



## Algeria from Western Lenses in Isabelle Eberhardt's *Yasmina and Other Stories*

### L'Algérie vue par des Occidentaux dans *Yasmina et autres nouvelles algériennes* d'Isabelle Eberhardt

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**Abstract:** This article examines the representation of Algeria in the travel writings of Isabelle Eberhardt, with a particular focus on her short story collection *Yasmina and Other Stories* (1902). While travel literature has often served as a tool of imperial knowledge production, reinforcing stereotypes of the "Orient" as exotic, static, and inferior, Eberhardt occupies a complex position within this tradition. Born in Geneva and later converting to Islam, she traversed boundaries of gender, religion, and culture, adopting multiple identities that complicate her role as both insider and outsider in colonial Algeria. Drawing on postcolonial theory, particularly Edward Said's concept of Orientalism and Homi Bhabha's notion of hybridity, this study analyzes how Eberhardt's writings both reproduce and challenge dominant Western discourses of the Maghreb. Through close textual analysis, the article demonstrates that Eberhardt's Algeria is portrayed in ambivalent terms: the landscape is alternately romanticized as timeless and harsh, while Algerian traditions are depicted with both admiration and exotic fascination.

**Keywords:** Eberhardt, Algeria, Orientalism, travel literature, postcolonial theory.

#### Résumé:

Cet article examine la représentation de l'Algérie dans les récits de voyage d'Isabelle Eberhardt, en mettant l'accent sur son recueil *Yasmina et autres Nouvelles* (1902). Alors que la littérature de voyage a souvent servi d'outil de production de connaissances impériales, renforçant les stéréotypes de l'« Orient » comme exotique et inférieur, Eberhardt occupe une position complexe au sein de cette tradition. Née à Genève et convertie à l'islam, elle a traversé les frontières du genre, de la religion et de la culture, adoptant de multiples identités qui compliquent son rôle à la fois d'initiée et d'étrangère dans l'Algérie coloniale. S'appuyant sur la théorie postcoloniale, le concept d'orientalisme d'Edward Said et la notion d'hybridité de Homi Bhabha, cette étude analyse comment les écrits d'Eberhardt reproduisent et remettent en question les discours occidentaux dominants sur le Maghreb. Grâce à une analyse textuelle approfondie, l'article démontre que l'Algérie d'Eberhardt est dépeinte en termes ambivalents: le paysage est tour à tour romancé comme intemporel et rude, tandis que les traditions algériennes sont décrites avec admiration et fascination exotique.

**Mots-clés:** Eberhardt, Algérie, orientalisme, littérature de voyage, théorie postcoloniale.



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Travel writing has long occupied an ambiguous space in literary history, functioning simultaneously as documentation of cross-cultural encounters and as a vehicle for reinforcing imperial ideologies. In the colonial era, narratives of journeys to Africa, Asia, and the Middle East were often framed through the lens of European superiority, constructing the “Orient” as exotic, timeless, and in need of Western governance (Said, 1978). Within this tradition, Algeria, as a French colony from 1830 until 1962, became a particularly contested site of representation. Its deserts, cities, and peoples were filtered through Western eyes that sought both to romanticize and to regulate. Yet travel literature also provided a medium for alternative voices, particularly those of women travelers, who negotiated their own marginality in relation to both the colonial project and patriarchal structures (Mills, 1991; Youngs, 2013). Among such figures, Isabelle Eberhardt (1877-1904) occupies a singular place. Born in Geneva to an unconventional household, she converted to Islam, adopted male dress, and immersed herself in North African societies at the turn of the twentieth century. Her writings, particularly *Yasmina and Other Stories* (1902), reflect a complex positionality: she was both European and Muslim, both privileged by her colonial background and marginalized by her gender and outsider status. This hybridity complicates her place in colonial discourse. On the one hand, she reproduces Orientalist tropes of exoticism and timelessness; on the other, she offers empathetic depictions of Algerian life that challenge dominant imperial narratives.

Situating Eberhardt within postcolonial theoretical frameworks allows for a nuanced reading of her work. Edward Said’s (1978) foundational critique of Orientalism exposes how travel narratives often functioned as instruments of power, shaping Western knowledge of the East in ways that legitimized domination. However, Eberhardt’s writings resist a straightforward categorization. Her hybrid identity resonates with Homi Bhabha’s (1994) concept of “third space,” where cultural translation and ambivalence destabilize fixed binaries of colonizer and colonized. At the same time, her position as a woman writing from within a male-dominated colonial sphere intersects with feminist critiques of travel writing, which underscore how women authors navigated both colonial and patriarchal constraints (Holland & Huggan, 2000; Lisle, 2006). This article examines Algeria as portrayed in *Yasmina and Other Stories* through the intersecting lenses of Orientalism, hybridity, and feminist travel writing. It argues that Eberhardt’s representations of landscape, traditions, and people reveal the tensions of colonial discourse: admiration interwoven with exoticization, empathy entangled with paternalism. By analyzing these ambivalences, the study highlights the ways in which Eberhardt both participates in and disrupts Western representations of Algeria. The significance of such an inquiry lies in its contribution to broader debates about literature, identity, and power. Postcolonial scholars have increasingly recognized travel writing not merely as anecdotal or documentary, but as a crucial site for the production of cultural meaning (Pratt, 1992; Lisle, 2006). Examining Eberhardt’s work within this framework enriches our understanding of how texts mediate encounters across cultural boundaries and how individual subjectivities shape colonial discourse. Moreover, by focusing on Algeria, this study sheds light on a context often overshadowed in Anglophone postcolonial studies by India or the Middle East, thereby contributing to the diversification of postcolonial literary scholarship. The objectives of this article are threefold. First, it situates Isabelle Eberhardt within the tradition of Western travel writing and examines how her hybrid identity informs her perspective on Algeria. Second, it offers a thematic analysis of *Yasmina and Other Stories*,

focusing on the portrayal of landscape, traditions, and people. Third, it evaluates the extent to which Eberhardt's writings reproduce Orientalist patterns while also providing subversive counter-narratives. By engaging with these dimensions, the article seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How does Isabelle Eberhardt represent Algeria in *Yasmina and Other Stories*?
2. In what ways does her hybrid identity complicate her position within colonial discourse?
3. To what extent do her narratives challenge or reinforce Orientalist frameworks?

Through this approach, the study contributes to the re-evaluation of Eberhardt's legacy, positioning her not simply as a romantic adventurer, but as a writer whose work embodies the contradictions and complexities of colonial encounter.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Travel Writing as Imperial Discourse

Travel writing has long been recognized not only as a literary form but also as a cultural practice deeply implicated in the history of empire. Scholars argue that European accounts of journeys to Africa, Asia, and the Middle East often served as instruments of colonial knowledge production, shaping Western perceptions of non-European societies in ways that legitimized domination (Pratt, 1992; Thompson, 2011). In *Imperial Eyes*, Pratt (1992) coins the term "contact zone" to describe the spaces where travelers encountered other cultures, emphasizing how these encounters were narrated from perspectives that reinforced asymmetries of power. Within this framework, Algeria became a frequent subject of French and European travel narratives from the mid-nineteenth century onward. These accounts typically portrayed the desert as vast and timeless, its people as either noble savages or degenerate subjects, and Islam as both alluring and threatening (Lorcin, 1995). The effect was to render Algeria as a site of both fascination and control, simultaneously exoticized and subordinated. As Holland and Huggan (2000) contend, travel writing often oscillates between romantic admiration and imperial appropriation, producing a discourse marked by ambivalence.

### 2.2. Orientalism and the Politics of Representation

Edward Said's (1978) *Orientalism* remains the foundational critique of such representational practices. Said demonstrates how Western texts systematically constructed "the Orient" as Europe's other, defined by passivity, sensuality, and irrationality. This discursive formation, he argues, not only reflected but actively reinforced colonial structures of power. Travel writing, with its blend of observation, narrative, and authority, was central to this process. Later critics have nuanced Said's thesis, highlighting the heterogeneity of Orientalist texts. Bhabha (1994), for instance, emphasizes the role of ambivalence and hybridity, arguing that colonial discourse is never fully stable but marked by contradictions that open spaces for resistance. Lisle (2006) similarly points out that travel narratives cannot be reduced to monolithic instruments of domination; they are sites of negotiation where power, identity, and culture are contested. This theoretical shift allows for a more complex reading of figures like Isabelle Eberhardt, whose writings oscillate between Orientalist tropes and subversive empathy.

### 2.3. Feminist and Post Colonial Interventions

A parallel body of scholarship has examined how gender shapes the production and reception of travel narratives. Mills (1991) demonstrates that women travelers were often marginalized within the genre, their authority questioned in ways that reflected broader patriarchal structures. Yet, paradoxically, their marginality sometimes enabled alternative perspectives. By virtue of exclusion from official colonial hierarchies, women writers could adopt more intimate, domestic, or empathetic modes of engagement with local cultures (Youngs, 2013). Postcolonial feminist critics have further explored how women's travel writing intersects with both colonial and gendered discourses. Lisle (2006) suggests that women travelers often negotiated a double bind: while participating in Orientalist frameworks, they simultaneously contested patriarchal norms by asserting their voices in a male-dominated literary sphere. This ambivalence resonates strongly with Eberhardt, who transgressed both gender boundaries—by cross-dressing and adopting male identities—and cultural boundaries—by converting to Islam and living among Algerian communities. Her writings thus illuminate how gender, culture, and power intersect in complex ways within colonial contexts.

### 2.4. Isabelle Eberhardt in Critical Perspective

Isabelle Eberhardt has been the subject of fascination among biographers and scholars alike, often depicted as a romantic adventurer, a mystic, or a rebel against European conventions (Mackworth, 1951; Kobak, 1988). More recent scholarship, however, situates her within broader debates on colonial representation and hybridity. Apter (1991) argues that Eberhardt's embrace of Islam and her immersion in Algerian society complicate the binary of colonizer and colonized, suggesting that her writings destabilize fixed categories of identity. Mutman (2014) reads her as embodying the contradictions of Orientalism itself—at once reproducing exoticism and disrupting it through intimate, sympathetic portrayals. In *Yasmina and Other Stories*, these contradictions are particularly evident. Eberhardt depicts Algeria with both admiration and ambivalence: the desert as harsh yet sublime, Algerian women as oppressed yet resilient, Islam as austere yet profoundly meaningful. Her position as a European Muslim woman allows her to write from what Bhabha (1994) would call a "third space," where cultural translation occurs and the authority of colonial discourse is unsettled. Yet her texts are not free of Orientalist traces; the romanticization of the "noble Arab" and the exoticization of Algerian customs reflect the persistence of Western gazes.

### 2.5. Travel Writing, Hybridity, and Algeria

Eberhardt's case exemplifies the broader complexities of travel writing as a genre of hybridity. As Thompson (2011, 2020) emphasizes, travel texts are inherently unstable, oscillating between documentation and imagination, reality and projection. They reflect the traveler's subjectivity as much as the world encountered. For Eberhardt, this subjectivity was shaped by her liminal identity: female yet adopting male roles, European yet embracing Islam, privileged yet marginal. Such hybridity complicates her relationship to colonial discourse, making her an emblematic figure for postcolonial analysis. Moreover, the Algerian context amplifies these dynamics. Unlike other colonial spaces, Algeria was not merely occupied but annexed as French territory, producing unique forms of cultural and political contestation (Lorcin, 1995). Eberhardt's immersion in Algerian society, therefore, cannot be separated from the violent realities of colonial domination, even as her writings attempt to transcend them. Her work thus invites critical reflection on the limits of empathy and the persistence of colonial frameworks in even the most sympathetic Western accounts.

## 2.6. Summary of the Literature Gap

The scholarship reviewed here underscores three central insights. First, travel writing is a genre deeply implicated in colonial power, yet also capable of subversion. Second, feminist and postcolonial perspectives highlight how marginalized voices, such as women travelers, complicate conventional narratives. Third, Eberhardt's work embodies these tensions in a particularly acute form, given her hybrid identity and ambivalent representations of Algeria. Despite these insights, there remains a relative paucity of sustained literary analysis of *Yasmina and Other Stories* within postcolonial frameworks. Much of the existing scholarship focuses on Eberhardt's biography or her mythologization rather than detailed textual analysis. This article addresses that gap by situating *Yasmina* within the discourses of Orientalism, hybridity, and feminist travel writing, thereby contributing to a more nuanced understanding of Algeria's representation in Western lenses.

## 3. Isabelle Eberhardt: life between worlds

Isabelle Eberhardt (1877-1904) has long fascinated scholars and readers alike, not only for her literary output but also for the unconventional life she led in North Africa at the turn of the twentieth century. Born in Geneva to an émigré Russian mother and an ex-priest father, she grew up in a household that rejected conventional European norms of religion and society. From an early age, she was encouraged to pursue languages and self-education, becoming fluent in French, Russian, and Arabic (Mackworth, 1951). Her intellectual formation thus already positioned her on the margins of mainstream European society, a marginality that would later shape her writing and her choice to live in Algeria. Eberhardt's attraction to Algeria began with her first visit in 1897, where she immersed herself in local communities, often adopting male dress and assuming male pseudonyms in order to move more freely through Muslim society (Kobak, 1988). Her decision to convert to Islam and her affiliation with the *Qadiriyya* Sufi order further distinguished her from other European travelers of the era, who typically maintained cultural and religious distance from the societies they observed. In crossing these boundaries, Eberhardt sought not merely to observe Algeria from afar but to inhabit it from within, living in desert towns, marrying an Algerian soldier, and sharing the hardships of colonial life. Yet her position was never entirely secure. On the one hand, her European background afforded her privileges and freedoms unavailable to Algerians under French rule. On the other, her rejection of European respectability and her embrace of Islam placed her at odds with colonial authorities and with many of her compatriots. She was subject to surveillance by the French administration, who viewed her activities with suspicion, especially given her sympathies for Algerian resistance movements (Apter, 1991). This dual marginality—privileged yet suspect, insider yet outsider—defined her life and shaped her literary vision. Critics have highlighted the ways in which Eberhardt's biography illuminates broader themes of identity and hybridity. Mutman (2014) argues that her adoption of male attire and Muslim identity can be seen as a radical performance that destabilized conventional binaries of gender and culture. However, this very performance also reveals the limits of her integration, as she remained, in many respects, an outsider looking in. Bhabha's (1994) notion of the "third space" provides a useful lens here: Eberhardt occupied a liminal position in which cultural translation was possible but never complete, generating texts that reflect both empathy and exoticization. Her writings, including *Yasmina and Other Stories* (1902), emerged directly from this liminal experience. Unlike many European travelers who depicted North Africa as a backdrop for adventure or conquest, Eberhardt sought to capture the textures of daily life—its rhythms, struggles, and spiritual

dimensions. Her intimate portrayals of Algerian characters, especially women, diverged from the detached or paternalistic tone of contemporaries such as Guy de Maupassant or Pierre Loti. Yet traces of Orientalist exoticism persist, particularly in her romanticized depictions of the desert and her tendency to portray Algerians as embodiments of timeless archetypes (Mutman, 2014; Lorcín, 1995). Eberhardt's personal struggles further inflect her legacy. Her life was marked by poverty, illness, and instability. She survived an assassination attempt in 1901 but ultimately died in a flash flood in Ain Sefra in 1904 at the age of 27. This tragic early death contributed to her mythologization in both French and Algerian memory, often overshadowing critical engagement with her texts (Kobak, 1988). Biographers such as Mackworth (1951) and Kobak (1988) have tended to emphasize her romantic adventurousness, while later scholars have sought to situate her more critically within the discourses of colonialism, gender, and identity (Apter, 1991; Youngs, 2013). Ultimately, Eberhardt's biography is inseparable from her literary work. Her experiences of marginality, cross-cultural immersion, and resistance to conventional norms inform her representations of Algeria in ways that are at once sympathetic and ambivalent. She embodies the paradoxes of travel writing in the colonial era: a European who sought authenticity in the colonized world, a woman who performed masculinity to access freedom, and a writer whose empathy coexisted with exoticization. By inhabiting a "life between worlds," Eberhardt produced texts that both reflect and destabilize the colonial discourses of her time.

#### **4. Algeria in *Yasmina and Other Stories***

##### **4.1. Landscape and Space: Between Sublimity and Exoticization**

Eberhardt's Algeria is first and foremost a landscape—one that overwhelms the senses and unsettles conventional European categories of nature. Her descriptions of the desert in *Yasmina and Other Stories* reveal a profound reverence for what she perceives as the sublime: "the vast eternity of silence," the shifting sands, and the "harsh brilliance of the sun" convey both beauty and hostility. In this, she aligns with Romantic traditions, particularly the nineteenth-century fascination with wilderness as a site of transcendence (Lisle, 2006). The desert becomes not merely a physical environment but a metaphysical force, testing human endurance and offering spiritual renewal. However, this sublime rendering is never ideologically neutral. By presenting the Sahara as timeless, Eberhardt participates—consciously or unconsciously—in the Orientalist trope of stasis, where the colonized land is imagined as outside history (Said, 1978). Such portrayals risk erasing the material realities of French colonial occupation: the violent dispossession of Algerian tribes, the military conquest of desert regions, and the imposition of new boundaries and infrastructures (Lorcín, 1995). In framing Algeria as an eternal desert, she obscures colonial violence even while sympathizing with Algerians. Yet what distinguishes Eberhardt from writers like Pierre Loti or Guy de Maupassant is her refusal to treat the landscape as mere backdrop. Loti's Algeria, for instance, often functioned as exotic scenery against which the drama of French characters unfolded, while Maupassant reduced it to spectacle (Thompson, 2011). Eberhardt, by contrast, depicts the desert as lived space, shaping daily routines, survival strategies, and cultural practices. Nomadic tribes in her stories are not abstract symbols but communities negotiating an unforgiving environment. By embedding the human within the natural, Eberhardt blurs the line between ethnographic observation and lyrical prose, producing a layered representation that complicates the colonial gaze.

##### **4.2. Traditions and Religion: Reverence, Exotic Fascination, and Spiritual Hybridity**

Eberhardt's immersion in Islam fundamentally shaped her narratives. Unlike most European travelers, who depicted Islam as a monolithic threat or a backward force, she portrays it as a living, diverse tradition that gives coherence and dignity to Algerian life. Her descriptions of rituals—such as the *zikr* (remembrance of God) or Friday prayers—emphasize collective devotion and spiritual intensity. Here, she diverges sharply from colonial administrators who pathologized Islam as irrational (Lorcin, 1995). At the same time, her portrayals cannot escape the pull of exotic fascination. She often frames rituals in terms of mystery, sensuality, and spectacle, focusing on the rhythm of chants, the veiled women, or the atmosphere of “otherworldliness.” This is where her work mirrors Orientalist aesthetics, transforming faith into performance for the reader's gaze. The contradiction is striking: Eberhardt admires Islam deeply, yet her language still caters to Western expectations of alterity. Her fascination is not, however, one of detached curiosity. As a convert to Islam, she writes from within religious practice, not solely as an observer. This hybridity complicates the boundaries of inside and outside. Bhabha's (1994) concept of the “third space” helps explain this tension: her position is neither fully Algerian nor fully European, but one of cultural translation where meanings are constantly negotiated. In depicting Islam with reverence and intimacy, she unsettles colonial stereotypes, yet the persistence of exoticizing language reminds us of the gravitational pull of Orientalist discourse.

#### **4.3. People and Characters: Women's Resilience and Ambivalence of Representation**

The most poignant element of *Yasmina and Other Stories* lies in its human portraits. Unlike many contemporaries, Eberhardt gives Algerian women narrative space and agency. Yasmina, for example, is not a silent figure but a character whose interiority is explored. She embodies resilience in the face of patriarchy and colonial pressure, yet her suffering is foregrounded in ways that elicit empathy rather than dismissal. This portrayal contrasts with colonial writers like Maupassant, who often reduced Algerian women to eroticized figures of desire or silence. By offering Yasmina subjectivity, Eberhardt departs from dominant paradigms of representation. Feminist critics (Mills, 1991; Youngs, 2013) suggest that such portrayals reflect women travelers' ability to access spaces and relationships denied to male writers, resulting in more intimate narratives.

Yet here too, ambivalence persists. While Yasmina and other female characters are depicted with sympathy, they are also framed as archetypes of suffering and endurance, echoing the Orientalist tendency to view women of the “East” as timeless victims (Said, 1978). The narrative occasionally slips into fatalism, presenting their struggles as inevitable outcomes of cultural tradition rather than as products of colonial and patriarchal structures. This tension reveals the limits of Eberhardt's perspective: her empathy humanizes, but her essentialism risks reducing complexity. Male characters are similarly ambivalent. Some embody the “noble warrior” archetype, presented as embodiments of courage and austerity, while others are written with psychological depth, reflecting loyalty, ambivalence, and resistance. Soldiers, for instance, are caught between service to the colonial army and fidelity to local communities, a contradiction that exposes the fractures of colonial subjecthood. What distinguishes Eberhardt's characterizations is her intimacy. Living among Algerians, she had access to everyday struggles and personal stories often ignored by detached observers. This closeness lends her narratives an authenticity missing in writers who viewed Algeria from salons or military camps. But

intimacy does not eliminate asymmetry: she remains a European narrator whose authority frames these lives for a Western readership. The poignancy of her character depictions arises precisely from this tension—between closeness and distance, empathy and power.

#### 4.4. Ambivalence as Aesthetic and Ethical Position

Ultimately, *Yasmina and Other Stories* is a text of ambivalence, and it is this very ambivalence that makes it both powerful and problematic. On one hand, Eberhardt disrupts Orientalist patterns by depicting Algerians with empathy, exploring Islam from within, and giving voice to women often silenced in colonial discourse. On the other, she reproduces familiar tropes of timelessness, mystery, and fatalism. Her hybrid identity inflects her prose with both critique and complicity. Bhabha's (1994) notion of hybridity helps illuminate this paradox: colonial texts often contain "slippages" that destabilize their authority. Eberhardt's writing exemplifies such slippages. Her admiration for Algerians undermines colonial contempt, yet her exoticized imagery reinscribes difference. Her empathy complicates colonial detachment, yet her authority as narrator reasserts hierarchy. The result is not resolution but tension—an oscillation that mirrors the contradictions of colonial modernity itself. The poignancy of *Yasmina* lies precisely here. It refuses to sit comfortably within either category of "Orientalist" or "anti-colonial." Instead, it embodies the messy complexities of encounter: admiration shadowed by othering, belonging fractured by estrangement. Reading Eberhardt through postcolonial and feminist lenses thus reveals her work as both a product of empire and a subtle critique of it, a text that exposes the instability of colonial representation by inhabiting its contradictions.

#### Conclusion

Isabelle Eberhardt's *Yasmina and Other Stories* stands as a compelling and deeply ambivalent text in the history of colonial travel writing. Unlike many of her contemporaries who depicted Algeria as little more than exotic scenery for European adventure, Eberhardt immersed herself in Algerian life, adopting Islam, moving among communities in desert towns, and writing from a position that blurred the conventional boundaries of colonizer and colonized, male and female, insider and outsider. Her biography, marked by transgression and marginality, profoundly shaped her literary vision, infusing her narratives with a hybrid quality that complicates any simple categorization. The analysis of *Yasmina* reveals this hybridity most clearly in her representations of Algeria's landscapes, traditions, and people. The desert, in her writing, becomes more than backdrop: it is a sublime, spiritual space that simultaneously resists and succumbs to Orientalist tropes of timelessness. Traditions and religious practices are depicted with reverence and intimacy, reflecting her own immersion in Islam, yet her language often lapses into the familiar exoticism of Western gazes. Her characters, particularly women, are given voices and agency rarely afforded in colonial texts, but they are also framed in archetypal terms that risk reinforcing stereotypes of victimhood or fatalism. These ambivalences do not negate her empathy, but they remind us of the persistent gravitational pull of colonial discourse, even in the writings of those who sought to resist it. The theoretical frameworks of Orientalism, hybridity, and feminist travel writing illuminate these tensions. Said's (1978) critique of Orientalism exposes the ways in which Eberhardt, despite her immersion, reproduced discursive patterns that rendered Algeria

timeless and mysterious. Bhabha's (1994) notion of the "third space," however, allows us to see how her hybrid identity produced moments of disruption—slippages in colonial discourse where empathy destabilized authority and intimacy complicated hierarchy. Feminist scholars such as Mills (1991) and Youngs (2013) help us appreciate how Eberhardt, as a woman, navigated both patriarchal and colonial constraints, carving out narrative space for Algerian women while also reinscribing familiar tropes. What emerges from this analysis is not a portrait of Eberhardt as either colonial apologist or radical dissenter, but as a writer embodying the contradictions of her historical moment. Her work illustrates the dual function of travel writing: as a medium of imperial imagination and as a site of potential subversion.

*Yasmina and Other Stories* is poignant precisely because it resists resolution. It oscillates between empathy and exoticism, admiration and essentialism, critique and complicity. It is in this oscillation that its historical and literary significance lies. For postcolonial studies, Eberhardt's writings remind us of the importance of attending to ambivalence in colonial texts. Rather than seeking neat binaries of resistance or domination, such works must be read for the tensions they embody and the ways they reveal the instability of colonial representation. For Algerian literary history, Eberhardt occupies a paradoxical place: she is a European writer who sought belonging in Algeria, whose texts offer sympathetic depictions of Algerian life but remain shaped by Western readership and expectations. Her legacy invites reflection on the long history of Algeria as a site of contested narratives, where identity, power, and representation intersect in complex ways. In conclusion, *Yasmina and Other Stories* offers not simply tales of Algeria under Western eyes, but a window into the hybrid, fractured, and contradictory space of colonial encounter. Eberhardt's texts compel us to confront the paradoxes of empathy within empire: that one may admire yet exoticize, belong yet estrange, humanize yet essentialize. Reading her today, through the lenses of postcolonial and feminist theory, allows us to see in her work both the persistence of Orientalism and the possibilities of its disruption. In doing so, we recognize the enduring significance of her writing—not as a definitive representation of Algeria but as a testament to the complexities of writing across cultural divides in the shadow of empire.

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