

# The dictator and orientalism essay



East as a magical, exotic place, where the society is backwards and primitive. I argue that *The Dictator* constructs generalizations of Eastern societies such as the low status of women, primitive culture and the non-existent democratic state. *The Dictator* is a movie about a dictator whose name is Admiral General Sabbath Leaden, who rules an imaginary nation called Wading in North Africa. He is anti-western and anti-Semitic. The country's main source of income is oil and Admiral General has plans of developing nuclear weapons. Admiral General does not want his oil to be sold internationally and is considered by the UN a "troubled" leader.

Admiral General's uncle wants to kill him, so the oil can be sold internationally. A hit man kidnapped Admiral General and while Admiral General is escaping his kidnapper, his beard was shaved while through the process of escaping. Now without his signature beard, no one can recognize him. At the end of the movie, Admiral General meets Zoe, marries her, and eventually regains power of his country. The beginning of the movie shows Wading located in the African desert. The architecture of the building is very "Middle Eastern" with domes on top of the alluding that resemble the architecture of the Ottoman Empire period.

The country has no modern building. This scene is the first manifestation of Orientation. The movie sets the scene by telling the audience that this country is not progressive, but primitive, by showing one style of architecture and no modern buildings in a country that is in the 21st century. The setting of the movie implies something about the culture, that the viewer is led to believe. The viewer is led to believe that the culture is unsophisticated. As a viewer, the view of Wading has created a mindset

that the East does not have modern buildings and has only one type of architectural style.

This mentality is not true because there are some nations such as United Arab Emirate and Qatar who have very modernized buildings. Those countries' architecture is modern or even more cutting edge than the West. An example of a modern building in the East is the Edited Towers in ABA Dublin In The Dictator, the status of women was a theme. The women in Wading are mistreated and are considered lower than men. In the beginning of the movie immediately after giving birth, Admiral General mother was killed by the doctor. Admiral's father ordered for her to be killed. This scene shows the status of the women in the Wading society.

The women are not considered a person and their life is not valued. The scene of his mom getting killed by the doctor is a parallel of the stories of honor killing that we hear in the West. Many of the honor killing stories we hear are women killed because the father or male figure in their life felt his woman was Jeopardizing his honor. So instead of the men ignoring their feelings they decided to kill their women so their honor is still kept. In our society, we consider this barbaric and inhumane. So as a viewer, the movie made me think that the women of the East are victims of their culture.

The notion that the women of the East are victims of their culture is an idea that Occident has. This notion is used by Western governments to intervene into countries that they feel the women in that society do not have rights. Another example of the status of women in the movie is when Zoe tells Admiral General that she is pregnant. Admiral General asks "" a boy or an

abortion" (Cohen). This is one of the most profound and very telling dialogues in this movie. This line portrays what the West believes the status of a woman is in the East. It is better to have an abortion than to have a girl.

This line reminds me of a time during Prophet Mohamed's life, where the people of Mecca used to bury their girls because they will bring shame. This scene sends the Wading society back fourteen hundred years ago and portrays them as primitive and backwards. The status of a woman is one lens that this movie portrayed; another one is the anti-democratic nation Wading is. The people of Wading are portrayed as archaic people, by still having a dictator and not a democratic entry. The Wading government is set up in a way that Admiral General is the government.

He is the one who issues the rules and laws. He is the executive, judicial and legislative branch. In one of the scenes, Admiral General went to his nuclear power plant and found out that the leader of the power plant has not completed his task. Admiral General was angry and motioned one of his soldiers to kill him. This scene depicts a picture that the leaders of the East have the authority of killing citizens without a reason. As a viewer, this scene displayed how unsophisticated his culture is, but I remind myself that the Western countries such as the United States have many flaws in their justice system.

There are a number of cases where people were wrongly accused and served jail time. There are a few numbers of cases where someone was wrongly executed. Some will argue that Accountant Bay has parallels to Serbia during the time of the dictator Stalin. In conclusion, The Dictator constructs generalizations of Eastern societies such as the low status of women,

primitive culture and the non-existent democratic state. The architecture shown in the movie portrays a mentality that Wading is not contemporary.