gloomiest hue is the gloom of the hair of her And her bright brow uplifteth the murks of the night of her' (Burton, p. 313). It is also indicated that it was not only curiosity which influenced Aladdin to want to sneak a peek of the Princess, it was also due to the lieges who has spoken of her, as he quotes: 'Indeed all the lieges talk of her beauty and loveliness and the end of my desires is to see her' (Burton, p. 313). This thought happens inside Aladdin's mind, a sense of intimacy is going on here. The word 'desires' indicates that there is more to just curiosity, even Aladdin's mother quotes that Aladdin felt an 'uncontrollable longing to look upon her' (Burton, p. 320). It is more sexual in nature. Further examples of this include 'this very night the Grand Wazir's son goeth in to her' (Burton, p. 323) and the Lady Badr al-Budur thanking Allah for 'preserving her virginity intact for her true bridegroom, Aladdin' (Burton, p. 348). The explicit terminologies changes the dynamics of the story towards an older audience and it is understandable why Burton has been criticised for this reason.

The story ends with a single quote by the Queen Scheherazade. Unlike Galland's, where there more details added to the ending, Burton quotes: 'When Queen Scheherazade ended this story she said to Shahryar, "O my lord, thou art doubtless astonished at the audacity of Aladdin, but I am assured that though wilt be more surprised on hearing the story of the curious adventures of Harun al-Rashid" (Burton, p. 370). As it appears, it is very short and Burton compares "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp" to the next story as not being as 'surprising', stirring the Sultan's curiosity of an Other that has infinite possibilities in the 'medieval world of magic' (Stephens and McCallum, p. 231).

Chapter 2: Disney

In this chapter, I will be focusing on the Disney version of *Aladdin*. I believe it is very important to dedicate a chapter on Disney's *Aladdin* due to its popularity. As Jack Zipes has noted in *Breaking the Disney Spell*, most people only know the Disney version of popular known fairy tales (Zipes, p. 334), and he quotes, 'If children or adults think of the great classical fairy tales today, be it Snow White, Sleeping Beauty or Cinderella, they will think Walt Disney' (p. 332). Zipes further mentions that it was Disney who was able to 'gain a cultural stranglehold on the fairytale', being even stronger with the most recent Disney productions: *Beauty and the Beast* (1991) and *Aladdin* (1992) (p. 333). In other words, Disney became dominant in western culture and essentially has imprinted an 'American vision on the fairy tale' (p. 333), thus creating a distorted representation of the Other. In analysing the Disney's version of *Aladdin* I will be looking at picture book versions of the story, as well as film. Originally released in 1992, I have chosen to analyse the 2004 *Aladdin* film, created by Buena Vista Home Entertainment, California.

To begin with, I believe it is important to understand the history behind Disney in order to understand better why certain westernised themes and ideas were used in the story of *Aladdin*, whilst many of the traditional themes were omitted. It helps to understand whether these changes, for example, the characters being westernized (Stephens and McCallum, p. 237), was made deliberately or accidental and why these changes were preferred, compared to the traditional version of 'Aladdin'. Despite its international success, the maker of Disney, in fact had come from a poor family. In addition to suffering from poverty, he also suffered under the care of an unaffectionate father (Zipes, p. 343). As a result, the young Princes in many of the Disney fairy tales are seen as the 'heroes', even though they have done nothing to help the people or community. In other words, one can achieve glory through deception (Zipes, p. 345). The hero in these films, represent the

creator of Disney, and hence he is given much credit. In terms of *Aladdin*, the creator of Disney appears to have chosen his story since he can relate to Aladdin's poverty as a child where he was drawn to fairy tales 'because they reflected his own struggles in life (Zipes, p. 343). Disney also held a similar outlook in comparison to *Aladdin*, in being rich and successful through the lamp, where 'one can achieve glory through deception' (Zipes, p. 345). It shows that despite making these western changes to *Aladdin*, he has used the idea of what the Orient represents to be a creation of his own, through the many Disney remakes.

Zipes believes that Disney films are simply an attack on the literary tradition of fairy tales, by robbing the literary tale of its true voice, with changes to its 'form and meaning' (p. 344). The reason for this, may be due to the fact that Disney's success did not lie in producing a good story. This was not their main priority as they defined success through the use of images. If the images used in film stirred a reaction in the audience, this was considered a success (Zipes, p. 342). More importantly, Disney always wanted to do something 'new and unique', as long as he had full control (Zipes, p. 351). It can be concluded that Disney took advantage of the technological advances in order to produce a successful story. Unlike the traditional forms of 'Aladdin', where translators such as Burton and Galland have used their literary art to produce detailed descriptions of the Orient, Disney appears to not have used this and thus a detailed description of the Orient is limited through images and shorter sentences in the picture book versions of *Aladdin*.

It wasn't until the 1930s that Disney began to publish its picture book versions of the film. In the *Aladdin* Little Golden Book, the beginning sets the readers to see the Orient as something different, as an enchantment. For example, it begins with the line 'On a dark night in a faraway land, an evil man named Jafar and his wicked parrot were waiting' (Kreider, p. 1). To be more specific, it presumes the Orient to be different from the West. The 'Golden Book spin-offs from the

Disney film' (Stephens and McCallum, p. 235) version of this picture book, is also reduced to just 105 words. Unlike other versions by Richard Burton and Antoine Galland, the Disney picture book removed many elements to the story. For example, there is only one genie, which is the genie of the lamp, and the magic carpet is used to replace the ring genie. The magician character is not mentioned, and there is no Wazir who wishes marry his son to the Princess. Stephens and McCallum highlight the implications of such changes in removing these elements. It includes three main effects: the story is reduced to a 'Cinderlad narrative' (Stephens and McCallum, p. 235), when the hero is able to achieve two outcomes of romance or folktale—therefore, the money and the bride; it is all about being suddenly wealthy and makes assumptions on the destiny of certain individuals (p. 235).

In *Retelling stories, framing culture*, by Stephens and McCallum, the basic outline of the *Aladdin* picture book is shown as follows:

- “1. Aladdin finds the lamp while “exploring the cave.”
2. When Aladdin’s mother attempts to clean the lamp, and so conjures the genie, the genie simply “gave Aladdin and his mother many more jewels, and made them rich.”
3. Aladdin goes himself to ask to marry the Sultan’s daughter, and is successful because he “was now a rich and handsome young man.”
4. The marriage takes place, “and they were both very, very happy.”” (Stephens and McCallum, p. 235).

This shortened version of the story is compact in comparison to Galland’s translation and leaves out details and mini-plots, such as the Magician’s brother and his disguising and killing off Fatima (Galland, p. 143) or the disappearance of the Princess and the castle, and having the Sultan about to execute Aladdin (Galland, pp. 116-118). The absence of these creates a less suspenseful story which could be seen as more suitable for a younger audience. Also, in the event where Aladdin asks for the Sultan’s daughter’s hand after becoming a

rich prince himself, this backfired on him. The Sultan was impressed, but the same cannot be said for Princess Jasmine. She initially became angry at her father's acceptance and rejected such a proposal. It seems as though the riches and royalty did not impress the Disney version of Jasmine. It was the poor version of Aladdin, who she first bumped into in the marketplace, which she fell in love with. This is different to Galland's version of the Princess who simply accepted the proposal by her father without having a say in the matter. This is shown when the Sultan orders the grand judge to write a contract of marriage with requisites, while in conversation with Aladdin. The only objection is Aladdin who requests a delay in the marriage so that he can build a palace and it is assumed that the Princess will be impressed by this too (Galland, pp. 88-89). It's an interesting twist to what was seen as the magnificent 'other' as not so magnificent in Jasmine's eyes. Being rich and of high class is a burden to her. Disney's *Aladdin* is, thus, promoting western values of women who need to be 'independent' and 'free' and this is what both Aladdin and Jasmine feel, the need to be free. I believe the message in *Aladdin* is hinting the Orient is a magical place but it does have its negatives attached to it too. It is not always a positive thing.

The western influences on the story, in general, are even more evident in viewing the film *Aladdin* by Disney. Though, the film does represent the Orient in a particular way, the West is the dominating factor in how it is represented and Edward Said mentions how Orientalism is 'a sign of European-Atlantic power' (Said, p. 6). This reveals the power the West has on the East. The opening of the film presents to viewers a peddler who welcomes them by saying 'Welcome to Agrabah'. Unlike the traditional forms of 'Aladdin', where the story starts in a Chinese town, taking the reader to Maghreb ('a region in Northern Africa west of Egypt' (Ananda, p. 6)), the Disney's version begins in Agrabah. Agrabah is a fictionalised city, located in the North of Arabia, near the Jordan River (Ananda, p. 6). Christiane Staninger says that *Aladdin* is "a propaganda movie for Western imperialism" that shows the

supposed unworkability of the Middle Eastern traditions and the need for American intervention” (Staninger, 2003, p. 69, quoted in Giroux and Pollock, p. 139) and that the name “Agrabah” is actually connected to the first war in Iraq (Giroux and Pollock, p. 139). The film then takes off with a song, singing along the lines of “I come from a land, far, far away”, indicating the ‘other’ being a remote place from that of the implied viewer, whilst showing a camel rider walking across the vast desert, that seems to have no end, until it switches to a scene of the camel rider reaching town and the camel collapsing from exhaustion. By showing the camel collapsing, the film is trying to establish that the journey from the desert to the town is a very long way. Viewers are witnesses to this, where the East is being emphasised as a far, far away place. The film also makes no secret of the magic lamp, by also introducing it to its viewers as ‘a diamond in the rough’ due to its hidden magical powers, with the term ‘diamond’, symbolizing the lamp’s valuable nature. The statement ‘diamond in the rough’ could also be a metaphor to Aladdin as being a character who is quite rough on the outside, but genuine on the inside.

An addition to the film, which is not found in other versions of the text, such as in the traditional forms of ‘Aladdin’, is the fact that the main characters: Jafar, Aladdin, Jasmine, all have their own sidekicks, or ‘pets’ so to speak. They serve a role in assisting the main characters to reach their goal. For example, as Aladdin is stealing bread, Abo, Aladdin’s pet monkey, says he’s ‘only in trouble if you get caught.’ He is seen as a ‘street rat’, and his status as an orphan positions the viewer to be more tolerant of his socially aberrant behaviour than if he had had caring mother who was concerned to keep him to a moral code which includes no stealing. On top of this, the animal friends could also highlight how lonely the characters are and how everyone is need of a friend, such as Jasmine feeling trapped, only having her pet tiger, Rajah, which means ‘Indian prince’ in Hindi and Arabic (The Disney Wiki, 2015), to talk to. He also serves in her defense by rejecting suitors whom appear to be disrespectful.

This loneliness and the need for 'freedom' is emphasised in the film, with many additions made to it, which was not found in many previous versions of the story. For example, Jasmine must be married by 18 and escapes as a result of having to be married against her wishes. Upon meeting Aladdin for the first time, they both express how 'trapped' they feel but in different because of their different backgrounds: Aladdin is restricted due to being poor and lost, whilst Jasmine is restricted within the palace walls and rules as her position as princess compels her. The genie also expresses this, and as promised, Aladdin wishes for his freedom, something that was not possible for genies in previous versions of the story such as in Galland's and Burton's translations of *Aladdin*. It is also hinting at the concept of equality, and that genies too should have their right to be free. Stephen's and McCallum state that 'the motif of setting the genie free' appears 'set to become the standard ending in all genres', in that 'both ring and lamp genies are freed' (p. 234). Stephen's and McCallum highlight how Aladdin and Jasmine are very Western in their behaviour and aspirations (p. 237) and this is evident on their wishing to be free, and the way they approach romance. For example, in Galland's version, there was a lot more modesty and Aladdin would tend to place a sword, or 'sabre', between himself and Jasmine in order to honour and respect her and to prove that if he were to attempt an immoral act, he would deserve to be punished. In the film, they are shown to attempt to kiss each other upon the very first meeting and Jasmine is very comfortable with this due to having a lower level of modesty, compared to the Princess in Galland's translation of 'Aladdin', where the Princess maintains a higher level of modesty. An example of this is when she is visiting the public bath and only lifts her veil when she had come close to the bath, even though the Sultan had ordered all shops to be shut before the arrival of his daughter (Galland, pp. 37-38).

The idea of feminism, which is the belief that women should be allowed the same rights, power, and opportunities as men (Cambridge

Dictionaries Online, 2015), plays a role in Disney's version where Jasmine is represented as a character that goes against tradition. She refuses to allow her father make decisions for her, and that she wants to marry for 'love'. For example, when the Sultan encourages her to marry Jafar, she responds by saying 'When I'm Queen, I'll get rid of him' and when she overhears Jafar and Aladdin fighting over her, she is outraged, expressing that she is 'not a prize to be won'. She is also the reason that the traditional law, in which a princess must marry a prince, is changed due to the Sultan's feeling sympathetic towards Jasmine and Aladdin at the end of the film and he states that from now on, 'a princess marries who she deems worthy.'

Other changes that have been made, include fewer appearances of the genie, with the carpet substituting the ring genie, as Stephens and McCallum have mentioned (p. 237). There was the concept of the ring present in this film and it was used to show Jafar as to who could enter the cave. The wishes are also limited in the film: traditionally in earlier forms of story, such as Burton's and Galland's, there was no limit as to how many wishes one could ask from a genie, though in Disney's film one could only make three. The symbolism of the number three is said to have gained great respect in the cultures of both English and Chinese because it represents divine completeness and perfection (Yanping 2012, p. 68). Yanping describes this number as 'the most universal symbol of the triad', for example, which can be found in the Holy Trinity, a well-known triad (Yanping 2012, p. 68). The genie, being shown as friendly, and humorous is also shown to have a certain liking for Aladdin, though not for Jafar, even though they were both his masters at one point. This is due to the genie character being equal and, as mentioned earlier, 'humanized' (Certainly, as mentioned previously, he is more 'humanized' (Stephens and McCallum, p. 237). This is different to the genie in Galland's and Burton's version where the genie did not present any form of disapproval when the Magician stole the lamp from Aladdin.

In terms of the songs played in the Disney film, I will start with analysing the opening song: 'Arabian Nights' (Pilhofer, 1995). It begins with the line 'Oh I come from a land, from a faraway place, where the caravan camels roam, where it's flat and immense, and the heat is intense, it's barbaric, but hey, it's home' (Pilhofer, 1995). I believe the first verse is very indicative of a writer who is viewing the East from the outside, hence the words 'a land, from a faraway place' and 'it's barbaric'. For one who lives within the East, it is impossible to be seen as 'far away', and is why the East is seen as the 'other', because it is foreign and remote.

The song, titled 'Friend like Me' (Pilhofer, 1995), was sung by the genie as he introduced himself to Aladdin. As mentioned previously, the genie is introduced as being a more 'humanized' character and this is reflected in the song through phrases such as in verse five, where he quotes: 'I'm in the mood to help you dude, you ain't never had a friend like me' (Pilhofer, 1995). The genie is reinforcing that there is no friend like him. This is in complete contrast as to how the genie was introduced in Galland's version, who greets Aladdin by saying: 'What do you wish? I am ready to obey you as your slave, and the slave of those who have the lamp in their hands, both I and other slaves of the lamp' (Galland, p. 28). His voice is described as having a loud 'thunder', which depends on how rough a person rubs the lamp, making Aladdin's mother fall down in a 'fainting fit' (Galland, p. 28). In 'Friend like Me', the genie is essentially presenting himself as the perfect companion for Aladdin, in the most respectful tone. For example, in verse two he sings 'Mister Aladdin, sir what will your pleasure be? Let me take your order, Jot it down, you ain't never had a friend like me, no, no, no' (Pilhofer, 1995). The genie is also dressed, and behaves as a waiter in a restaurant, which creates a warm character, one that Aladdin can find comfort in. In other words, the genie is far from being a frightening character.

However, there is more behind the lyrics of 'Friend like Me' (Pilhofer, 1995) and that it ties in with the concept of exoticism, and what goes with it, namely,

abundance and capitalism. Exoticism is a concept associated with the Orient (Stephens and McCallum, p. 231), the Orient being 'another medieval fantasy world, already constructed as a fantastic Other by that medieval world itself subsequently reconstructed as a fantastic Other by the modern West' (Stephens and McCallum, p. 230). The genie first mentions that Aladdin has 'got some power in your corner now' in the first verse, before describing all the possibilities that come with this power, which includes Aladdin being 'the boss, the King, the Shah' (verse 4) and all it takes is to 'say what you wish, it's yours! True dish, how about a little more Baklava?' The abundance in wishing for what you want, is compared to ordering in a restaurant. The image of the restaurant taps into hunger itself as a desire, food being a basic human need, and the genie can be seen to be enticing Aladdin this way since he is originally poor, suffering from a lack of food. As well as this, fancy food, and the concept of a menu and a restaurant are also associated with being rich and of higher class.

Although many of the songs in Disney's *Aladdin* construct Agrabah as exotic and as a place that is 'Other' to that of the implied viewer, this is most obvious in the song, 'A Whole New World' (Pilhofer, 1995). It is ironic as it appears Aladdin is showing Princess Jasmine, being a native from the land herself, the fantastic place of the Other, as though he is introducing it to a Westerner. Jasmine was trapped most of her life, until very recently, within the walls of the palace. This is until Aladdin takes her for a ride on the magic carpet and describes the world as 'shining, shimmering, splendid' (verse 1) and that it is 'a whole new world, a new fantastic point of view' (verse 3). Jasmine responds to this as a world of 'a dazzling place I never knew' (verse 4) and that it has 'unbelievable sights, indescribable feeling, soaring, tumbling, freewheeling through an endless diamond sky' (verse 4). The last few lines of verse 4 gesture towards how an outsider may feel when encountering the tales of the Orient, especially in the *Arabian Nights*.

Whether it is film or in picture book form, the 'Aladdin' story has similar themes and ideas which run throughout. Obviously, this is very limited

in a picture book due to its length, but it still has the major themes. For example, where Jasmine has had enough of being 'protected', but then she ends up rebelling on escaping the palace, is an act of freedom. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the more well-known translations of *The Arabian Nights*, were produced under the influence of the Western metaethic (Stephens and McCallum, p. 229), and hence many of the characters in the Disney film and book version have been given a 'complete makeover' from the traditional representation of character in Galland's and Burton's. For example, the genie character is portrayed as being 'funny, vulnerable and morally committed' and is thereby humanized (Stephens and McCallum, p. 237). This is a major change because it opposes what genies are supposed to be like in Islamic demonology—which are spirits of enormous power, frightening and high tempered (Stephens and McCallum, p. 231). The reason why the genie has stayed is because it is a central representation of the exotic culture and 'belong to the realm of oriental fantasy' (Stephens and McCallum, pp. 230-231). More importantly, Aladdin and Princess Jasmine are represented as being totally Western through their behaviours and aspirations. For example, Jasmine is transformed into a female love object in order to fit into the Western romantic paradigm (Stephens and McCallum, p. 238) and Aladdin's values represent the modern, urban youth culture of the present time (Stephens and McCallum, p. 240).

Chapter 3: Short stories and other forms of “Aladdin”

In chapter three of my thesis, I will be looking at other versions of ‘Aladdin’, besides Disney’s. This includes short stories, blogs and a humorous cartoon that I have come across. The reason why I believe this chapter is important, following Disney’s, is to show that versions of ‘Aladdin’ do not stop at Disney. There are even more altered versions available, which only indicates how successful and popular the tale is. Though, to begin with, I will be looking at three different examples of short story versions, which have been taken from a collection of short stories by various different authors, titled *Aladdin Master of the lamp*, by editors Mike Resnick and Martin H. Greenberg, with each of these three examples representing the Orient in a unique and different way.

The first short story for analysis, ‘Fair Exchange’, by Anthony R. Lewis, is about life after living in the palace for many years, almost as a sequel to Burton’s version. It has similarities to Burton’s version, by using similar names such as the ‘Maghrabi Darwysh’, ‘Khans’, ‘Lady Badr al-Budur, and ‘djinn’ as well as Islamic terms such as ‘God is All-merciful and All-knowing’, and ‘Salam aleykhem’. Also, like both Burton’s and Galland’s version, ‘Fair Exchange’, is set in China and contained the similar eastern, environment which consists of sultans, khans, and princes (Lewis, p. 12), and silk robes and maids (Lewis, p. 13). Such descriptions are in an effort to imitate the Orient.

In ‘Fair Exchange’, many years have passed since both Aladdin and the Lady Badr al-Budr, were last in danger. Aladdin quotes to his wife as saying ‘I have not lived since we fought and slew the evil Maghrabi Darwysh and his monstrously wicked brother. But now, life is a bore. What am I to do?’ (Lewis, p. 13). Clearly, even though with the riches and harmony which they have been living in, the author is hinting that a life of forever abundance may not be the greatest thing. He is also revealing that a life of danger and thrill is actually exciting to Aladdin. This is unlike his character in Galland’s where he did not express or hint at any liking to thrill and danger, his main focus was all about the Princess. An example of this is seen when Aladdin realises the palace and his princess missing and was about ‘to throw himself in water’ (Galland, p. 121). Even though Aladdin and his wife have had children, who he describes as

'delights' (Lewis, p. 12) and the city of China prospered with harvests which were rich (Lewis, p. 12), this was not enough to satisfy him, indicating that what the Orient provides may be not enough, it is incomplete.

Upon conferring this dissatisfaction to the Lady Badr al-Budur, she advises him to again consult with Slave of the Lamp, saying, 'Call upon him to solve thy problem as thou hast done in past times' (Lewis, p. 13), due to the djinn being the reason behind all these riches. Instantly, Aladdin calls upon the djinn and demands 'I am not happy. Make me happy' (Lewis, p. 13). Through much arguing, as the djinn cannot just magically make a person feel happy, Aladdin brings about the idea of wishing to enter the djinn's world, essentially becoming a part of it and ignoring the fact that he'll be leaving his own family behind. It is almost as though, after all these years, greed has taken priority over his family. By a firm order, and a threat that he will be sent to Eblis – the leader of all djinn – his wish was ultimately granted. This tale brings about an interesting twist to the common version of Aladdin because it takes the realm of the Otherness one step further and Lewis has achieved this. The fantastical "Other" is not just limited to China and the East, there are more places which are indicative of the Other.

The next story I have chosen is titled, 'The Rest of the Story', by Mark Aronson and I believe the title gives way that there is more to the story, as it reveals, both Aladdin and his wife do not continue to live happily ever after. He is now Sultan of China (Aronson, p. 16) and, despite this, he is introduced as playing 'mah-jongg' with the genie in a 'cramped, tiny chamber at the farthest remove of the palace' (Aronson, p. 16). Aladdin is trying to hide from his wife. The genie quotes 'she's going to find you' (Aronson, p. 17), and Aladdin replies with 'What do you know about women, anyway?' (Aronson, p. 17). As it shows, this is a more modernised and westernised version, as it shows two male figures enjoying their time together, whilst Aladdin is fed up with his marriage, something that many married couples in the Western phenomenon can relate to. The princess too is represented as an angry, bossy character, far from the sweet and loving princess she originally had been. This is shown when the door bursts open, exposing Aladdin and the genie, where Aronson describes the moment when the princess 'storms through' like 'a tornado through Kansas'

(Aronson, p. 17). The writer does mention the typical oriental settings, such as clothes of silk, but adds that rougher edge to it. For example, the princess is shown wearing 'rustling silk'. Ironically, it is only when the princess is not in action, 'frozen' by Aladdin wishing so, that she is described as 'quite remarkable, a true Oriental porcelain beauty' (Aronson, p. 18). She is viewed quite the opposite in action, yet the tale is still keeping in touch with its oriental, fantastical roots of sensuality (Stephens and McCallum, p. 231).

Aladdin seems confused about his feelings towards his wife, something that is much unexpected for a character who fell in a deep trance when he first set his eyes upon her in Galland's version, being described as 'dazzled, and almost out of his senses' (Galland, p. 38). Aladdin expresses this confusion in response to the genie suggesting to kill her by quoting 'No. Maybe I still love her, down deep somewhere.' (Aronson, p. 18). For this reason, he wishes to exchange places with the genie, making the genie take Aladdin's place as the husband and vice versa. Aladdin describes the feeling of being 'curiously disembodied, yet aware of sensations, in a place oddly hard to define, yet much larger than he would have expected the interior of a lamp to be' (Aronson, p. 18).

In this retelling of Aladdin, so far, I have not come across a story which would describe what it is like to be a genie, coming from his point of view. We are only shown the East according to how it is described by Aronson, there are no descriptions of what the other, other world looks like, in where the genies reside. The original genie hints to us that this mysterious world is not so great, as compared to the world of Aladdin, as he greets Aladdin, who is now a genie himself, by quoting 'Welcome to the half-world, Aladdin. You are the Servant of the Lamp, and I it's Master' (Aronson, p. 19). The tale ends with the Princess being unfrozen, despite Aladdin warning him not to, and finds happiness with a new husband. The ex-genie's final word to Aladdin being that 'he didn't really deserve her' due to being 'such a whiner' (Aronson, p. 19). Notably, it shows the comparison between how the two characters feel about the luxurious life in China, with Aladdin willing to 'give up the castle' and 'give up everything' (Aronson, p. 18), and the genie, in reply, calling him a 'whiner' (Aronson, p. 19) for complaining about life with the Princess. It is still proving the point that the Other is as great as they say it is, and there is none like it. Even the genie calls

his original world a 'half-world' (Aronson, p. 19), proving that it is incomplete and the problem lies in Aladdin's boredom having taken a hold of him and unfortunately suspects that he will be worse off as a genie, than how he was before. There may be more behind as to why the genie calls his world a 'half-world', in comparison to the human world, and it has to do with Islamic demonology, in which the djinn are typically jealous of the human world (Lvcifer, 2013). Here the genie is indicating that the issue is not that the Other is incomplete, it is indeed a fantastical, and fulfilling world, and Aladdin has failed to be grateful for this.

The last short story, in *Aladdin Master of the Lamp*, I will be analysing is titled 'The Tale of Ali the Camel Driver', by Beth Meacham. I believe I should include this tale as it brings together the East and the West through the main character, Ali, who now lives in Yuma, America, after having migrated from the city of Medina, Arabia. The result of this migration is after many years of settling in America, the thought of returning to his homeland was not possible as 'years in America had changed him, and he could not imagine taking up his old place, squatting by the wall in the marketplace in Medina' (Meacham, p. 113). This man, Ali, was 'the son of a poor man' who was the 'grandson of a poor man of Medina' (Meacham, p. 103) and is described as 'ambitious' and a 'dreamer' (Meacham, p. 103). The Orient is described as having 'instant gratification of desire' and 'immense wealth' (Stephens and McCallum, p. 231) and Ali appears to have achieved this in America, which is why he cannot bear to return to his old life. His personality of being 'ambitious' and a 'dreamer' (Meacham, p. 103), helped him in achieving these goals.

It was through being a hardworking camel driver of Medina that he heard the tales amongst the marketplace, including the story of Aladdin. Soon, he was part of the United States Army Camel Corps on migration. His first encounter with the djinn happened amongst the lands 'far to the south' (Meacham, p. 105), during the long summer days, and Meacham describes these djinn in as much detail as to reinforce the original ferocious nature of the djinn. He describes the three djinn as 'men wrapped in the whirlwind. They towered above the salt plain, fifty feet high or more. Their long black hair flew in the wind of their passage, trailing feathers and leaves and bright beads. Their garments were

made of pure white leather, sewn with turquoise and shell, and trailing fringes' and each 'carried a great staff before him' (Meacham, p. 106). It was realised that the djinn were not seen by the soldiers and perhaps that was why they were free, or else they would be 'trembling with fear' (Meacham, p. 107).

Ali, who had longed to find an imprisoned djinn like Aladdin, devised a plan to trap one into a brass bottle, containing the Seal of Solomon, which would prevent its escape. He hoped that by trapping the djinni, it would grow desperate to be released again and grant him his wishes. The djinn, 'raged and howled', 'made dire threats', 'swore that Ali was doomed' until he 'promised only death to Ali' (Meacham, p. 108). It also questions the reader as to how the djinns in the story of 'Aladdin' came to be trapped into the lamp. There is no indication of this in traditional forms of 'Aladdin', or in Disney's *Aladdin*. The lamp is found trapped in a cave, with a genie trapped inside the lamp with no explanation as to how it happened and this is because the oriental world can be unrealistic at times. In other words, it is 'a make-believe' world (Stephens and McCallum, p. 231).

Like Disney's version of *Aladdin*, the djinn also offered to grant three wishes and Ali wishes for a grand palace, just like what Aladdin had wished for. Although, not in China, on the banks of the Colorado River. With the palace being an important concept in the major versions of 'Aladdin', Meacham uses this opportunity to provide a description that emphasises a particular construction of the Orient, quoting 'The walls were white marble, sending bright darts of reflection back from the high, hot sun. The towers rose in delicately carved spirals up to the sky. The gates were tiled in blue and gold, and the windows were screened in cinnabar and jade' (Meacham, pp. 109-110). The 'hot sun' emphasises the arid, environment of the desert, while the materials of white marble and high towers are associated with having immense wealth, which is part of the oriental fantasy (Stephens and McCallum, p. 231).

What differentiates this short story from the previous two mentioned, however, is how Ali lived for the rest of his life and that it was without having the lamp always beside him. It shows that one does need to be involved with the 'medieval world of magic' (Stephens and McCallum, p. 231) in order to achieve

satisfaction. Aladdin, in the first two short stories, was not satisfied after many years, and luckily Ali had realised that having a palace was not a good idea. What he sought was a 'lifetime's comfort, and not a few days of luxury' (Meacham, p. 113) and with one wish left, this was granted. Not before making 'his morning prayers to Allah, and considered a path of wisdom' (Meacham, p. 113). He lives happily as a successful trader in Mesa, or to better sum this up 'a rich merchant with a wife and fine sons and a thriving business to show for it' (Meacham, pp. 113-114). What is also different from the other versions of 'Aladdin' discussed in this project is that it is not only Ali who is taught a lesson, the djinn had learned something new, in that these 'mortals' could possibly be used as 'a source of rich amusement' (Meacham, p. 114).

Depictions of 'Aladdin' have also been made into short films and blogs, and here I will analyse two different examples: The DVD film titled: *Cartoons that time forgot*, by the UB Twerks collection Vol. 1 and a Wattpad blog post, titled: *Don't trust him*, by Williamr02. Both versions depicted Aladdin in vastly different ways. The short film, 'Aladdin and his wonderful lamp', presents a very condensed and humorous version of the story. The result of this is that the authors of the film had to focus on what are the most important elements of the lengthened version of the story, versus the not so important elements that they could essentially leave out. It comes to show that few details are needed to create a memorable 'Aladdin' story, by having the same basic elements as the earlier versions of 'Aladdin'.

For example, there was a heavy emphasis on the 'lamp' and they exaggerated this in the film through the songs about the lamp too. The lamp is a central part of 'Aladdin', due to being Aladdin's main source of abundance and good fortune. It is what allowed the story to progress, including Aladdin being able to marry the princess and Jafar having stolen the lamp, making it vitally important to the two main characters: Aladdin and Jafar. It can be concluded that the lamp, in the film, was the catalyst of the film being a story of magic objects (Thompson, p. 70).

In the short film, the film begins with the magician, dressed up as a salesman, singing 'new lamps for all' and the films also ends with this too, only having a

whole heap of lamps dumped ontop of him. Unlike in the more well-known versions, such as Disney's *Aladdin*, the magician is not aware of a magic lamp and sells lamps for a living, even owning his own store called 'lamps bought and traded', where Aladdin works as his slave by polishing lamps, singing 'lamps, lamps, rubbing and scrubbing'. This shows that there is already a fascination of lamps in the culture in which they live, despite not being aware that a magic lamp even exists.

It is through chance that Aladdin does come across a magic lamp, and a red coloured genie comes out, quoting 'I am the slave of the lamp, my master, what do you wish?' This is similar to how the genie in Galland's version quotes, but in a shortened version. In the short film, despite being directed for children, the genie looked quite hideous and typical of a frightening looking genie. This is very different to Disney's version of a blue, and friendly genie, which is due to the different narrative functions they have in the story. The depiction of the genie in traditional Islamic demonology are known as frightening creatures of 'immense power and strength' (Stephens and McCallum). The use of red, further emphasises this as red represents fire, strength, danger, energy (Bourn, 2011), amongst other things, which matches the genie's original character.

The only conflict to be seen between the magician and Aladdin is the attempted 'snatching' of the lamp, when the magician witnesses this, showing the Sultan, Aladdin and the magician running after each other, which is a short way of expressing the conflict of who will catch the lamp. The film then ends with the Sultan finally accepting Aladdin to marry his daughter, after calling him 'a beggar in rags', and he shows up suddenly in Jasmine's public bath, the same bath mentioned in both Galland's and Burton's version, showing how it is an important ritual to be done in honour of the princess. The illustrated Aladdin and the princess in this film also looked childlike and this may be due to the film being aimed at a younger audience.

By contrast, the blog post, *Don't trust him* (Williamson, 2014), reads as a very dark and contemporary version of 'Aladdin'. The author demonstrates that Tyler is Aladdin, Elise is both Jasmine and the genie, the pendant represents the lamp, and Satan is Jafar. The story is set in America, Joplin where the action

begins with Tyler, a seventeen year old student, visiting a graveyard, and finding a strange looking pendent attached to 'Elise Mohr's' gravestone, in it with the inscription 'Elise Mohr, we love you'. Tyler snatches this pendant feeling that it will give him 'good luck' and a 'confidence booster'. The concept of a cemetery, and Tyler feeling good about the pendant, immediately gives off a spiritual theme, something that relates to Orientalism as being 'mysterious in nature' and the story definitely exceeds this, only in a dark fashion.

Both the genie character and Jasmine are played out in the seventeen year old character, Elise, who is dead but is being given a chance by God to be on Earth one last time where she will find her one love, Tyler. The 'dead' aspect represents the genie being a trapped, and soulless character, who is given the chance to come out of his prison again through the lamp, in this case the pendant. Elise, being represented as a girl, and forming a romantic relationship with Tyler, is very reminiscent of the love story between Aladdin and princess Jasmine.

A major theme that occurred throughout the story is the many fits and trances Elise went through, quoting 'Satan's coming'. It is showing how much Elise (Genie and Jasmine) is in conflict with Satan (Jafar). Satan's wish is to bring Elise to hell, otherwise to join with her as a team, seeming as she had a strong soul, which was Jafar's wish to own the genie and take Jasmine as his wife and to kill Tyler, which Jafar tried to attempt as well. Though, this version was very biblical in nature, through the concepts of heaven and hell and God being the master of this story – by giving Elise another chance and eventually being doomed to hell, due to a decision she makes in order to save Tyler— it changes the overall feeling of this story as a very spiritual one, something that was absent in the more popular versions of 'Aladdin'. However, there is the representation of another world in which Elise and Satan both fight, as well as the concepts of heaven and hell. It is essentially representing the world of the Other using a very modern tone in comparison with traditional forms of 'Aladdin', for example, richness is not defined as having gold and silver plates, fine food, and a grand palace. It is about love and personal growth.

Conclusion

In the thesis, it has been demonstrated how the story of 'Aladdin' relies on notions of Otherness, by relating to how it fits in with Orientalism and representations of East and West. From the traditional forms of story, as told by Antoine Galland, and Sir Richard Burton, to Disney and shorter forms of story, they all in one way or another relate to the realm of Orientalism as an Other being both in positive terms, as in being a place of abundance, and negative, such as being barbaric (Stephens and McCallum, p. 231). Edward Said's theory of Orientalism is about how the East is represented by the West in ways that are more to do with Western perception than they are with actualities in the East, which means that representations can be inaccurate or limiting. Said defines Orientalism as 'way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience' (Said, p. 1), with the Orient being 'another medieval fantasy world, already constructed as a fantastic Other by that medieval world itself, subsequently reconstructed as a fantastic Other by the modern west' (Stephens and McCallum, p. 230).

The jinni, as well as the lamp and its bounty, appear in some form in all the versions of 'Aladdin' I encountered. The jinni is the symbol of what Orientalism represents and is the most obvious symbol of Otherness. As shown, there is much emphasis on the jinni of the lamp due to its great powers that provided much abundance and is what pushed the story forward. The theory of Orientalism has been useful in analysing the versions of 'Aladdin' because it helped to identify the various changes and differences being made between the stories and to better understand the reasoning behind such changes being made.

It is important to also realise, as mentioned earlier, that there have been many other writers around the time of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who have also provided their own translations of 'Aladdin'. It was limited to how many I could focus on in this thesis and have chosen both Galland and Burton's versions to compare, due to Galland being known as the 'creator of the Nights' and Burton infamous for other reasons altogether, such as his use of explicit terms, and was curious to explore this, essentially being two opposites in style.

The chapter on Disney's version of *Aladdin* was included due to the film being so widely advertised and available. It compared as to how the characters and elements were changed to fit a western point of view and what Disney overall represented. As shown, even though it does include some elements of the Orient, it changes around these details, including the jinni who goes through a drastic change. In that effect, the Orient is shown little respect and treated as a lesser place to provide entertainment that is not to be taken seriously. There has also been a brief analysis on the songs included in the Disney movie which relates to Otherness.

Chapter three focused on other short stories not widely known. Some of these authors stuck to the elements found in Galland's version, with an extension made to life after many years of living in the palace. On the other hand, there were others which were completely different, for example, 'The tale of Ali the Camel Driver'(1992), who lived in Medina, before moving to America, the effect of this is to show how the two different cultures have affected Ali, showcasing the differences through his experiences. More so, the blog story version, *Don't trust him (2014)*, was even more drastically different and it was confusing at the beginning as to whether this story was an 'Aladdin' retelling or not. Being a modern version of 'Aladdin', it focuses on using similar elements, such as the evil character, the love interest and the magic object (the pendant), whilst completely changing the name of characters and the context of the story.

To conclude, I hope that by providing many examples of different version of Aladdin, that people are more aware of the different themes and ideas behind the stories of 'Aladdin', which are used to position readers or viewers to regard the Orient as a foreign place. I hope that one can expand their knowledge that there is more behind mainstream stories. By choosing to focus on 'Aladdin', I hoped to focus on looking at the Eastern and Western aspects incorporated, and ways that the story relies on notions of Otherness, especially in relation to Orientalism. The study of Orientalism, as mentioned earlier, can be defined in various ways, and hopefully this study will continue to flourish and people throughout the world will become more aware of different ways in which Orientalism has become a part of Western culture, and thus, for many people, a part of their daily life.

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