



Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

Department of English Language and Literature

English Language and Literature

**ORIENTALIST REPRESENTATION OF THE SARACENS AND  
THE EAST IN THE MIDDLE ENGLISH ROMANCES**

Ali BELENLİ

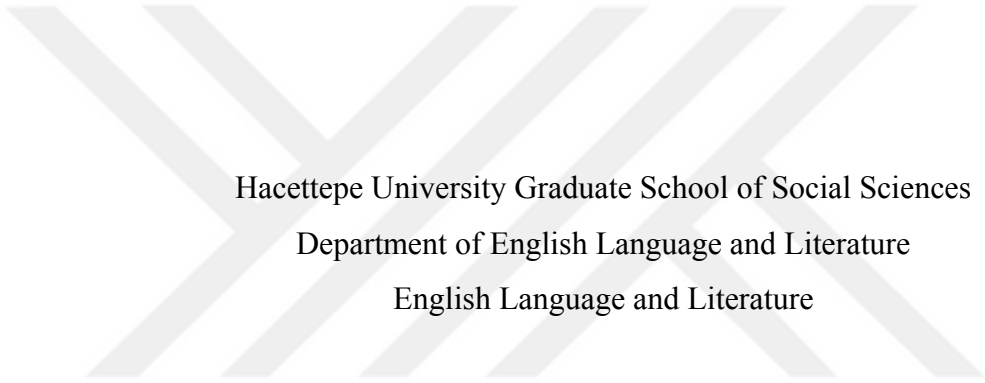
Ph.D. Dissertation

Ankara, 2018



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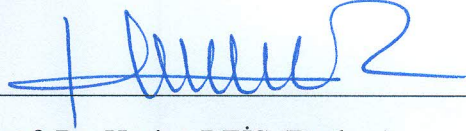
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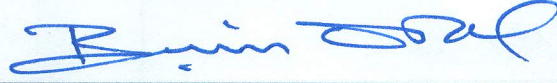
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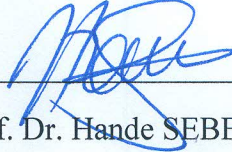
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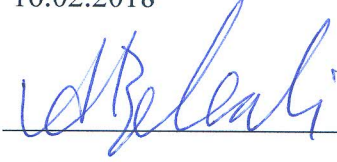
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Ali BELENLİ

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**o Tezimin/Raporumun.....tarihine kadar erişime açılmasını istemiyorum ancak kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla bir kısmı veya tamamının fotokopisinin alınmasını onaylıyorum.**

**o Serbest Seçenek/Yazarın Seçimi**

16/02/2018



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Bu çalışmadaki bütün bilgi ve belgeleri akademik kurallar çerçevesinde elde ettiğimi, görsel, işitsel ve yazılı tüm bilgi ve sonuçları bilimsel ahlak kurallarına uygun olarak sunduğumu, kullandığım verilerde herhangi bir tahrifat yapmadığımı, yararlandığım kaynaklara bilimsel normlara uygun olarak atıfta bulunduğumu, tezimin kaynak gösterilen durumlar dışında özgün olduğunu, Prof. Dr. F. Burçin EROL danışmanlığında tarafımdan üretildiğini ve Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Tez Yazım Yönergesine göre yazıldığını beyan ederim.

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*To my better half Pelin,  
and to my lovely cat Samwise...*

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## ÖZET

BELENLİ, Ali. Orta İngilizce Romanslarında Doğu ve Doğuluların Şarkiyatçı Temsili. Doktora Tezi, Ankara, 2017.

Bu tezin amacı Edward Said'in Şarkiyatçılık teorisi çerçevesinde Batı'nın kimlik yaratma sürecini Orta Çağ Kral Arthur geleneğine bağlı olmayan romanslarında sunmaktır. Orta Çağ'da, Kral Arthur geleneği dışındaki İngilizce romanslar Doğu'yu ötekileştirerek ikili karşıtlık yaratırlar. Orta İngilizce romansları Doğu'yu egzotik olarak temsil eder ve bu temsiller aracılığı ile ikili karşıtlıklar yaratırlar. Ayrıca, egzotik kelimesinin hem olumlu hem de olumsuz anlamları romanslarda temsil edilmektedir. Fizyonomi, coğrafya ve kültür Batı'nın Şarkiyatçılık çerçevesinde Doğu'yu egzotik olarak anlamlandırmada kullandığı kıstaslardır. Batı kültürü, Doğu kültürü ile yakın bir ilişkide olduğu için bu yakınlığı Doğu'yu tanımlayarak kendi kimliğini yaratmakta kullanmıştır. Romanslarda Doğu'nun düşman ve karşıt dine sahip olarak anlatılması genellikle Haçlı Seferleri ile bütünleştirilmiştir. Ancak İslam'ın çok tanrılı bir din olarak temsil edilmesi ve Doğu'nun tanımlamasının kitleler üzerinden yapılarak bireysel kimliğinin yok edilmesi de romanslarda Şarkiyatçılık bakış açısı ile temsil edilmiştir. Buna ilave olarak, din değiştirme teması –kabul edilsin veya reddedilsin – romanslarda kültürel ikilikleri ve Batı'nın farz edilen üstünlüğünü göstermek için kullanılmıştır. Doğuluların din değiştirme teklifini Hristiyanlığı korumak için reddetmek ya da Batı'nın gözünde değerli Doğulu şövalyelerin din değiştirmesi de Hristiyanlığı empoze etmek için romanslarda işlenmiştir. Bu yüzden, Doğu'nun Şarkiyatçı temsili, Doğuyu öteki olarak ve doğuluları da sadece Batı gözünde değerliyse asimile edilebilir ve din değiştirebilir olarak temsil eder. Şarkiyatçılık bağlamında, Batı kendi kimliğini yaratmak için Doğu'yu olumsuz olarak temsil eder, Doğu'yu sadece fethedilecek, sömürülecek bir yer olarak görür ve bu davranışların romans geleneğindeki örneklerini inceler.

### Anahtar Kelimeler

Orta İngilizce romansları, Şarkiyatçılık, Edward Said, Arthur geleneğinden olmayan İngilizce romanslar, Doğu-Batı, egzotiklik, Doğulular.

## ABSTRACT

BELENLI, Ali. *Orientalist Representations of the Saracens and the East in Middle English Romances*. Ph. D. Dissertation, Ankara, 2018.

The aim of this dissertation is to present the identity creation process of the West through the non-Arthurian Middle English romances of the Middle Ages in line with Edward Said's theory of Orientalism. In the Middle Ages, the English non-Arthurian romances create a binary opposition by othering the East. The Middle English romances represent the East as exotic and through these representations that they create binary oppositions. Furthermore, both positive and negative connotations of the word exotic are represented in the romances. Physiognomy, location and culture are the criteria used by the West to assess the East as exotic, in accordance with Orientalism. The Western cultural sphere as it was adjacent to the Eastern cultural sphere, used this close existence to identify itself by defining the East. In the romances the reflection of the East as the enemy, the religious other usually combined with the depiction of the Crusades. However, the polytheistic representation of Islam, and eliminating the individuality of the East by reducing it to masses are also depicted in the romances from an Orientalist perspective. Furthermore, the theme of conversion, either rejected or accepted is also employed in the romances to depict the cultural dichotomies and imply an assumed cultural superiority of the West. The rejection of the Saracen offer to protect Christian faith or the worthy, chivalric Saracen accepting to convert into Christianity are depicted in the romances to impose the superiority of the Christianity. Hence, the Orientalist representation shows the East as the other and shows that only the chivalric or heroic Saracen, according to the Western values, can be assimilated and converted. In the context of Orientalism, the West narrated a negative image of the East to create its own identity, and saw the East as a place to conquer or as a colony, and this dissertation studies the reflection of these attitudes in the romance tradition.

### **Keywords**

Middle English romance, Orientalism, Edward Said, Non-Arthurian English romances, East-West, exoticism, Saracens.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Europe which Orientalism has in mind is a medieval Christian Europe, as if that world had not been swept away by the whirlwind of revolution in the nineteenth century. And Europe's notion of the psychology of Islam is similarly static. It conjures up before our eyes simple, fixed human types: the

Arab, the Muslim, the Berber, the Turk, all endowed with stable, rather too stable, characters.

Likewise, all the richness of Islamic "culture" disappears into a descriptive picture based not on patient analysis but on intuitions aiming to reveal the essence of that culture at a glance.

Hichem Djait *Europe and Islam*, 53.

The East - the marvellous, exotic, unknown and mysterious lands of the European imagination - has shaped, and is shaped by its eternal counterpart, the West. The concept of Orientalism that Said explains is a representation of a culture that is static, deliberately ambiguous, childishly innocent, awe inspiring, effeminate in opposition to ever developing, strictly clear, experienced, monotonously perfect and masculine West (Djait 17). The attribution of "laziness, aggression, violence, greed, sexual promiscuity, bestiality, primitivism, innocence and irrationality [...] by the English, French, Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese colonists to Turks, Africans, Native Americans, Jews, Indians, the Irish and the others" (Loomba 93) promotes a picture whose frame was drawn earlier, in the Middle Ages. This dissertation will discuss, study and analyse Middle English romances, using the ideas that Edward Said put forward in his *Orientalism* (1968) as the literary evidence found in these texts and their context argue that the postcolonial condition of Orientalism is not a late Enlightenment period invention but was almost always a part of the power systems of the world - the East and the West because the struggle between the East and the West to overcome and dominate one another was present in the Middle Ages. Furthermore, to limit the extent of this study, Arthurian corpus of romances will not be the focus of the textual analysis.

Geographical explorations, expansion and gradual identity formation through contact with other cultures sped the formation of nations in the Renaissance. During the process of structuring their identity, the West - Christian Britain in particular - produced its

counterpart to define itself. As Loomba argues “[f]ifteenth and sixteenth-century European ventures to Asia, America and Africa were not the first encounters between Europeans and non-Europeans but writings of this period do mark a new way in thinking about, indeed producing, these two categories of people as binary opposites” (53). In addition to these voyages, the Crusades were one of the primary source of interactions with the East, thus, the primary source of information. The Crusades helped the West to see the East in a true light since it was described as “almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity; a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences” (Said 1). Trade, on the other hand, had always been a reason for interaction; however, until the late Middle Ages its potential was not fully realized. In addition to the crusades, Muslim empire of Al-Andulus was another important point of interaction between the Muslims and the Europeans. Up until *the Reconquista*, which began in the eight century and ended in 1492 (Coleman 157), the cultural and political presence of the “Saracens” in Europe created an ongoing influence on the culture of the West. Lampert-Weissig brings a different approach to the condition of the East in the Middle Ages, she states that “[t]he translation projects of Al-Andulus mark an example of cultural interchange that cannot be reduced to a one-sided attempt by Western European thinkers to understand or control the East, as Said describes modern Orientalism; the medieval situation was more complex and could even be seen symbiotic”(13). The term “symbiotic” itself states a strong idea about the complexity of the relationship between the East and the West. Through this symbiotic relationship the West actualised itself, while enriching itself and its culture on both geographical and cultural grounds of the East. As the Western culture became more dominant, it gradually re-invented the East as the West imagined it. It can be argued that, through this European invention of the East, European colonialism and imperialism of the later centuries have their foundations in the Middle Ages.

In relation to the postcolonialism of the Middle Ages, Cohen asserts that

postcolonial theory in practice has neglected the study of the “distant” past, which tends to function as a field of undifferentiated alterity against which modern regimes of power have arisen. This exclusionary model of temporality denies the possibility that traumas, exclusions, violences enacted centuries ago might still linger in contemporary identity formations; it also closes off the possibility that this

past could be multiple and valuable enough to contain (and be contained with) alternative presents and futures. (3)

Redefining European history in a new light and tracing its roots further back in time also brings the question of European identity and the factors which effectively created this identity to the contextual discussion. As “traumas, exclusions, violences” such as the Black Death, which decimated the European populace, or the Hundred Years’ War which left its mark on British identity formation, Orientalism’s effect in shaping the core of the identity formation of the West will be central to this dissertation. The Orientalist representations of the East, the negative and positive connotations of the word exotic and how it defined the Orient and the Orientals, and the representations of these connotations and definitions in the Middle English romances such as *Kyng Alisaunder*, *Richard Coeur de Lyon*, *Sultan of Babylon*, *Bevis of Hampton*, *King of Tars*, *Octavian*, and *Generides* are the focal point of this study.

The concept of postcolonial theory in the late twentieth century and in the beginning of the twenty-first century turned its focus further back in time and reached a point where the social structures of the medieval era and the literature of the period can be studied in a new light. Discussing the socially constructed other and identity creation in general, postcolonial theory can be employed to trace the necessary dichotomies in the cultural context studying the literary works of the period. Taking this aspect into consideration, postcolonialism is well applicable and valid for the Middle Ages. Nadia R. Altschul states that “most places on the planet have at some point experienced different facets of colonization, and thus it would be reductive to limit postcolonial studies to the spatio-temporal domains of European post-Enlightenment modernity which have become best known in English-language academic surroundings” (589). Hence, this new area of discussion includes the Middle Ages, which covers power struggles, colonisation and identification of the other, and can be subjected to the scrutiny of postcolonial studies.

Postcolonial identities are reflected as colonized and struggling for freedom. Medieval postcolonial theory, however, works with a different understanding of identity that reaches the roots of the binary opposition between the East and the West. John Ganim states that “the definition of medieval culture, especially literature and architecture,

from its earliest formulation in the Renaissance to the twentieth century, has been a site of a contest over the idea of the West and, by definition, that which is non-Western” (125). This contest between the East and the West is ever-present. Ania Loomba asserts that “[m]odern European colonialism cannot be sealed off from these earlier histories of contact – the Crusades, or the Moorish invasion of Spain, the legendary exploits of Mongol rulers or the fabled wealth of the Incas or the Mughals were real or imagined fuel for the European journeys to different parts of the world” (8-9). This idea articulates another context by discussing colonialism, hence it indirectly refers to postcolonialism. As “Modern European colonialism” cannot be separated from the postcolonial period, that is, colonial era is followed by the decolonization of the colonised countries and separation from the imperial entities, which has led to the post-colonial condition, so, the argument of this dissertation touches upon the colonial condition in the Middle Ages which promotes the postcolonial condition to follow. The Middle Ages, involving colonial and postcolonial practices, becomes a subject matter for postcolonial theory.

The idea of postcolonialism may at first glance be regarded as problematic within the context of the medieval period, as the concepts of nationalism, national identity or colonial expansion were not defined as understood today in the Middle Ages. One of the most important aspects of national identity was language as Benedict Anderson claims that “even though sacred languages [in this case Latin] made such communities as Christendom imaginable, the actual scope and plausibility of these communities cannot be explained by sacred script alone: their readers were, after all, tiny literate reefs on top of illiterate oceans” (15). Yet, these ideas took shape as Lavezzo disputes the issue of language stating that “we can point out to the introduction of the vernacular into the spaces of classroom, the court and Parliament in the fourteenth century, as well as transformation, [...] texts in Middle English” increased in number and quality (xvii).

To clarify the use of the terms post-colonial and postcolonial it is necessary to state that the adjective

“postcolonial” has been accommodated comfortably enough into the contemporary critical lexicon for the hyphen that used to divide its constituent parts to vanish.

This disappearing punctuation, like all ghosts, tells an interesting story about time. “Post-colonial” suggests straightforwardly enough that a historical period exists that is after colonialism. “Postcolonial,” the hyphen digested but its constituent elements bumping into each other without synthesis, has come to signify a temporal contiguity to, rather than an evolutionary difference from, the noun that forms its linguistic base. (Cohen 3)

Stating that the use of the idea of postcolonial is conceptual, that is, it refers to the ideological background of the word and the meanings that are attached to it, Cohen emphasises the distinction between the post-colonial, which is just a representation of a period, and postcolonial which is a framework of mind and a philosophy. Unless stated otherwise, this dissertation will use the word “postcolonial” considering the references and the meanings that this term carries. Removing the pre-accepted borders on the concept of postcolonial provides new areas of cultural interaction to be scrutinized and analysed. Because of the fact that “[t]ime and history are always-already colonized and never an inert, innocent Otherness waiting to be excavated” (Cohen 5), articulation of further inspection using postcolonial theory is both possible and viable.

This study will hold Edward Said’s *Orientalism* as its primary theoretical background. Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978) defined an academic area of interest and became a cornerstone of postcolonial studies. Orientalism perceives the East as an object to behold, a field of study, which should be under the constant gaze of the West. Said states

Because of Orientalism the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought or action. This is not to say that Orientalism unilaterally determines what can be said about the Orient, but that it is the whole network of interests inevitably brought to bear on (and therefore always involved in) any occasion when that peculiar entity the Orient is in question. (3)

As a major discipline in studying the relation between the East and the West, Orientalism expresses the power struggles and exercises on ‘the other’ in detail. As a result, it produces knowledge and discourses which debate the relationship between the East and the West. Furthermore, “[t]he Orient was the place of origins, but it was also the place of future apocalypse, the place from which avenging armies of Prester John were expected to arise and ultimately the site where the events of Armageddon would

unfold. It was both beginning and end, charged with potentiality and danger,” (Akbari 3) that is, the centrality of the Orient perpetuates the timelessness of the Orient, making it ever-present in the Western perspective.

Said discusses Orientalism in three different aspects: According to Said, Orientalism is firstly an academic field:

The most readily accepted designation for Orientalism is an academic one, and indeed the label still serves in a number of academic institutions. Anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient - and this applies whether the person is an anthropologist, sociologist, historian, or philologist - either in its specific or its general aspects, is an Orientalist, and what he or she does is Orientalism. (2)

Said, by drawing the conclusion that anyone who researches the Orient or produces anything about the Orient is an Orientalist, releases his theory from the boundaries that he himself set in his book. His discussion of Orientalism in his seminal book *Orientalism* covers several examples of the representations of the Orient in Western literature and culture, yet, this particular definition of academic Orientalism encompasses a broader perspective than the book presented.

The second aspect of Orientalism that Said discusses is the intellectual one that Said describes as follows:

Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between “the Orient” and (most of the time) “the Occident.” Thus a very large mass of writers, among whom are poets, novelists, philosophers, political theorists, economists, and imperial administrators, have accepted the basic distinction between East and West as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, “mind,” destiny, and so on. (2-3)

Descriptions of the Orient within the intellectual products are shaped by the shared background of Western culture. Thus, these intellectual products reflect the Occidental ideology, whether it is intentional or not. Furthermore, Lisa Lampert-Weissig states that “Orientalism also has an ‘imaginative meaning’ as writers, artists, intellectuals and politicians constructed a vision of the Orient that was integrally connected to academic

approaches as the two types of intellectual work developed together” (12). This unavoidable connection between these patterns of thoughts on the Orient supplied the concept of Orientalism as they contributed to each other.

The third and the last type of Orientalism is the ideology in action. Said claims that

Taking the late eighteenth century as a very roughly defined starting point Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient - dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient. (3)

The domination of the Orient is the theory put into action. The academic and intellectual discussions and evaluations of the Orient by the West practiced the ideas they produced through this type of ideological or political Orientalism. Furthermore, the domination over the Orient also became another source for the Oriental discourse as it created a bond between the East and the West. These three types of Orientalism are intra-connected, they share information and stimulate each other while creating the Orientalist discourse.

As Orientalism is the main producer of discourse in the relationship between the East and the West and the formation of the ideological system that constitutes this theory, a working definition of it and how it will be a part of this research should be clarified. A general introduction to this theory by Lisa Lampart-Weissig states that

Orientalism is a way of studying the East and more generally a way of conceptualising it in opposition to the West. Through Orientalism, the Orient came to be understood as, among many other things, irrational, backward, sexualised and feminised, as opposed to the rational, developed, civilised and masculine West. (12)

Yet, primarily, this biased, heavily frustrating representation of the East by the West is the result of an accumulation of information gathered throughout centuries. As Said asserts

[s]trickly speaking, Orientalism is a field of learned study. In the Christian West, Orientalism is considered to have commenced its formal existence with the decision of the Church Council of Vienne in 1312 to establish a series of chairs in 'Arabic, Greek, Hebrew, and Syriac at Paris, Oxford, Bologna, Avignon, and Salamanca'. Yet any account of Orientalism would have to consider not only the professional Orientalist and his work but also the very notion of a field study based on a geographical, cultural, linguistic, and ethnic unit called the Orient. (49-50)

This information about the East which was produced, enlarged and evolved, taking a different turn as the centre of power shifted from the East to the West. Translations from the Arabic, Greek, Hebrew, and Syriac, geographical observations, linguistic and cultural differences were studied and analysed by the West. Nevertheless, to analyse these early roots and show how the perspective has changed with the decentralisation of the East and Orient by the West will be studied. Since the discursive formations about the Orient were constructed by the West and the West started to exercise power over the East, the centre of power in this confrontation shifted in favour of the West. Hence, these discursive formations can be traced within romances especially those which deal with the Saracens such as *The Sultan of Babylon*, *King of Tars*, *Richard Couer de Lyon* which will be discussed in the following chapters of this dissertation.

At this point, *Orientalism* by Edward Said has an important role and it becomes the discursive formation which formulates the knowledge and discourse of the Western ideology that produces information about the Orient. Biddick, while discussing how Said defined this power relation, points out that

Said tells the history of Orientalism according to highly conventionalized chronologies of an Enlightenment history of progress. *Orientalism*, thus paradoxically produces the Middle Ages as a medievalism, that is, a fantastic origin that sets in motion a progressive history. (36)

In parallel with this idea, it must be noted that Said observes Dante and comments on his representation of the prophet Muhammad and Ali, his son-in-law (68-69). Dante, in his book *The Divine Comedy: Inferno* explains Muhammad's and Ali's punishment in detail; they are "torn open from chin to forelock," as a punishment for "sowing scandal and schism" (28. Canto II. 31-33). This example that Said included in his work shows his perception of the Middle Ages in relation with Orientalism in the Middle Ages, as it

is limited to a single part of a large volume of medieval literature produced in Europe, yet Said leaves room for further arguments and does not limit his observation as opposed to the argument above saying

Orientalism [...] views the Orient as something whose existence is not only displayed but has remained fixed in time and place for the West. So impressive have the descriptive and textual successes of Orientalism been that entire periods of the Orient's cultural, political, and social history are considered mere responses to the West. (108-109)

The Orient, from the Western perspective never changes. The Orientalist representations of the Orient deny any progress, they prevent the Orient from solidifying its own identity, however, they still point out a progression of Western culture, which has its reflections on the Eastern culture hence, as Biddick stated above, give rise to a paradox while representing the East. Nevertheless, according to the Western thought the Orient's progress in any field is considered to be triggered by the West.

The general definition of the Orient is based on the idea that the Orient was always different. However, the ideas about the East, especially when the Middle Ages are in question, originate from the lack of political unity and economical integrity that Europe suffers from, as the Eastern culture and political power were at their peak in the Middle Ages. As Said states, “[b]y the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Islam ruled as far east as India, Indonesia, and China. And to this extraordinary assault Europe could respond with very little except fear and a kind of awe” (59). Said's observation about the condition of Europe, stating that the image of Islam left Europe in “fear and awe” confirms why he set the background of Orientalism in the eighteenth century and afterwards. The reason behind this is the shift of power, that is, the West freed itself from its “fear” and “awe” and exercised its power on the East to manipulate it and capitalise on its weakening condition. However, even in the Middle Ages, the Orient was subjected to the Orientalist discourse that the West employed while defining the Orient.

Starting in the Early Middle Ages the contact of the East and the West through the crusades, geographical discoveries, the political and cultural presence of the Arabs in the Iberian peninsula and ongoing trade produced a greater amount of interaction. Despite having an imaginary cultural border between itself and the East, the West, failing to isolate itself geographically, had unavoidable interaction with the Arabs of Al-Andulus. Menocal, considering the cultural achievements of the Arabs in Spain, states

A surprising number of historians of various fields, nationalities, and vested interests have described the relationship in the medieval world as one in which it was al-Andulus (as Muslim Spain was called by the Arabs) and its ancestry and progeny that were ascendant, and ultimately dominant, in the medieval period. It has been variously characterized as the age of Averroes, as an oriental period of Western history, a period in which Western culture grew in the shadows of Arabic and Arabic-manipulated learning, the 'European Awakening,' with the prince, a speaker of Arabic, bestowing the kiss of delivery from centuries of deep sleep. (2)

Claiming that the Andalusian culture has sparked the Renaissance in Europe, Menocal points out the cultural superiority of the East. In the introduction of *Role of Islam in Development of Western Thought* Abdurrahman Bedevi discusses how two locations, Toledo and Sicily, acted as centres of thought, and more importantly, translation. Translation of Ancient Greek texts, which were in Arabic, into European languages, most importantly to Latin, reconnected Greco-Roman Europe and medieval Europe. These translation activities created the pillars of the enlightenment of the Renaissance (1-12). However, before this integration:

[t]he Medieval notion of the "East" or the "Orient" is very different from modern conceptions. [...]. The Orient was a place of both geographical and temporal origins, with the earthly paradise located at once in the region's furthest east and in the remotest past. In the medieval imagination, the Orient was the place of origins and of mankind's beginning, it was also, however, a place of enigma and mystery, including strange marvels and monstrous chimeras, peculiarities generated by the extraordinary climate. (Akbari 3)

Thus, the position of the East changed with increasing information produced by and about it. Following this change, once marvelled and awed by the cultural achievements of the East, the West slowly formulated itself, and the gradual degradation and failure to comply with the changing times and technology caused the East to be surpassed by the West. The exotic and marvellous East was seen as such, not because of its technology or

cultural superiority but because of its mystery, unknown and ambiguous nature in the eyes of the West.

In relation to these definitions of the Orient and Orientalism, Edward Said and Abdel Latif Tibawi systematically specify the power relations and mutual definitions between the East and the West by formulating the religious binary opposition between the two. Edward Said's ideas on Orientalism are more comprehensive and they mainly focus on identity creation and power struggle, as he claims that his "contention is that without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage – and even produce – the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period" (3). On the other hand, Tibawi significantly focuses on religious controversy between Christianity and Islam. Tibawi claims that, "the late medieval image of Islam remains substantially unaltered; it has only discarded old-fashioned clothes in favour of more modern attire"(195) clearly the problem of identity is not only limited to secular issues but also includes religious confrontation, particularly for the Middle Ages, considering the power of the Church. Even though the impact of the Church no longer holds sway on social life as it once did in the Middle Ages, the religious contradiction still plays an important part.

Edward Said's idea of the Orient is mainly based on the representations of the East by the West. In his book *Orientalism*, Said describes this condition by saying:

The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image; idea, personality, experience. (1-2)

Reflecting the East as the 'other' in every way is the result of a process which has been going on since the antiquity. John Tolan states that

Thirteenth-century Europeans defined their perceived "superiority" primarily as religious (though cultural and other concerns were inseparable from religion); their twentieth-century counterparts tend to see themselves as culturally or intellectually

superior: more “enlightened,” more technologically advanced, and so on. Feelings of rivalry, contempt, and superiority have existed on both sides all through intervening centuries, tinged or tempered at times with feelings of doubt, inferiority, curiosity, or admiration. (xvii)

Concerning the Middle Ages, during which the East was culturally developed and politically more stable than the West, these ideas become problematic as the balance of power was in favour of the East, which resulted in a reverse identity creation process. That is, the West defined the East, but not because it was superior but because it felt the need to do so in order to be able to compete with the rising power of the East. Loomba states that “[k]nowledge is not innocent but profoundly connected with the operations of power. This Foucauldian insight informs Edward Said’s *Orientalism*, which points out the extent to which ‘knowledge’ about ‘the Orient’ as it was produced and circulated in Europe was an ideological accompaniment of colonial ‘power’” (42). The transformation of this concept of knowledge production to the Middle Ages makes the problems of representation in question practically viable.

While these identity formation problems because of the time and space differences raise question marks about Said and his theory, *Orientalism* is still in effect. However, Tibawi takes a different approach. The religious discrepancy between the East and the West has a major influence for both while creating their identities, thus, when the Middle Ages is in question, this religious controversy works quite well to describe the hostile approach of the West to the East as it can be observed. Because of the difference between Christianity and Islam, the West condemned the East and Islam, naming them as heretics and their belief as imposture. Tibawi describes the clash between the East and the West as follows:

To what extent such propaganda [the call for the Crusades] conditioned Western Europe to respond to the call for the Crusades is hard to determine. But one of the most spectacular and paradoxically less obvious failures of this long contest between Christendom and Islam is that it did not induce Christendom, despite close and prolonged contact with Islam in the Holy Land neighbouring countries, to soften its prejudices on the least to correct its factual image of the enemy. Two centuries of strife ended with both sides even more hostile to one another, and not less prejudiced or ignorant. (185)

Referring to the Crusades, Tibawi claims that this struggle just widened the divide. However, simply blaming the religious controversy for the differences between the East and the West is an understatement as it limits the perspective of the conflict between the East and the West. It is a well known fact that during the third Crusade, crusaders ransacked and destroyed Constantinople. Yet this confrontation with the Eastern Church is an exception and as Hichem Djait claims “[p]opular thinking successively conjured up images of a splendid Orient, full of marvels, of the cruel, lascivious Oriental, of the primitive, violent Berber, and all this capped by a vision of Islam: fanatically religious, aggressive, simpleminded” (17). Structuring the Orient by producing its identity around religion simplified the perception of the Easterners which helped to generate a perceptible concept of the East.

The Crusades, in the context of East - West relationship, became a pivotal point as they created zones of direct conflict and confrontation in the Middle Ages. However, the connection between the East and the West in the Middle Ages was not solely the result of these military expeditions and conquests. Nonetheless, with the Crusades, the clash between the East and the West reached a climax, and a resurgence of cultural transformation followed. The tension between the East and the West has always been present since antiquity, hence, with the fall of the Roman Empire, the newly emerging European powers, having once established their sovereignty under the guidance of the Roman Catholic Church turned their gaze eastwards. Pope Urban II in his famous speech at Clermont in 1095 urged the Christian West to act upon the calls of help from the Eastern Roman Empire; “as most of you have heard, the Turks and Arabs have attacked them and have conquered territory of Romania (the Greek Empire) as far west as the shore of Mediterranean and Hellespont, which is called the Arm of St. George” (qtd. in Thatcher and McNeal 516). Pointing at the enemy and the direction, Pope Urban II set the course of the history of the encounters between the East and the West. The ecclesiastical confrontation between the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church temporarily halted as a new, “common” enemy emerged. This enemy, the Saracens, became a threat to entire Christianity with their rising military force and emerging religious influence.

The Crusades became an important factor while the West was slowly forming its identity. Since these series of conflicts presented the East as the enemy, the West identified themselves automatically as opposed to the East. Since Orientalism in the Middle Ages mainly focused on identifying the East, each interaction added depth and another dimension to the information about the East. Thus, the West gradually created a reference point for its own identity. As Anna Triandafyllidou states, “[t]he notion of the other is inherent in the nationalist doctrine itself. For nationalists (or simply for those individuals who recognize themselves as members of a national community) the existence of their own nation presupposes the existence of other nations too” (594). This presupposition is one of the fundamental aspects of identity creation as it refers to the others to reflect the self.

Orientalism, while creating an opposition, also creates a self. According to Sinan Akıllı “affirmative auto-occidentalism” is “[t]he discourse which essentializes the West positively, and - in dialectical processes - the East negatively, through the construction of stereotypes and/or images of the West by Western agents” (29). Being the opposite of Orientalism, Occidentalism is the defining of the West, but as the concept of affirmative auto-occidentalism purports, it does not merely refer to the definition of the West by the East, but also to the definition of the West by itself. The idea that Akıllı proposes supports the argument of this dissertation by conceptualizing identity formation. The scholarly argument that the concept of history in the Middle Ages was different, the perspective of the medieval cultures was timeless, just representing the present as the different dimensions of time and history emerged with the Renaissance along with the sense of an individual self, an idea of authorship and a notion of a unified bureaucratic state (Galloway 1). This argument imprisons the concept of the Middle Ages into a contemporary point of view, thus limits the progression of ideas and knowledge.

The Orient, as the opposite of the Occident, existed in the collective culture of the West long before modernity. Greek city-states were considered to be the basis of European civilisation. As Bernard Lewis states, “Europe is an European idea, conceived in Greece, nurtured in Rome, and now, after a long and troubled childhood and adolescence in Christendom, approaches maturity in a secular, supranational

community. Asia and Africa are also European ideas, European ways of describing the Other” (2). These city states were the first to encounter and define the other, the East. In their battle against the invading Persian forces, the rival city states united for the first time to form a military force. However, it should be noted that they also had shared beliefs and culture systems, which helped them to define themselves and distinguish their identity. Thus Greek civilisation not only became the cradle of the entire Western civilisation but also created the concept of “them,” Loomba, in her evaluation of the stereotyping process, states that “[f]irst of all racial stereotyping is not the product of modern colonialism alone, but goes back to the Greek and Roman periods which provide some abiding templates for subsequent European images of ‘barbarians’ and outsiders” (92). This encounter between the West and the East continued as the civilisations battled with each other throughout history.

The West developed a cultural integration long before developing segregated nationalistic entities. However, this cultural integration was intermittent, not clear and unified as the Greek civilisation faded and Roman civilisation rose and then again Roman civilisation collapsed as the invasions of the Germanic people left it powerless and vulnerable. The immersion of the barbarian other positively affected the cultural unity of Europe. Nevertheless, it was Christianity that brought real unity and integration. The definition of the other was limited to religious perception for a time. Still, nationalistic and ethnic divisions started to form as the European forces fought amongst themselves. As a result of these struggles, forming an identity became a matter of ethnicity as well as culture and religion. Thorlac Turville-Petre states “writers in English promoted their ideas of nationhood in the half-century leading up to the outbreak of the Hundred Years’ War, as they defined the nation in terms of its territory, its people, and its language, and fashioned a history of the nation in which these three features were intertwined” (vi).

The Eastern people were the “other” from the Western perspective, as the West’s approach to the “other” was ethnocentric as they label and group because most of the Easterners with the name Saracen. Falk argues that “[d]eriving from the Greek word *ethnos*, meaning tribe or people (hence ‘ethnic group’ and ‘ethnic cleansing’),

ethnocentrism is the perception of a human ‘race’, tribe, or nation of itself as the centre of the world, and racism is its perception of itself as superior to all other ‘races’” (1). The term Saracen, which refers to the entirety of the Muslim population regardless of their nation, is used to represent the Easterners in general by the Western cultures in the Middle Ages; the name derived from “Sarakenoi” by the Greeks which means “the people of the tents” referring to the nomadic tribes of Arabia (Lewis 13). Furthermore, the origins of the Saracens were also a matter of discussion among the medieval scholars. The need to classify, categorise and identify the enemy was already on the rise as the Saracens became a threat for the West. Hence, reflecting upon the biblical and geographical evidence, Isidore of Seville, in the seventh century AD stated that

The Saracens are so called because they claim to be the descendants of Sarah (wife of Abraham) or, as the pagans say, because they are of Syrian origin, as if the word were *Syriginae*. They live in a largely deserted region. They are also Ishmaelites, as the Book of Genesis teaches us, because they sprang from Ishmael. They are also named Kedar, from the son of Ishmael, and Agarines, from the name Agar (i.e. Hagar). As we have said, they are called Saracens from an alteration of their name, because they are proud to be descendants of Sarah. (195)

Isidore of Seville’s definition of the Saracens as Ishmaelites, the descendants of Ishmael who was banished by Abraham with his mother Hagar, touches upon the outcast nature of the identity of the Saracens. In addition, Menocal states that “[t]he image of the Saracen is constructed on the basis of a literary definition of what the Christian is, which, in this text [*The Song of Roland*], is what the Saracen is not” (52). Hence, the image of the Saracens is simply the opposite of the Christian image, and this opposition reflects the Orientalist perspective of the West in the Middle Ages.

Representative of the chanson tradition *The Song of Roland* presents the Saracens as the adversaries of both European culture and Christianity. Influencing the romance tradition of the period, the work provided context for a number of Middle English romances directly; *Sir Isumbras*, *Otuel*, *The Sultan of Babylon*, *The Siege of Milan* to name a few. *The Songs of Roland* influenced romances and other Middle English romances such as *Kyng Alisaunder*, *Richard Coeur de Lyon*, *King of Tars*, *Bevis of Hampton*, which include Saracens as the antagonists, mostly represented the Easterners as exotic, irrational, awe inspiring or the enemy of the West. Those Easterners who are

individually represented to have positive - by the Western cultural standards - characteristics are to be converted into Christianity. Hence, the romances provide opportunities for religious and cultural confrontations in accordance with the Orientalist aspects in question.

Saracens are the main adversary to Christianity as represented by the West, excluding Eastern Orthodox Church, and the Saracens are the dominant figures as the enemy of the West in the romances. This presence is almost always felt, through the actions of the heroes of the romances, as they encounter Saracen champions. Since the romance genre has various roots and the Crusades are one of them as some of the romances include the Crusades as their subject matter, the concept of Saracens procures a rather real and living concept of the enemy. In addition, the difference of the political structure between the East and the West, as well as the religious one, created a divide. These differences were to be emphasised to promote the Christian belief and Western identity. Thus, the romances can be argued to provide information on how to act against the threat rising from the East, both spiritually and militarily. The religious zeal behind the Crusades was also a part of identity creation, its distinguishing features and practices through its strong connection to Christianity produced a biased and deformed reflection of the East.

The Middle English romances are also represented as having popularity among the different social classes of the English society. Hudson states that “[e]ven before the advent of popular romance as we know it, medieval romances were referred to as ‘popular antiquities’ by early scholars such as Bishop Percy and Joseph Warton” (31). That is, the characteristics of the genre enabled it to reach a broader audience, which in turn provided the necessary means to transpose the ideas, thus ideology, to the masses of the Middle Ages. Hudson further argues that the romances “reached a varied audience and were attractive to more than a single socio-economical group” (37). Although the concepts of race and masses are not clearly defined in the Middle Ages, the reflection of the othering ideology in the romances indicates the aim to describe the enemy to a certain group of people who are not like the audience themselves. The concept of “masses” is quite different from today's representation of the world. In

addition to this correction, the supposed audience of the romances should be clarified. Harriet E. Hudson states that

the genre romance originated in the courts and it is to these elite origins that Middle English narratives owe their noble characters and concern for chivalry. If artefacts can be, in a sense, multi cultural, members of their audiences can be too. Though social stratification was greater and mobility was more limited in the Middle Ages than in modern times, it was still quite possible for an individual to participate in more than one kind of culture. (33)

The quotation refers to the condition of the Middle English romances, which act as a mediator between the classes, conveying the necessary ideas that the “upper class” may wish to impose onto the people who wish to be like their “superiors”. The “groups” which in time will become the dominant factor in English society, were the newly emerging wealth producing people of the late Middle Ages which were evolving out of their feudal identity. Baugh, concerning these masses, states that there is

at this time the rise of another important group—the craftsmen and the merchant class. By 1250 there had grown up in England about two hundred towns with populations of from 1,000 to 5,000; some, like London or York, were larger. These towns became free, self-governing communities, electing their own officers, assessing taxes in their own way, collecting them and paying them to the king in a lump sum, trying their own cases, and regulating their commercial affairs as they saw fit. The townsfolk were engaged for the most part in trade or in the manufacturing crafts and banded together into commercial fraternities or guilds for their mutual protection and advantage. In such an environment there arose in each town an independent, sometimes a wealthy and powerful class, standing halfway between the rural peasant and the hereditary aristocracy. (131)

Contrary to the land-based economy of the feudal system, these merchants who traded goods both nationally and internationally, circulated money in gold, thus controlled a more active power contrary to the land-based economy. The fact that “the emergence of a new class, the bourgeoisie [...] coincided with the time when the most specifically feudal characteristics of Western civilization began to disappear” (Bloch xxxvii) supports the idea that these newly emerging classes, hold the key to the future of the society. Although the time span of the popularity of the romances does not particularly cover the rise of the middle class and the death of the feudal economic system as mentioned above, it should be noted that a social change of this scale was gradual. Thus, the romance genre was among the factors that created a starting point for the

newly emerging social structure which slowly evolved into the British Empire. In consideration with the popular aspect of the romance, it should be stated that the romances convey and contain Orientalist discourse of the West. Hence their popularity helped to dissipate this ideology to their audience.

Although the romance genre was underappreciated by some critics - such as W.P. Ker who states “[a] great part of medieval romance is nothing but a translation into medieval forms” (66) of literature or Derek Pearsall who claims that “[t]he audience of the Middle English romances is primarily a lower or lower-middle-class audience, a class of social aspirants who wish to be entertained with what they consider to be same fare, but in English, as their social betters”(91-92) - the popularity of it in the Middle Ages was prominent. Radulescu states that “[s]cholarly consensus over the apparent low aesthetic quality, unsophisticated form and limited conceptual framework exhibited by most medieval popular romances has affected many analyses of these texts until relatively recently” (1). However, this long-term negligence led to a rise of interest in the field and new forms of discussion and evaluation are produced. One of them, “the popular romance” concept attributes them an influence over the audience of the time. Considering the romances, Hudson states that

The Middle English romances are potentially popular literature. Mediators made them more accessible - in this sense the stories have been popularized. But because the romances were not popularized in the sense of created in order to be widespread, they did not necessarily reach a large audience. They were not the product of a large, organized, well supported program of dissemination as were popularized religious works. The notable feature of the mediation of popularized romances is that the mediators fundamentally alter the material of their source before passing it on, and have contacts with different social groups within the culture. (39)

The fact that the popularity of the romances and the conditions of their audience allowed these romances to convey ideas and ideologies can be deemed as evidence of their power to perpetrate changes in society. The romances received praise from a larger crowd as “the shift in taste from romances written in French to romances written in Middle English occurred gradually from the mid-thirteenth century onward as the appeal of romance spread to the gentry and bourgeois readers” (Krueger 4). Hence,

having a larger audience necessitated the romances to change their subject matters and how they were structured. Barron states that “[t]hough its idealism can express itself at many social levels, romance is inherently aspiring, often aristocratic; yet in values as in setting its aims not at pure escapism or fantasy but at the conviction of reality” (4). Hence, Middle English romances, evolving with their audience and the society that the audience belongs became a part of the social change, and became a vital part of the medieval English society as it progressed in time.

In the first chapter of this research, the exotic representation of the East and the Easterners will be discussed. The East’s condition as the other and how the concept of the exotic helped the West procreate a binary opposition as they are presented in the reflection of the exotic features of the Orient within the Middle English romances. This binary opposition, consisting of the East and the West, provided the necessary ground for the West to formulate its identity. By discussing the East as exotic, the West produces the norms and standards. Exotic physiology and exotic geography represented in the romances form a binary opposition to the Western idea of the body and geography, through the representations of the bodies and alien landscapes of the East as monstrous. The exotic in these romances sustains the Western ideology and this chapter analyses how the concept of Orientalist exotic helped the West to construct itself as the norm and the East as the other.

The second chapter of this dissertation will study the East as the cultural and religious other of the West. Furthermore, the concept of the enemy as - religious and cultural - found in the romances will be discussed as it is within the themes of the Crusades and conquests. Also, the idea of conversion, converting the worthy Saracen to Christianity will be studied in the context of Orientalism. The Crusades, became the clashing ground of the two cultures: The East and the West. In addition, the interaction between the East and the West was not necessarily always negative. Still, the presentation of Islam as a polytheistic religion functions as a mechanism to other the Saracens and the East. In opposition to the religious othering, the amazement and awe that the East inspired in the West also reflected in the romances. Finding the corresponding point of the mysterious and marvellous East in Orientalism, the romances represent an awe inspiring image of

the East. Thus, this chapter investigates the relationship between the East and the West on these different grounds.

In conclusion, this dissertation uses the theory of Orientalism to analyse the representations of the East and the Easterners in Middle English romances. The application of postcolonial theory to the medieval context is a matter of discussion; still, the concept of colonialism, on a theoretical ground, is as old as humanity itself. Whenever two groups encounter and communicate, a power relation is at hand and in this case, the power relation between the East and the West is observed and studied through the medium of Middle English romances. The representations of the Orient that can be found in the romances refer to the hegemonic relations between the West and the East in which they can be represented as the dominant and the dominated, respectively. Seeing through the allegories and symbols, the medieval audiences were informed about the East and Saracens via the romances.

## CHAPTER I: EXOTIC REPRESENTATION OF THE EAST AND SARACENS

The concept of the exotic and exoticism from the perspective of Orientalism includes the differentiation of the East from the West as awe inspiring and extraordinary - both in positive and negative connotations of the word exotic -, and different in physical and cultural aspects. This chapter aims to introduce the exotic depiction of the East and the Saracens in the Middle English romances and how this exoticism is used in the representation of the other. Hence, the romances that are included according to their subject matter, are studied to reveal the Orientalist aspect of this use of exoticism. The discussion, then, reveals the dichotomy created between the East and the West through literature. The Orient, or the East, is usually associated with “the exotic,” as it was entirely different in its vital aspects such as its conceptual “vast size,” large geographical “scale,” and cultural “multiplicity” (Said 61). The manifestation of the exoticness in the medieval context reveals itself as the admixture of the known and the unknown (Strickland 59). This combination forms the understanding of the East, and supports the imagination of the West in the romances. The exotic within the medieval romances is considered as something that is either not natural or not culturally normal by Western standards. Said, in his *Orientalism*, comments on the concept of exoticism stating that

[It] was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, the West, “us”) and the strange (the Orient, the East, “them”). This vision in a sense created and then served the two words thus conceived. Orientals lived in their world, “we” lived in ours. The vision and material reality propped each other up, kept each other going. A certain freedom of intercourse was always the Westerner’s privilege; because his was the stronger culture, he could penetrate, he could wrestle with, he could give shape and meaning to the great Asiatic mystery. (44)

The exotic representation of the East, produces the East as different in climate, way of life, flora and fauna, and the people in general, thus, as the other and the enemy. According to this view, Saunders states that “[m]edieval romance does indeed present imaginary otherworlds, and engage with ideal chivalric worlds that are always already past, that are seductive in their otherness and exoticism, and that promise what reality

cannot” (2). However, in romances the exotic is not always the ideal. On the contrary, through the complete alienation of the Eastern culture from the Western culture exotic descriptions of the East provide a sense of defamiliarization, and difference.

Accordingly, the exotic in this chapter is the alluring, not always the enemy but the envied, the distant unaccustomed lands and people, which are represented in the romances that will be discussed. The exotic East that the romance genre represents also reveals the nature of this literary type. Romance has its roots in multiple sources including Al-Andalusia, courtly love tradition and Christianity. These sources added to the romance the variety and depth in creating stereotypes. Arabian cultural influence in the Middle Ages on Western culture, especially during the ninth and tenth centuries, reached its peak because of the Muslim conquerors in Al-Andulus and in Sicily, where Frederick II lived in accordance with Arabic traditions (Menocal 34-35). Along with the Arabic cultural influence that was being disseminated by Al-Andulus and Sicily, the Crusades and trade brought the West and the East closer. Romances, having their sources in both history and tradition, were influenced by these factors, and made use of them in their narrative structures. Romance, being one of the most important forms of literature in the Middle Ages, represents the East through the gaze of the West. As Strickland argues in romances

Certain common exotic features, such as extraordinary physical form, sumptuousness, ugliness, or beauty, may be most vividly particularized in a pictorial image. However, other aspects of exoticism, such as vast size, scale, multiplicity, or distance, might be more effectively expressed with language. In practice, throughout the Middle Ages both words and pictures worked together to identify and to define the exotic both within and out with the observer’s cultural world. The exotic, then, was read as well as seen. (61)

Along with the descriptive pictures, images drawn on manuscripts to express the exotic in ugliness, beauty or extraordinary physical form, other features of the exotic such as size, scale or multiplicity, which are expressed through verbal representation. Thus, the cultural traits of the romance preserving the continental concepts and immersing these concepts into those of the English court, which began to differ from its French counterpart, acted as a stimulus for the English society to define itself as a group, drawing a line between themselves and others. French feudalism with the Norman

Conquest brought the traditions of the French court and tastes to England. It took a certain period of time and political conflict with the continental connections of the Normans in England to isolate themselves and develop an identity blending with their newly conquered land. Normans, after the conquest, to transfer their culture, used romances to reflect the presumed identities of the East and the Easterners, and the remnants of the confrontation between the Crusaders and Saracens.

The exotic, as a concept, refers to different aspects that are attributed to non-native people - that is foreigner or stranger to one's own society -, objects or traditions (Strickland 59). The idea of the foreign not only means distant or far away from the self, but also different from and unlike the self. The West and Westerners set themselves as the norm in romances and defined the concept of the exotic through the physiological aspects of the East and Easterners such as having one eye and one leg, superhumanly strong giants, who eat and dress differently, and locations that are different from those of Europe. At this point, exoticism becomes the source of information for the West through literary representations. In this respect, Huggan states, "[e]xoticism relieves its practitioners [...] from the burdensome task of actually learning about 'other' cultures" (26). Hence, exoticism and reflections of the East in the Middle English romances, are "[t]he best candidates for the exotic label," says Todorov, as these "people and cultures [...] are most remote and least known to us" (qtd. in Huggan 26).

The exotic represented through the geographical and physical aspects in the Middle English romances is the main force to activate the self-identity formation process of the West. Physical and traditional aspects of the people of the East need to be studied together as most of the traditional qualities overlap with physical ones. Geographical aspects will be studied for their different and exotic nature when compared with the climactic and topographical conditions of the West, especially the northern countries. Considering these points, the aim of this chapter will be to point out how the Orientalist point of view is used to represent the East in exotic terms in romances. These traits are physical qualities, cultural practices uncommon or non-existent in the Western sphere represented in the romances *Richard Coeur de Lyon*, *Kyng Alisaunder*, *The Sultan of Babylon*, *Generides* or *Bevis of Hamptoun*. The Orient with its different skin colour,

different geography, and different customs provoked the Western imagination to represent the East as alluring and desirable in some cases. Furthermore, this imagination also produced the East as the alien and the enemy. Regarding these points, Strickland states

[i]n a medieval context, I define ‘the exotic’ as alien creatures, groups, cultural practices, or accoutrements perceived by Western Christians as either geographically distant or consciously imported into their own society from the outside. Always constructed, medieval exoticism might be informed partly by physiognomical and cultural characteristics of actual contemporary groups such as Arabs, Mongols, or Black Africans. (59)

The West encountered the multiple groups that are from either the East or somewhere that is not the West and used these encounters to support the imagination that produces the literature and the information about the East. Hence, the real encounters ended up to be the source of the Western imagination of the East, different and alien.

The exotic representations of the East in the romances derive from the travels to the Near and Far Orient, especially those of Sir John Mandeville and Marco Polo, who are the most well-known travel writers of the Middle Ages, who reflected both their observations and imaginary representations. It can be stated that these observations and reflections helped the romances to formulate their understanding of the East and the Easterners. Travel writing helped shape the image of the East for the Western perspective. The narration of the distant lands and people shaped with imagination and fabulation plays a great part in the creation of the exotic in the romances. Andrew Fleck states “[o]ne text that exerted powerful influence on late medieval and early modern European perceptions of cultural difference was fourteenth-century *The Travels* of Sir John Mandeville” (380). It can be said that these texts are ideological as they convey messages and produce discourses, further implementing the idea of the East as exotic in the European cultural tradition. Sir John Mandeville, who is known for his widely circulated *Travels of Sir John Mandeville* which was translated into eight languages in the late fourteenth century (Higgins 6), is also known for the disputed sources of his travels. Furthermore, some scholars argue that *The Travels* was not actually the result of the travels of Sir John Mandeville, but more of a collection of hearsay. C. W. R. D.

Moseley, in his introduction to *The Travels* first and foremost discusses the identity of Sir John Mandeville, then states that the “details [of Mandeville’s travels] range from the quite possible to the improbable but possible” (4). Hence, the descriptions that have been included within the text have no solid background, yet, they convey a diverse series of explanations and representations of the East, producing information for “potential readers and hearers [who] were doubtless ready for a work that offered them, among other things, an entertaining inventory of eastern ‘choses estranges’ [strange things]” (Higgins 6). Taking the work of Mandeville into consideration, a particular definition of tradition in which a son slays then serves his sick parents to be eaten, or people with no heads and eyes on their shoulders, a tribe of people with no mouths or noses, and a tribe of people with an immense upper lip which can be used as a cover in sunny days (Mandeville 132-135) show the exotic and imaginary descriptions of the East and their people. In addition to the exotic representation of the physiognomy of the Eastern people by Sir John Mandeville, which illustrates the fabulation of the unknown, we have Marco Polo’s reflection upon the Far East which is more informative and more consistent. Especially his references to the Great Khan (Kublai Khan) and his reign provoke much less criticism than the works of Sir Mandeville (Komroff 113-118). Iain MacLeod Higgins states

Clearly, the East as it was known to Latin Christendom between the twelfth and the fifteenth centuries was a vast and varied place. It was the fertile ground of an imagined community's noblest hopes, wildest dreams, and worst fears - at once the distant source of its chivalry, learning, and historical covenant with God, the outlandish location of its most sacred, coveted, and finally unattainable sites, and the slowly expanding theater of its most reverent, bewildered, disgraceful, and disturbing encounters with Otherness. (5)

The variation of the corporeal and spatial information about the East is the result of the contact points between the East and the West. The cultural interaction which resulted in the European Renaissance is the result of multiple cultures incorporating their studies in Al-Andulusia. The presence of the “other” within Europe provided more information for Europe to fabulate. Furthermore, the fascination with Islamic culture produced both awe and inspiration for the Renaissance.

Another point of contact with the Crusades provided the concept of the enemy and the other. The Crusades are primarily the result of the religious zeal, and the zealous armies aimed to defeat the enemy of their religion. Romances, which are heavily inspired by the tales of the knights who went on the Crusades and the concept of knighthood itself, reflected the representation of the other as the exotic enemy. In addition to the Crusades, trade was the source of unknown riches for the West. The trade connection between the East and West, introducing goods, spices, riches and textiles that is unknown in Europe developed a desire to own these exotic commodities, fabled riches of the East. The fact that all these imaginary and informative representations worked collectively to reproduce the East in Western terms is evident. Furthermore, Phillips states that

Some representations of Eastern peoples fulfilled the urge to wonder, which has been noted as an important characteristic of medieval cultures, while other elements of their descriptions met desires for amusement or delight. Monstrosity or alien customs were comprehended within ancient conventions on the “barbarian” and could assist an emerging European sense of selfhood or in some cases provide a kind of pleasure through horror. (3)

As it is suggested in this quote, estrangement of physical, geographical and cultural practices set the norms of the self of the West as well as characteristics of the East as seen by the West.

Giving shape and meaning to the mysterious or the exotic, the East became a strong point for the West to define its own norms and social standards. The main problem with the concept of identifying the East as the “exotic” is that exoticism also connoted a negative image. Edward Said asserts that the “[f]ifteenth and sixteenth-century European ventures to Asia, America and Africa were not the first encounters between Europeans and non-Europeans but writings of this period do mark a new way in thinking about, indeed producing, these two categories of people as binary opposites” (53). Said claims that the Renaissance was the period that this binary opposition was set between the West and the East. Still, this dichotomy can be traced back to the Middle Ages. As Strickland, in parallel with the discussion of the binary opposition which is based on the discussion of the “exotic nature” of the East, asserts

Review of recent literature concerned with late medieval exoticism and related theoretical problems [shows], the medieval exotic emerges as an aspect of wonder that evoked contemporary responses of a profoundly ambivalent and binary order. To contemporary readers and viewers, the exotic was either by turns or simultaneously desirable/dangerous, beautiful/hideous, godless/pious, and strange/familiar. (69)

Furthermore, defining the East as exotic, in attempt to create a negative other or reflect themselves through affirmative auto-occidentalism, the West aims to create the norm that the Western culture sustains. Said discusses the constructed concepts of the East and West by stating “that neither the term Orient nor the concept of the West has any ontological stability; each is made up of human effort, partly affirmation, partly identification of the Other” (xii). Discussing the ontological instability, Said indicates that both the East and the West are interdependent. In relation to this, Corin Saunders argues that “[r]omance creates possible worlds that are exotic, magical and wondrous, whether in terms of adventure, love or vision” (2). As Saunders indicates, exotic definitions are almost always a part of the romance narrative in general. However, this definitely does not mean that it is not related to the concept of identity creation. As Said argues

Rather than listing all the figures of speech associated with the Orient – its strangeness, its difference, its exotic sensuousness, and so forth – we can generalize about them as they were handed down through the Renaissance. They are all declarative and self-evident, the tense they employ is the timeless eternal; they convey an impression of repetition and strength; they are always symmetrical to, and yet diametrically inferior to, a European equivalent, which is sometimes specified, sometimes not. (72)

The timelessness of the East, lingering in a perpetual stasis, is a direct contrast to the ever-changing state of the West. This timeless, stale state which is attributed to the East makes it vulnerable to the scrutiny of the West. Lucy K. Pick states “Said's examples from classical Greece and the Middle Ages simply testify to the ubiquitous, increasingly elaborate yet essentially unchanging nature of this series of images of the East” (267). MacKenzie suggests that these “images imply timelessness, the absence of the historical dynamic progress that represent western superiority” (46). Furthermore, Said claims that the negative aspects which are attributed to the East can be found even before the

Renaissance. While Said discusses the condition of the East in Aeschylus' plays, he states that "[a] line is drawn between two continents. Europe is powerful and articulate; Asia is defeated and distant" (57). Hence, medieval romances can be considered as textual bodies which employ these ideas that Said emphasises and associate them with the East. The exotic other which provides a parallel identity requires additional scrutiny, since dismissing these representations as simple descriptions of the East can be misleading.

As a part of Orientalism, exoticism always acts on binary ideas. As Lampert-Weissig states "Orientalism is a way of studying the East and more generally a way of conceptualising it in opposition to the West" (12). The descriptions of the East that the romances have to offer present the reflections of the East in such ways that the West is placed directly opposite to the East. Although there are some correct or at least valid representations, the moments in the romances which describe the Easterners as superior to the West in any sense directly refer to two occasions, either to magnify the victory over the East or to make a more interesting presentation of the East as fabulous and awe inspiring. As Said points out;

In the depths of this Oriental stage stands a prodigious cultural repertoire whose individual items evoke a fabulously rich world: the Sphinx, Cleopatra, Eden, Troy, Sodom and Gomorrah, Astarte, Prester John, Mahomet, and dozen more; settings, in some cases names only, half-imagined, half-known; monsters, devils, heroes; terrors, pleasures, desires. The European imagination was nourished extensively from this repertoire: between the Middle Ages and the eighteenth century such major authors as Ariosto, Milton, Marlowe, Tasso, Shakespeare, Cervantes, and the authors of the *Chanson de Roland* and the *Poema del Cid* drew on the Orient's riches for their productions, in ways that sharpened the outlines of imagery, ideas, and figures populating it. (63)

The authors and the literary works that Said talks about touch on the different aspects of the Orient, not as the enemy but as the exotic. These different representations and their reflections within the literary works seem to provide a wider perspective of the East; however, these various references lead to a concept of the East which is "fabulous" yet strange and sometimes insultingly sometimes inspiringly different. Romance, in this sense, owes its existence to the encounter of the East and the West as it reflects the exotic in the Orient in both positive and negative way. The conflict between Christianity

and Islam also affected the nature of the romances since the religions clash and try to replace each other as the true belief which creates enmity. The romances that deal with the East in some way or the other included the religious struggle, thus negative representation of the East is apparent in the romances. The heroes of the romances, the chivalrous knights are servants of Christianity. In relation to religion in the knightly tradition, Richard Kaeuper states

Religion, in other words, means adding required pieties to an essential warrior code, not changing the code in any significant way beyond what prudence requires because of God's superior power; religious ideas express themselves through exteriorities, not by entering the heart or soul to work basic changes within. (248)

The requirement of piety from a warrior, such as attending a Crusade, is also the manifestation of religion through war. The knight, the hero of the romance, fights for the Christian God; the romances like *Richard Coeur de Lyon* represent the enemies of God as the Saracens and Eastern people. Although this conflict seems to create a greater division between the two religions and cultures, as Tibawi states "[t]he Crusades had a chastening influence on Christendom" (186). Nevertheless, the clash of religions - Christianity and Islam - not only impacted the politics but also culturally motivated each side to know and define the other better. Thus, romances that include this clash of religions and cultures reflect this motivation to define the other as they present the two sides and give a biased opinion on the righteousness of the Christian side.

Romance deals with supernatural incidents and heroes, fabulous settings, extraordinary encounters, thus, it is suitable to embody the exotic charm of the Orient, presenting the riches and glamour of the East. The romances include "prowess [...], love [...], marvels" (Barber 45). The marvels in the romance are shaped by the beliefs and understandings of the medieval people. Hence, their definitions and ideas about the East also helped shape the plots and the representation of the exotic in romance. Enriching the plots of the medieval narratives, "the embrace of the exotic (the oriental) had the effect of superimposing European values over these other cultures, creating a distorted picture that conformed more with the expectations and fears of Europeans than with reality" (Colmeiro 128-129).

*Kyng Alisaunder*, *Richard Coeur De Lyon*, *The Sultan of Babylon*, *Bevis of Hamptoun*, are the romances which deal with the exotic representations of the East, depicting different groups of people, different landscapes and cultures. The conquests or Crusades, contribute to the development of a common vision of the East and the Saracens as exotic. Religion, serves to create an important dichotomy as “rightful” Christianity always prevails over the “pagan” or the “heathen” Islam. Since Christianity was a dominant force in the Middle Ages, the references to the enemies of religion can be found in the romances to further reinforce the religious ideals. Also, the geographically adjacent position of the East to the West, further fuels “Orientalism,” which “is premised upon exteriority, that is, on the fact that the Orientalist poet or scholar makes the Orient speak, describes the Orient, renders its mysteries plain for and to the West” (Said 20-21).

In the romances important forms of exoticism are related to the topics of race and location. Since geography and race are usually thought together, the exotic representation of race and geography is combined. The question of race refers to the particular identifications of the people of the East, attributing different qualities - such as different bodily representations, eating habits and clothing culture, and contrasting them with their Western counterparts as in the example of *Kyng Alisaunder*. These traits, were used in the romances to present a view of the East to reflect the way the West constructs the East as different and inferior. Said claims “European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient, as a sort of surrogate and even underground” (3). The East was the opposition of the West, which created a disparity in various forms such as geography, physiology and culture. The hostile environment of the East, the deserts or the jungle-like forests with wild animals as represented in *Kyng Alisaunder* (ll. 4916-5100) and as the Westerners experienced during the Crusades illustrates the way the West exoticises the East. The physiologically different Easterners; black or with dark, at least darker complexion, or as the Easterners reflected in various romances with imaginary physical differences such as hound heads on a man’s body; or cultural practices of cannibalism, food and clothing habits such as eating raw meat and fish or wearing only thorns as garments are examples of the representation of the exotic which will be exemplified in this chapter. Considering these

examples, it should be stated that by constructing an opposition, the West tries to justify its claims to subdue the East by attributing abnormalities to it, which are not based on facts but mythical reflections, and tries to dominate and civilise the Easterners. Stereotyping the East and the Easterners, the West limits the scope of its attention to constructed aspects of the East. Furthermore, as the West stereotypes the East it creates a reason for its own existence. As Dagenais and Greer claim, “stereotyping permits the maintenance of contradictory beliefs regarding the colonized, which are necessary to justify conquest and continuing surveillance of the conquered” (441). Similarly, Said states that

[t]here are Westerners and there are Orientals. The former dominate; the latter must be dominated, which usually means having their land occupied, their internal affairs rigidly controlled, their blood and treasure put at the disposal of one or another Western power (36).

This domination not only manifests itself as material gains but also political power and cultural supremacy to create a negative image of the East, that is the stereotyping, exoticising and limiting it through which the West can see and define itself.

The question of race in the Middle Ages reflected generally as us against them, especially in the romance. The concept and understanding of race in the Middle Ages revealed itself through various practices. State practices forced Jews to wear badges showing their identity which was the law in 1215 England, banished them for being Jews in 1290, and murdered the Jews in masses during the First Crusade, moreover, falsely attributing several bodily functions under the guise of scientific, medical or theological treatises, they claimed the bodies of the Jews had putrid stench and Jewish males bled from their private parts, furthermore, the skin colour was a symbol of purity and superiority and being black was associated with being evil, hence the example from *Cursor Mundi* in which three black Saracens turn into white noble people after kissing the staff of Moses (Heng, *The Invention of Race I* 1-4). It is clear that the division created by the races –racism- was present and functioning within the society in the Middle Ages.

Still, the question of race is both an important and debatable one within the context of the Middle Ages. Race is closely related to how it is perceived by the scholars. Geraldine Heng argues that “[c]anonical race theory understands ‘racial formation’ to occur only in modern time” (The Invention of Race I 261). Heng further states that “[i]n principle, race theory - whose brilliant practitioners are among the academy’s most formative and influential thinkers - understands, of course, that race *has* no singular or stable referent: that *race is a structural relationship for the articulation and management of human differences, rather than substantive content*” (The Invention of Race I 262; emphasis in original). Accordingly, it should be stated that race is a structure, where a binary opposition is created generally to describe the other. Since there is a binary opposition in relation to race, there is also a hegemony that the dominant power encodes into the discourse of race. In the Middle Ages, race as a concept was a problem, although it was not as clearly defined as it is in the contemporary world. The differences in colour, religion or culture functioned as points of confrontation and distinction, hence possible sources of discrimination. The Middle Ages provides abundant exemplary cases of comparisons, direct or indirect, between the European or Western norms, and the derogatory representations of the Eastern peoples. Thus, the Jews, the Saracens who are sometimes represented with the colour black to signify their impurity, the monstrous and wondrous races of the East as reflected in the Middle English romance *Kyng Alisaunder*, provide ample examples to illustrate the racial discourse in the Middle Ages. Furthermore, the exotic nature of these examples serves as identifiers of the Orientalist point of view.

The presentations of the clash between the East and the West in the Middle English romances vary, these clashes between the East and the West do not occur only in the religious conflict between Christianity and Islam or Europeans and Saracens. The representation of the East in *Kyng Alisaunder*, which, in detail, narrates the conquest of King Alexander, shows the East and the Easterners before the rise of Christianity. Alexander the Great, the hero of this romance, was born in 356 BCE and succeeded his father Philip of Macedonia to the throne in 336 BCE and henceforth began his continuous conquest of the East until his death in 323 BCE (Green, xliv-xlix). The romance of Alexander the Great, *Kyng Alisaunder* (c.1200) draws its contents from

various sources such as the Iranian accounts of Alexander's exploits and Anisthenes' account of Alexander's life, and most importantly from Simeon Seth's the eleventh century translation from a Persian poet named Arrian (Weber xx-xxii). Furthermore, as Rosalind Field states "*Kyng Alisaunder* is a translation of the Anglo-Norman *Roman de toute chevalerie* of Thomas of Kent" (77). This particular aspect of the romance explains the representation of the expansionist idea of Alexander the Great. While exploring the conquests of Alexander the Great, the poem goes into detail and delivers an incredulous account of Alexander's exploits. The exotic in terms of race and location is clearly observable in *Kyng Alisaunder*, making the romance one of the core texts of exoticism. *Kyng Alisaunder* describes different characteristics, such as distorted physical traits, or cultural traits which are alien to Western traditions, even predating the descriptions of Sir John Mandeville, and reflects an understanding of the East and Eastern races, that is, the distorted reflections of the Easterners as the representation of the opposite of the West. As Sir John Mandeville, in his *The Travels*, gives detailed descriptions of the Easterners, the romance of *Kyng Alisaunder* acts as a catalogue of Eastern peoples with exotic characteristics.

To produce the Western "norms" this romance provides grotesque pictures such as one eyed or headless men and alien landscapes such as the end of the world, which are depicted in detail. The discussion of numerous different tribes of "people" leads to a stereotypical point of view. Each tribe of people is illustrated with a specific characteristic, and these characteristics are mostly derogatory, however there are exceptions through which the fabulous aspects of the East are narrated. As Akbari suggests "the bodies of the inhabitants of such eastern regions were marked by the sun not only in the colour of their skin and anatomy, but also in their physiology; these corporeal differences were consequently manifested in their behaviours, emotions and intellectual capacity" (3). In the romance of *Kyng Alisaunder* a series of lands are described; Alexander the Great marches through Anatolia, Babylon, Arabia, through deserts and jungles to India. His conquest takes him to the end of the world to the East, to the Garden of Eden and further to Caspian mountains, to fight the monstrous race of Gog Magog. In these lands a number of people are depicted with different physiological and cultural traits.

*Kyng Alisaunder* tells the tale of the conquest of Alexander the Great and starting from his birth, in the romance, he is claimed to be fathered by an Egyptian magician, and during his reign his bravery and military conquests are given in detail. Barrow states that

[t]he nature and balance of elements in *Kyng Alisaunder* remain [the same with *Roman de Toute de Chevalrie*] the bulk of 8000 lines dealing with the Persian Wars and the India campaign, combining martial action and exotic wonders, comparatively limited sections at beginning and end with Alexander's mysterious birth and with his seduction by Candace and his death. The poet views them all with the same candid eye, describes everything with the same unblinking realism. (125)

After Alexander defeated Darius and conquered Persia, he moves into the Indian subcontinent, to conquer the wild lands and exotic people living in these lands.

The first country described is "Pandea" which "is a land fast there biside. Alle hy ben maydens that thereinne woneth;/ Mannes compaignye certes hy shoneth" (ll. 4916-19). In this land, the representation of the people is reminiscent of the Amazons, the famed female fighters of ancient times, who challenge the male dominant societies. As these lines refer to representation of women, with no male figures in their society, this particular example displays a different practice of gender roles as the West was highly patriarchal in the Middle Ages. Hence, this Amazonian representation of the people of "Pandea" is exotic for the West because the norms of the Western society did not promote females in any way. Dominant patriarchal discourse of the Middle Ages is the reason why female warriors are exotic and different. The armies and fighting forces of the Middle Ages were primarily male, hence the concept of the female warrior contrasts with the existing social conditions. This privileged group of women enjoyed the rights and power that the European women did not have, since the two social constructions of identity was attached to being woman. Being as pure and good as Virgin Mary would require a woman to be meek, obedient, and subservient to the male hegemony. On the other hand, being as wicked and cursed as Eve who brought disrespect and punishment

to womankind was the example of evil for the women. Jennifer Ward discusses the condition of the women in the Middle Ages by stating

It was taken for granted that women were weaker than men and subordinate to them. [...] Women were regarded as weak, irrational and subject to temptation just as Eve in the Garden of Eden succumbed to the serpent's wiles, picked the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and gave it to her husband to eat. [...] Because Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary to redeem mankind, Mary could be taken to show a different side of womanhood. For medieval woman [...] the Virgin Mary was an ideal to aspire to. (2-3)

As it is discussed above, these two figures of religion, as they are figures from the Bible, with the help of the Catholic Church, became the epitome of womanhood in Europe during the Middle Ages. However, in the romance, a third way of representation is pictured. The masculine females of Pandea act as a curiosity for the Western audience, as this female-dominated culture is strange and alluring to them because of its difference.

In the romance, the next encounter, as Alexander the Great ventures deeper into the unknown land, with a different group of people is “[a] folk [...] cleped Farangos,/ [...] flesshe hy eten raw and hoot” (ll. 4928 -32). The “folk” called Farangos are depicted as raw meat eaters. By not going into detail about the Farangos people, the poet directs the attention of its audience to a disparate aspect. The eating habits of the Farangos are described, which are primitive and closer to a wild animal's eating habits, which creates a cultural dichotomy between the East and the West as it can be extrapolated from the fact that the East is represented as uncivilised and feral, hence, the West is civilised and developed. The way the traditions and characteristics of the Farangos people are depicted constructs a vision of the other for the West. In the Western tradition “[v]enison was usually roasted, or chopped up and surrounded with pastry to form venison pasties” (Adamson 36). The forms and the variety of cooking mean that the culture who uses different ways of cooking or preparing its food is more developed and civilised than the ones who have no way of cooking or preparing their food. The next group of people, which presents a similiar condition as the Farangos people is “[a]nother folk [...] y-hoyen Maritiny/ [...] libben all by fysshynge /[...] eteth it thanne withouten fyre, withouten panne” (ll. 4934-39). The Maritiny people's diet is

comprised of only raw fish, uncooked, with no other processes to prepare it for consumption. This eating habit is not usual for the Europeans as the “[f]ish appeared on the medieval table prepared in a variety of ways: it was roasted, fried, boiled, baked, encased in a pie shell, or in jelly, to name just some of the methods of preparation” (Adamson 39). The use of fire is one of the major characteristics of the civilised societies, Pyne states

the possession of the fire was unique - this humans knew at their origins. More than anything else, fire defined them and segregated them from the rest of creation; myths that depict the origin of fire account equally for the origins of humans because the latter depended on the former (2).

Cooking can be assumed as a distinctive characteristic distinguishing the civil and cultured from the barbaric and uncultured. Hence, presenting this group of Eastern people without fire suggests that they are to be received as inferior by the audience of these romances. These aspects provide a sharp contrast to European traditions, producing a distinction between the East and the West.

The third group of Eastern people that Alexander the Great encounters during his conquest shows that there are different portrayals of the Easterners in the romance. The representation of “[a]nother folk there is next,/as hogges crepth, after crabben and airen hy skippen and lepeth;/ of thornes and busshes ben her garnament” (ll. 4942-44). These lines describe a group of people who go after the crabs and fruits like pigs, creeping and jumping around. These people wear thorns and bushes for garments, which provides another context of the dichotomy between the East and the West. This nameless tribe of people, whose outfit drastically differs from Western costumes, provides an insight to the vision of the West of the East; how it perceives the East and Easterners and promotes a view of the East as uncivilised. This representation is aimed at the clothing habits of an anonymous people, providing another aspect to other the East by not even giving them a name and amassing them into a singularity. It can be observed that, their clothing - or lack of clothing - compared to the fabrics and materials used in Western attires in the Middle Ages, which “ranged from the opulence of gold *racamaz* of Lucca and cloth of gold *baldekyn d’outremer*, through to russet (a grey or brown woollen cloth) and the more utilitarian worsted (smooth wool cloth distinguished commercially

from the more expensive woollens)” creates a contrast with the Western idea of fashion and clothing (Owen-Crocker, et al. 1). Clothes and clothing symbolise refinement, artistry and social classes during the Middle Ages. Monica Wright states

Removal of his [Yvain in this case] garments, also signifies the removal of his social status – to an extent that it is nearly impossible for two maidens who know Yvain from the court to recognize the unclothed, compromised man the encounter one day in the forest. The text makes clear, however, that they would have recognized him immediately if he had been dressed appropriately. (3)

By giving the example of Yvain, Wright emphasises the symbolic importance of clothing during the Middle Ages. Thus, the people of the East who are represented as uncivilised, inferior unlike the civilised Europeans who had a sense of fashion and clothing. As Owen-Crocker states, “[i]n the Middle Ages, very much more than today, dress was an identifier of occupation, status, wealth, gender and ethnicity” (1). Since the clothing is a signifier of class and status, having next to no clothes by the Western standards becomes a topic of curiosity, also the unrefined, coarse and uncivilised clothing become the strange and the different, which might be classified as exotic.

The tradition to represent the people in their cultural standards in *Kyng Alisaunder* continues with the description of cannibalistic tendencies with different motives to justify them;

Another folk woneth there biside;  
Orphani hy hatteth wide.  
When her elderynges beth elde,  
And ne mowen hem seluen welde,  
Hy hem sleeth, and bidelue,  
And the guttes hy eteth hem selue;  
The guttes hy eten, for loue fyne,  
And for penaunce and for discipline. (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll. 4946-53)

These lines describe the tradition of the Orphani people, who eat the guts of their dead elderly out of love, penance and discipline. Cannibalism was not something unknown for the Europeans, as they attended the Eucharistic rituals (Price 27) or had committed acts of “cannibalism” which “attended famine in England in 1005 and 1069” (Heng, *Cannibalism* 108). These practices, especially the Eucharistic rituals, assume the

consumption of human flesh, as sacrament. Nevertheless, this consumption of the flesh is on the metaphorical level only. Anthropophagy is a topic not open to discussion in the Western culture (McDonald 124). However, consuming the elders as a sign of respect in the romance is an exotic representation, both different enough to be interesting and grotesque enough to create disgust. Although this cannibalistic ritual has a noble purpose, it is simply not sufficient to make it tolerated or praised. The description of this practice presents a picture of the East as uncivilised and untamed. It can be claimed that this representation, which is Orientalist, creates a self-sustaining appreciation of the Western norms. Furthermore, as Ania Loomba states

It is important to remember that images of Africans, Turks, Muslims, barbarians, anthropophagi, 'men of Inde' and other outsiders had circulated within Europe for a long time before colonialism. These images often appear to coincide with the constructions of the 'other' in colonialist discourse. For example, the twelfth- and thirteenth- century image of Muslims as barbaric, degenerate, tyrannical and promiscuous seems identical with the Orientalist images Said identifies in *Orientalism*. (54)

Hence, the discourse of Orientalism is not exactly defined or named in the Middle Ages, yet the practices that define Orientalism were present and these traditions were carried on to the later periods of colonialism. Since the awareness of the differences between groups of people or "races," is a part of Orientalism, the discussion of the representation of racial features and differences in the romance refers to the existence of Orientalism in the Middle Ages.

Representation of cannibalism is not only limited to *Kyng Alisaunder*. The romance, *Richard Coeur de Lyon* narrates the story of King Richard the Lionheart. Richard the Lionheart, urged by the Pope, joins the Third Crusade to reclaim Jerusalem. The first part of the romance narrates his journey to the Holy Land. After his arrival, Richard helps the defenders of Acre in repelling the siege of the Saracens. He fights against Saladin and wins, but he returns to England without taking Jerusalem back. On his way back home, he is kidnapped by the German emperor, with whom he had a conflict earlier in the romance. Unlike *Kyng Alisaunder's* representation of cannibalism, *Richard Coeur de Lyon* depicts a more realistic version of cannibalism. When he gets sick during the siege of Acre, Richard craves for pork meat. His men, unable to find

pork in the land of the Saracens, resorts to killing a Saracen, cooking him, and serving him to King Richard as “pork” meat. After eating the flesh of the Saracen, King Richard miraculously recovers from his illness. The romance depicts this incident of cannibalism in detail.

*Richard Coeur de Lyon* (c.1300) makes use of food culture in a radical way. Instead of representing different cultures as in the romance of *Kyng Alisaunder*, this romance presents an unconventional culinary practice, human meat cooking. Considering the eating habits of some of the different races of the oriental people depicted in *Kyng Alisaunder* by creating contrasts with the existing Western traditions, serving of Saracens as an exotic delicacy in *Richard Coeur De Lyon* functions as a whole new dimension of alienation and othering of the Saracens. Richard the Lionheart’s need for pork meat to be cured from his debilitating disease to continue his quest is satisfied with an unlikely replacement in the romance *Richard Coeur De Lyon*:

An old knygt was, with Richard bydis;  
 Whenne he wyste off that tydys,  
 That the kyngys wants we swyche,  
 To the steward he spak, pryvylyche:  
 “Our lord kyng sore is seke, I wis,  
 Afftyr pork he alongyd is.  
 Ye may non fynde to selle;  
 No man be hardy hym so to telle!  
 Yiff he dede he myght deye:  
 Nowe behoves to don, als I schal seye,  
 That he wete nought off that.  
 Takes a Sarezyne yonge and fat;  
 In haste that the theff be slayn,  
 Openyd, and hys hyde off flayn,  
 And soden ful hastely,  
 With powdyr and with spysory,  
 And with saffron off good colour. (*Richard Coeur de Lyon* ll. 3055-71)

Saracens were served to King Richard as food, when there was no other meat available. The flesh of a Saracen is presented like rare meat, with spices and saffron for an appetizing colour reflect the representation of the East on multiple layers of meaning. The saffron and other spices, “were the ultimate in luxury food in the Middle Ages” (Adamson 65). Especially saffron was the most valuable spice, as the production of it was quite hard yet it found its way to medieval culinary traditions for the feasts of the

royal family and the nobility (Adamson 15). Hence, the use of expensive and exotic spices indicates the social status of the king and the importance of the meal he was to have. The romance uses a culinary diction as if it is describing a recipe. The cook of King Richard the Lionheart picks a “young, fat Saracen” as the primary ingredient, slays it like a pork, “flays” its “hide.” The diction and style can be compared to that of a recipe book. The romance replaces animal meat with human flesh, and describes the process not as replacement but as an original, exotic delicacy. In this respect, the Saracens are equated to a beast such as cattle or swine. Hence, the bestialisation of the Saracens which degrades the Saracens’ status to perpetuate the chasm between the East and the West takes a different path as the sides of this binary opposition are no longer on the same level of existence. Dehumanisation of the Easterner not only adds to the superior image of the Westerner in this binary opposition, but also stereotypes the enemy and removes the individuality of the Saracens. Also, as the lines “Our lord kyng sore is seke I wis, /Afftyr pork he alongyd is” (*Richard Coeur De Lyon* ll. 3059-60) suggest that King Richard I yearns for pork meat and since his cook cannot supply any, he replaces this ingredient with Saracen human flesh. His yearning for pork meat is not a coincidence though. As medieval “[p]hysicians classified pork as a fairly moist and moderately cold foodstuff,” (Adamson 30) to balance his disturbed bodily fluids which is a result of “unkynde colde and hete,” (*Richard Coeur De Lyon* ll. 3021) Richard I demands pork. The dry and hot weather of Acre, which affected Richard I, can be balanced through moist and cold meat of pork. Moreover, “[p]ork was seen as extremely nutritious and was described by physicians as similar in taste to human flesh,” (Adamson 30) hence the replacement of pork with human flesh can be seen as probable. Furthermore, this cannibalistic tendency in the romances was not entirely fictitious, as it has its roots in the First Crusade during which cannibalism actually said to have taken place. Geraldine Heng refers to this historical fact as follows:

At Ma’arra, however, according to the three surviving eyewitnesses histories of the First Crusade written independently by Latin participants, the unthinkable happened: the crusaders roasted and ate the flesh of enemy corpses, an act of such unviated horror that all three chronicles are immediately driven to defend the cannibalism by invoking extreme famine as exigent explanation. (“Cannibalism” 103)

As Heng argues, cannibalism indeed did happen and found its way to literature. Quoting Fulcher of Chartre, Heng further states that

When the siege had lasted twenty days, our people suffered excessive hunger. I shudder to speak of it, because very many of our people, harassed by the madness of excessive hunger, cut off pieces from the buttocks of the Saracens already dead there, which they cooked and chewed, and devoured with savage mouth, when insufficiently roasted at the fire. And thus the besiegers more than the besieged were tormented. ("Cannibalism" 103)

This fact of cannibalism, which found its way into the romance *Richard Coeur de Lyon*, is used out of its original context that occurred out of dire need. Putting the practice of cannibalism into an entirely different perspective within the romance, the West is presented as a carnivore, and the East its exotic prey. The fact that the West is the cannibal here shows how deceptive the romances can be while representing the East. While *Kyng Alisaunder* represents cannibalism as an exotic practice, *Richard Coeur De Lyon*, portrays cannibalism as a necessity, and the victim as the exotic delicacy. Furthermore, Nicola McDonald gives a recipe from the late Middle Ages with the name "Test de Turt" that is "Turk's Head;"

Turk's Head. Take a well-rolled sheet of pastry; fill it with rabbit, fowl and honey-soaked dates; add fresh cheese and put cloves, cubebs and sugar on top. Then lay on a face with plenty of ground pistachio; the filling will be coloured red, yellow and green. Dress the head in black, in the manner of a woman's hair, and place it on a black dish. A man's face should be visible on the top. (124)

This recipe, along with Richard the Lionheart's consumption of Saracen meat in the romance, presents the view of the East from the West clearly. The romance combines these two different representations, cannibalism and the victim, to depict an East that is an exotic consumable. The East is a rich source for the Western imagination, which results in such reflections.

Since there are multiple representations of the exotic, alongside food and costume, grouping these aspects under same sections regardless of any particular romance will help to clarify and expand the argument of the portrayal of Orientalist exoticism. Culinary practices and costume tradition of different peoples in the romance *Kyng*

*Alisaunder* provide a portrayal of the Eastern races. However, these practices and traditions are not the only concepts that depict the East as exotic. As different from the West, the Eastern people do not look for a cure in a situation of sickness. To practice medicine also implies the development of a particular culture. In the romance *Kyng Alisaunder*, absence of medical care and search for a cure and the inevitable results of these absences are given as characteristics of the Orient:

Another folk there is acost,  
 Stille men, withouten bost ;  
 Whan hy seen seek her vryne,  
 Hy nylleth seche no medecyne ;  
 Ac from her frendes hy stelen  
 And gon to wode and maken hem helen,  
 And crepen thereinne, and steruen so,  
 Ne ben hy founden never mo. (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll. 4954-4959)

This nameless group of people's tradition is that they do not seek for a cure when they are in need of one. They isolate themselves, crawl into a hole as if to quarantine themselves and die there. As a wild animal, which hides when injured or sick to protect itself from the predators, these people unlike civilised communities who care about their sick and vulnerable, give in to their basic instincts. The healing and practices of medicine, and also caring about other members of the community create strong bonds between the members of the community, which help to develop a healthy, organised and civilised community. Peregrin Horden states that "[d]emographers, sociologists, and social historians are now more or less unanimous in their opinion that kinds of small household, precarious network and mixed economy of welfare that we have been reviewing are evident in the Middle Ages" (53). Taking care of the others in the society is an act of goodness. By not practicing medicine or showing compassion to the members of their family or tribe, these people are represented as different and exotic examples, and they are differentiated from the people of the West.

The positive aspect of the exotic is also alluring for the West as it reflects the desires of the West for the rare and unique. The goods that were produced only in the East fascinated the West and through trade they obtained the exotic products of the East. The riches of the East, which are also depicted in the romance *Kyng Alisaunder*, become the

sources of the fantasies of the West. John Day states “Latin merchants regularly imported expensive luxuries from the East: spices, dyes, sugar, silk, pearls, precious stones” (808). These luxurious items which are imported from the East show that the fabulous fantasies and alluring side of the East is based on some degree of observation. To clarify the importance and worth of these goods Krebs states

[t]he most prized spice, pepper, was sold by each individual peppercorn and was worth more, by weight, than gold. During the 11th and 12th centuries local city taxes and rents could be paid in spices, particularly pepper, when a small bag of this spice was worth more than a person’s life. (40)

These precious commodities, which are presented to the West by the East, triggered the imagination of the West. The romances that deal with the East and the Eastern traditions and people, are a part of this imagination, and this imagination is important in defining the West’s stance concerning the East and its riches.

The depictions of a group of people that is not physically distorted or do not possess a behavioural abnormality from the point of view of the West reflect a different, positive perspective of the exotic. The positive representations focus on the fabled wealth of the East and the Easterners. Fabled riches of the East represented in contrast to the other exotic representations reflected the “assumed” derogatory aspects of the East in the romance of *Kyng Alisaunder*. The people of this Eastern land who have and use gold, silver and luxurious clothing, compared to the ones who were only wearing thorns and bushes as garments are dressed like royalty. Hence, the richness and wealth as well as the “proper” attire and appealing physical features are represented in the romance;

On the sonth side, there Ynde maketh ende,  
 Woneth a folk wise and hende:  
 Hy clothen hem with grys and ermyne  
 With golde and siluer and skarlet pers fyne;  
 Faire vesage, and of face bolde;  
 Here hy habben yelewe so golde.  
 Cites hy habben and castels plente.  
 And eten and drynken of grete deyut;  
 None men in the londe of Ynde  
 Ne fareth so wel als ich fynde. (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll. 4984-4992)

This group of people are wise and brave, they are represented as a civilised society, on par with Western standards living on the borders of India. Furthermore, they wear grey fur and ermine fur, which are two indicators of wealth and nobility in medieval Europe. Paul B. Newman, while describing the wedding dress of Princess Philippa, daughter of Henry IV, states “the dress and its sleeves are edged with dark ermine fur” (264). Hence, these people can be compared to the royalty of Europe. Also, in this section of the poem, the climate of south India is not even in question, as the furs were mainly worn in northern Europe to keep the wearer warm, in a tropical environment, there would not be a need for such a dress. This particular representation emphasises the richness of this mentioned people despite climactic differences. Furthermore, the scarlet, as a material, is “the most expensive woollen cloth, often dyed with kermes (the most expensive dye, made from crushed insects that lived on oak trees; produced the colour crimson the most expensive dye)” (Scott 203-204). Their fair skin colour, similar to the Europeans, and blonde hair which was “at this [the Middle Ages] time esteemed a beauty, and saffron was used by the ladies to dye it of a colour ‘odious’ by modern ladies. Elizabeth [I] also made yellow hair fashionable, as hers was of the same tint” (Fairholt 128-129). In addition to their attire and physical features, these people have gold, their richness becomes the central theme of the passage. The East, in this respect, is defined with its gold, hence it has been commodified by the West. In addition to the gold and other riches they have, their castles and cities, which are more known concepts of the people of the Middle Ages as the economic system of the age - feudalism - was based on land. They are, by far, the best faring people in India. The language that is used to represent these rich people when compared to the other representations is neutral, even positive. That is, various representations of the different people with different words, which are mostly negative such as “raw meat eaters, pitch blak,” or people who eat “the flesh of their dead elders,” and these rich people with positive connotations such as “faire visaged, face bolde,” present a wide range of people, increasing the diversity of the encounters with the Easterners. These descriptions not only depict the romance motifs but also reflect the idea of the East according to the Western mind. Through this reflection of characteristics which are both positive and negative in the use of the exotic, the West limited the depiction of the East with certain

representations attributing deformed physical qualities or focusing on the richness of the East. In parallel with the West's reflection of the Eastern exotic, Strickland states

we can observe that medieval engagement with the exotic as a constructed idea facilitated self-identity, controlled cultural fears, aided the process of colonization, normalized the strange (in order to conceptualize the unfamiliar), and problematized the familiar (in order to critique or question received Christian practices). (69)

According to this statement, it is clear that controlling what is exotic and fashioning the identity in accordance with the controlled exoticism is exercising power over the controlled exotic. Furthermore, narrating these aspects of the exotic in these romances makes it a statement of the West which means to have authority and control over the East since the articulation of a subject and producing the discourse provide control over the other.

The descriptions of different races or groups of people from the East in *Kyng Alisaunder* can be argued to be undertaken in two ways. First, these descriptions function as a narrative pattern, which is a repetitive motif throughout a single episode of the romance that goes on for more than a hundred lines, to present the diverse and exotic nature of the people of the East. The second way is to produce the discourse about the East, as Foucault asserts “[d]iscourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it” (101). Hence, the production of discourse through these romances functions both as the reproduction and exercise of power. Different physical aspects and semi-human bodily representations provide a deeper perspective on the differences between the East and the West than the habitual or behavioural ones. The people are depicted with semi-human physical features, and this is also a way to further establish the difference between the West and the East. Such a description is in *Kyng Alisaunder*:

Another folk there is bside;  
Houndynges men clepeth hem wide.  
From the brest to the grounde  
Men hy ben, abouen houndes.  
Berkyng of houndes hy habbe.  
Her honden, withouten gabbe,  
Ben y-shuldred as a fysshe.

And clawed after hound, i-wisse (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll. 4962-4969)

The striking features of these people, primarily having the head of a hound, and barking instead of talking provide an extraordinary representation of exoticism. Although they have the body of a human being, they possess the aspects of other animals alongside human features such as the shoulders of a fish and claws of a hound. However, the most prominent non-human feature that these people present is their voice. Their medium of expression is barking, yet they are still called as a tribe of people. Still, this description of the tribe serves as an example of the representation of the other by the West. The West provides a distorted image to support its unmentioned normality.

The representation of the abnormal, especially the depiction of the part animal, part human Easterners, should also be studied with the Western concept of the order of beings. In his seminal book *The Great Chain of Being* Arthur O. Lovejoy discusses how the idea of The Chain of Being is formed. He starts from the Platonic philosophy and continues with Neoplatonism and Scholastic form of thought. Referring to St. Thomas Aquinas, Lovejoy formulates his argument that the universe is a great chain and only through the representation of absence of it can be perfect. Defining the position of mankind in the middle of the chain, this idea articulates that God is at the top of the chain followed by angelic beings who are representatives of the soul or the essence. Mankind, being in the middle, possesses both soul and body. Animals, which are followed by plants, represent only the body and the basic instincts (Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being* 78-84). Creating the combination of man and animal, the romance ramifies the concept of being. Exotic depiction of the half animal, half man innately places this creature lower on the scale of the Chain. The general view in *The Great Chain of Being* is that the universal truth and goodness need their oppositions to perceive the perfectness of the supreme essence of being. Hence, through the representation of the beastly, animalistic, and the abnormal man, *Kyng Alisaunder* puts emphasis on the normality of the West.

The romance *Kyng Alisaunder* not only describes the differences in human anatomy, but also gives the depictions of the processes of aging. The concept of aging itself is a part

of human anatomy and has different indications. One of the most common and well-known indicators is the greying of hair. Unless there is a health problem or different genetic heritage, the normal process of greying follows the age. However, in *Kyng Alisaunder*, the hair of the people and the changing colour of the hair present an almost reverse representation of the aging process as the colour of their hair turns into brown, not grey as they age. Although it is not natural for the East as well, since aging is a universal process, this reverse aging, according to the romance, is an exotic point for the European audience, as this change of colour can portray an unfamiliar aspect of the represented East, which is unnatural and exotic to the West:

Another folk woneth hem bisyde,  
 A riche folk of mychel pride:  
 Of nyntene wyntres and an half,  
 Hy ben hore al so a wolf;  
 And when hy ben of thritty yaar,  
 Hy ben broun of hare, as hy weren aar;  
 And so ay, by the ten yere,  
 The coloure chaunges of her here.  
 None men so longe libbe  
 As don hy and her sibbe. (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll. 5028-38)

These rich and proud people experience a metamorphosis as they get old. Having grey hair at the age of nineteen and a half, these people enter another phase in their life. For the remaining days of their life, they have a change of colour in their hair every ten years. Their long life span is also emphasised in the romance, these people experience a transformation similar to the creature called Phoenix, which dies in flames and respawns from her own ashes. Since these people change the colour of their hair, as they get older and older, their transformation is circular, like that of the Phoenix. The mythical creature Phoenix experiences drastic changes and death every five hundred years, and rises from its ashes (Hassig 72-73). Hence, the constant change of appearance and long lifespan are parallel to each other. Furthermore, it should be noted that, the changing colour of the hair is usually associated with old age and wisdom, especially when it is turning grey or white. However, this representation of the early age with grey hair completely juxtaposes the Western norms of aging and wisdom with a different image. To construct an identity, the self, in this case the West, as well as the opposite -the East- must be identified clearly and the borders between the self and the

other should be clearly defined. Loomba states that “[i]n medieval and early modern Europe, Christian identities were constructed in opposition to Islam, Judaism, or heathenism (which loosely incorporated all other religions, nature worship, paganism and animism)” (106). Hence, the text represents grey haired teenagers and brown haired adults. Likewise, the life span of the mentioned people is longer than everyone, as stated in the romance, adding to the exotic identity of the other.

The extraordinary physical representation of Eastern people is not only limited to unusual anthropomorphic figures like hound headed people in the lines 4964-4965 of *Kyng Alisaunder*. Also, the depiction of people as disfigured or lacking certain organs or limbs builds up the image of the East as the monstrous, less than human, and extraordinary, which contributes to their construction as the other. Hence, another tribe of people in *Kyng Alisaunder* shows that physical descriptions also enhance a sense of wholeness and completeness of the West. It is stated that,

Another folk there is ferliche,  
Also blak so any pycche;  
An eighe hy habbeth and no mo,  
And a foot on to goo.  
With his foot whan hyt ryneth  
He wrieth his body, and wanne it shineth;  
For his foot so mychel is,  
It may his body wryen, i-wiss. (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll. 4972-4976)

These people lack one foot and as the one foot people they differ from the Western people. Contrary to the natural physical representation, these people display particular characteristics which lead to an idea of incompleteness when compared to the man of the West, who have two feet. Despite the fact that they have one foot, its size is so great that it can protect their body when it rains or they can cover their body with it when the sun shines. Focusing on the foot, the romance does not go into detail about one eye, yet, it can be concluded that the concept of one eye, like a cyclops - the objects of ancient Greek mythology (Hamilton 105). Thus the more interesting and exotic fact of having one gigantic foot is foregrounded. These descriptions lead to the idea that the people of the East have different bodies and bodily features, they have distinctive body functions or physical characteristics when compared to the European people. Skin colour, also, is

used as a bodily feature to discriminate people. However, the physical difference and the skin colour, push the negative aspects of these people even further. This example might be seen as an extreme one, yet it should be noted that “[i]n the early Middle Ages, the dominant literate culture – male, European, and Christian – often represented itself through its comparison to exotic, fantastic beings, monsters, and monstrous humans” (Mittman 332). As Mittman supports the kind of comparison used in the romance *Kyng Alisaunder*, states and gives details about the fantastic and exotic, and leaves the Western side out of the picture to arouse curiosity in the Western audience about the exotic East and thus it emphasises the exotic differences of the East.

The romance of *Kyng Alisaunder* provides multiple aspects while representing the Eastern people. Neutral representations, with nothing extraordinary either in the positive or negative sense, address both physical and behavioural aspects of different people or provide a wider perspective for the exotic. Hence, these varying representations do not necessarily create a cohesion between physical and behavioural depictions. However, even if these physical and behavioural representations do not correlate, they still provide clues about the cultural practices of the East as seen by the West:

Another folk there is bisyde  
That habbeth furchures swithe wide;  
Eighttenc fete hy ben longe,  
Swithe lighth, and swithe stronge.  
In the londe, by the forest,  
There hem liketh wonyiig best. (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll. 4993-4998)

The people described here have long legs, they are fast and strong, furthermore, their size is extraordinary—eighteen feet—which makes them physically outside the norms that the reader is accustomed to. These physical aspects of these people, which basically depict them as giants, do not have any implications which are not associated with the fact that they live near the forest or the habits described in the following lines:

Barefoot hy gon withonten shoou,  
Michel wightnesse hy mowen don.  
Every wilde dere astore,  
Hy mowen by cours ernen tofore.  
Wymmen there ben mychel and belde;  
Whenne hy habbeth ben of fiftene wyntre elde,

Children hy beren verrayment;  
 That ben of body fair and gent:  
 Ac no womman of that contrey  
 Ne lyueth no lenger, par mafey,  
 Then she be of twenty wyntres age,  
 For than she gooth to dethes cage. (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll. 4999-5011)

These people are barefooted, which again implies that they are a backward society in the eyes of the West when compared to the Western codes of dress which requires and symbolises various levels according to attire as mentioned above. In addition to their physical strength, the description of the women of these people, who reproduce at the age of fifteen, giving birth to many children, illustrates the reproductive capabilities of these people. This depiction shows that they have only been described on the basis of their breeding capacities, and it is one of the few representations of the women in the romance. The way these women are represented is important. First the Amazons, and, at the other end of the scale, these women whose lifespan is just twenty years, are presented. This shows the large variety of beings that can be found in the exotic East. Yet, the striking point about these people is how the women of the tribe die at the age of twenty. Considering the condition of women and the general life expectancy of the Middle Ages twenty years was not that drastic, still it is far less than the European ones. Shahar states that “[a]n analysis of the ducal families in England between 1330 and 1475 showed that at 20 the life expectation of men was 31.5 more years and for women 31.1 more years” (34). Thus, the description which includes both physical and cultural aspects of these people delivers an ambiguous image as it discusses the bodily aspects and the conditions of women. This ambiguity is the result of extraordinarily fecund representation of the females which signifies the physical capabilities of their bodies, and the age of their death which is uncommon for healthy people. The condition of women was problematic also in Europe in the Middle Ages; the age of death was as young as twenty. However, the women in the Middle Ages “was to be the civiliser, the refiner, the teacher of good manners” (Hayden 282). Furthermore, her duties included “making the garments, preparing the food, attending the cattle, ploughing, sowing, reaping, grinding, baking, and brewing” (Hayden 284). Hence, reducing the role of women only to breeding, contradicts the Western approach to the females.

Regarding the same duality between cultural and physical attributes which are reflected in *Kyng Alisaunder*, the poet furthers the exotic descriptions with another ambiguous presentation of a group of people. Edward Said, in order to clarify how the Europeans used non-Europeans to define their own superiority, states that

Orientalism is never far from what Denys Hay has called the idea of Europe, a collective notion identifying “us” Europeans as against all “those” non-Europeans, and indeed it can be argued that the major component in European culture is precisely what made that culture hegemonic both in and outside Europe: the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European people and cultures. (Orientalism 7)

Hence, to identify “us” the West first identifies an ambiguous East, as in the following extract:

There biside is a folk ful wys,  
And proude men of mychel prys.  
Hy connen hem shilde from al sorough;  
For hy arisen erly amorwe,  
And gon to the sees stronde;  
(On on foot al day hy stonde,)  
By the wawen, and by the sterren,  
Hy juggen thanne alle werren;  
And hy connen by swiche boke,  
From euery kontek her londe loke.  
Thise men han selkouthe wyues. (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll. 5011-5021)

These people, again as the previous group, are defined with their pride and worth which can shield them from all sorrow. Furthermore, the romance represents these people to show their customs such as reading the stars or watching the waves to read their fortunes. All of these descriptions, which are not extraordinary so far, are followed by a biblical trait, which is the mention of talking or hairy babies;

And childem bot ones in al her lyues.  
Alsome as that childe y-borne is  
It hath wytt or har I wys,  
And may speken to his dame:  
Now is this a selkouthe game. (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll. 5022-5026)

Religion, Christianity, is one of the primary sources behind the romance genre. The effect of the Church as an institution and Christianity as a religion over the social and cultural life of the West can also be observed in this romance. The romance depicts talking babies, similar to the miracle of baby Jesus, which is exotic and extraordinary. As the romance attributes such an aspect to a group of people of the East, as Jesus was a Middle Eastern born in Bethlehem, the associated miraculous exoticness is also transferred to the text.

Another reflection of the differences between the Westerners and the Easterners is the way the giants are associated with the Saracens. The supernatural representations, creating awe and wonder as well as fear of the unknown serve as a motif in the romances. The gargantuan physical aspects and superhuman strength not only create an exotic enemy, but also present an anchor point for the binary opposition. In addition to their exotic characteristics, Mittman and Kim argue that these giant figures were also perceived outside of the literary context, as real figures that were to be faced on the battlefield

The ease with which such merging could occur powerfully voices the fact that representations of the monstrous cannot be dismissed as simply literary, or simply mythological, fabulous, imaginary: on the contrary, the anxieties articulated through these representations reflect both medieval belief in their 'real' existence and the danger that those anxieties could and would be played out in violent interaction with the real people represented through them. (333)

In romances such as *The Sultan of Babylon*, *Bevis of Hamptoun* or *Octavian* the Saracens always have a giant to fight on their side. However, these giants are defeated by Christian knights, which adds to their courage and valour all the more. Reflecting on the strength of the West and the weakness of East, Said declares that "Orientalism can also express the strength of the West and the Orient's weakness—as seen by the West" and states that "[s]uch strength and such weakness are as intrinsic to Orientalism" (45). The seeming strength of the East as reflected in the concept of giants serves as a glorifying feature for the West as the giants of these romances usually have demonic origins. In *The Sultan of Babylon* such a giant is introduced:

This Astrogot of Ethiop  
 He was a kinge of grete strenghte  
 There was none suche in Europe  
 So stronge and so longe in lenghte  
 I trowe he were a develes sone  
 Of Belsabbuis lyne (*The Sultan of Babylon* ll. 352-358)

Astrogot, being one of the giants of the romance, represented as the son of a devil, specifically Beelzebub or Baal, an ancient Babylonian god, becomes a devil in Christian mythology (ll. 352-358). Another giant from the same romance named “Alogolfre” is described with the words “[h]is skynne was blake and harde” and he had “tuskes like a bore” (*The Sultan of Babylon* 2197-2199). The black skin of the Giant Alogolfre shows the awareness of ethnicity in the Middle Ages. The basic racial understanding of us and them is depicted with the reference to the colour of the skin. Furthermore, the colour black is associated with evil and hell, which adds to the alienation of the Saracen. Moreover, the hard skin is something inhuman and different. The boar like teeth “tusks,” lower these giants on the scale of the Great Chain of Being, which removes their human aspects. These sub-human corporeal representations not only refer to the monstrous nature of the giants but also present them as formidable foes to be defeated by the knights, as these giants are fated to be defeated like Goliath is defeated by David. The defeat of Goliath created a strong leader and the defeat of the romance giants create heroes. That is, the heroes of the romances have to prove themselves to a larger and stronger opponent just as their biblical counterpart did against the giant Goliath. As Cohen argues, “[r]omance was a literature that created a mode of being, transubstantiating social reality” (*Of Giants* 79). The exotic representations associated with the giants promoted awe and fear. Thus, the confrontation between the Western man and the Eastern giant becomes the confrontation between the reasonable - normal and the unreasonable - exotic.

The case of the giants, however, is not limited, to simple enmity. Their function differs from romance to romance, and a significant example of a different function of the giants in a romance can be observed in *Bevis of Hampton*. Ascopart, the giant in the romance, is not a one sided, shallow, enemy figure. Still the first giant to appear is an enemy; he is portrayed as the stereotypical giant figure of the Middle English romances. The

introduction of the giant with the depiction of his belief and military feats presents him as follows:

Me lord," she seide, "is a geaunt  
And leveth on Mahoun and Tervagaunt  
And felleth Cristene men to grounde,  
For he hateth hem ase hounde!" (*Bevis of Hampton* ll. 1845-1848)

Most giants in the Middle Ages "enjoy a long and varied history in Scripture and medieval romance. They are depicted usually as villains, apostates, arrogant, threatening monsters" (Herzman, Drake, Salisbury 332). The only known friendly giant is "St. Christopher, a benevolent giant, who is said to have carried the Christ child across a treacherous river" (Herzman, Drake, Salisbury 332). However, the giant in *Bevis of Hampton* is depicted as a Saracen, who believes in Mahoun and Tervagaunt, who are the representation of the gods of the Saracens. Furthermore, he, the giant, is an enemy of Christianity who hates Christian soldiers and kills them. Thus, Bevis slays the giant and overcomes the Saracen other, the exotic and supernatural enemy.

Ascopart, on the other hand, functions differently than the giants in the romances, in that, it performs his role on multiple levels observed in his first meeting, submission to, and betrayal of Bevis. His introduction provides further information about his character as a giant;

"Me name," a sede, "is Ascopard:  
Garci me sente hiderward,  
For to bringe this quene aghen  
And thee, Beves, her of-slen.  
Icham Garci is chaumpioun  
And was idrive out of me toun;  
Al for that ich was so lite,  
Everi man me wolde smite;  
Ich was so lite and so merugh,  
Everi man me clepede dwerugh,  
And now icham in this londe,  
Iwoxe mor, ich understonde,  
And strengere than other tene,  
And that schel on us be sene;  
I schel thee sle her, yif I mai!" (*Bevis of Hampton* ll. 2617-2632)

Ascopard introduces himself as a knight would introduce himself to another knight. He states his intention and aim, gives reference to his overlord by claiming to be his champion. Claiming that he is the champion of Garci, Ascopard comes out of the castle, to fight. It is also notable that the Giant Ascopard is called 'dwarf' by his own kind in his own land, but when he fights with humans, he is far greater and stronger (ll. 2628-2630). Furthermore, he boasts of his strength, which creates an epic-like scene, where a champion would boast about his achievements and lineage. Thus, Ascopard challenges Bevis to a duel. This challenge is no ordinary statement of enmity between the hero and the monster. It is an encounter of two different worlds, metaphorically a fight between the East and the West. Since Ascopard is a giant, which makes him both physically and racially the other, as he challenges Bevis he challenges the concept of knighthood with it. Also, as Cohen, quoting the *Middle English Dictionary*, states that the name "Ascopart is a proper noun that designates 'a desert people of the Near East'" (*Of Giants* 173). Hence, the result of the conflict between Bevis and Ascopard becomes more important in this aspect;

Beves prikede Arondel a side,  
 Aghen Ascopard he gan ride  
 And smot him on the scholder an high,  
 That his spere al to-fligh,  
 And Ascopard with a retret  
 Smot after Beves a dent gret,  
 And with is o fot a slintte  
 And fel with is owene dentte.  
 Beves of is palfrai alighte  
 And drough his swerd anon righte  
 And wolde have smiten of is heved;  
 Josian besoughte him, it were beleved:  
 "Sire," she seide, "so God thee save,  
 Let him liven and ben our knave!"  
 "Dame, a wile us betrai!"  
 "Sire, ich wil ben is bourgh, nai!"  
 Thar a dede Beves omage  
 And becom is owene page. (*Bevis of Hampton* ll. 2533-2550)

Being the knight, Bevis spurs his horse. Being on a horse, as a knight against a giant on foot, creates a clear division between the two; the knight is the symbol of Christian Europe while the giant is an exotic, supernatural fighter representing the East because he is fighting for Garci the king of Dabilent, an Eastern land. Hence, the defeat at the

hand of Bevis is inevitable and the fight results in the surrender of Ascobart. In the aftermath of the surrender, having been accepted as the squire of Bevis, “Ascobart ineptly serves a young hero struggling to establish his chivalric singularity” (Cohen *Of Giants*, 172). This servitude, also can be interpreted as the taming of the exotic and untamed East, civilising the monster and asserting control over it.

The betrayal of Ascopard in the romance *Bevis of Hampton* presents the stereotypical “irrational, depraved (fallen)” (Said 40) Oriental. Furthermore, Akbari states “the irascible Saracen was as much a product of the Oriental climate that was natural to him as of the deviant ‘law of Mohammat’ to which he was obedient” (3). Ascopard, is bodily exotic and as a character is represented in accordance with the Orientalist representations as “irrational and depraved.” The betrayal of Ascopard and its reason is given in the following lines;

Beves lep on is rounci  
 And made is swein Terri,  
 That Saber is sone is;  
 And whan Ascopard wiste this,  
 Whiche wei hii wolde take,  
 Aghen to Mombraunt he gan schake,  
 To betraie Beves, as ye mai se,  
 For he was falle in poverté,  
 For, whan a man is in poverté falle,  
 He hath fewe frendes with alle. (*Bevis of Hampton* ll. 3585-3594)

Bevis, before taking his leave to reclaim his lands and wealth, makes Terri, his steward and protector’s son, his squire. Although the romance states differently, Ascopard, most probably out of jealousy, rushes to Mombraunt, to Kyng Yvor - king of Saracens - and betrays Bevis by taking his wife and newborn babies as hostage. The romance presents this betrayal as the result of Bevis’ poverty. Herzman, Drake, and Salisbury state that “Ascobart’s betrayal is ostensibly caused by Bevis’ fall into poverty, but is just as likely a jealous response.[...] Nonetheless, Ascobart does have trouble maintaining credibility, despite his good deeds” (337). Ascobart’s betrayal is victory or freedom for the monstrous and the uncivilised. Despite the efforts to tame and civilise the giant, the unruly, irrational and unreasonable nature of the monster, metaphorically the East, will not yield completely. Hence, the untameable nature of the East necessitates the conquest

and civilising attempts all the more as it stands as a challenge for the so-called civilised West. Cohen asserts that

Ascopart's true identity as monster has simply reasserted itself, for all of Bevis's humanizing influence. Perhaps his words at his baptism are all too true: "Icham to meche to be cristine!" Like Caliban, Ascopart may be of a nature nurture cannot transform, a body that illustrates the ultimate incompatibility of the chivalric subject with that which it defines itself against. (*Of Giants* 175)

Due to the inability to comply with the Western norms, in this case chivalry, the giant suffers the same fate as the others as defined by the Orientalist discourse. His supernatural and exotic figure further permeates his very being, making him impossible to comply with and totally adapt to the rules of Western society.

The exotic representations in the romances that are studied show that the aspects of extraordinary bodily representations and different cultural practices act as the negative representation of the East, and provide support for the West to perform affirmative occidentalism. The West uses this to produce its own image. Thus, the exotic plays a crucial role in the formation of Western identity. As Barron argues "[t]he scanty records of civilization suggest that Man has told himself stories from the beginning of time, partly for the simple pleasure of it, partly in order to understand himself and the world about him" (6). Similarly, the description of the East and Easterners through an orientalist perspective in romances, creates an understanding of the Western world and its place compared to the East. It further leads to "knowledge that is part of an overall campaign of self-affirmation, belligerency and outright war" (Said xiv).

The idea of the East, both as a concept and as a geographical location, alongside with its inhabitants, has been the central element to Orientalism. The alien landscapes, mythical places, deserts, jungle like forests of the Indian subcontinent became the central point of attraction as the climate and the landscape of the Western audience, quite different than the representations of these exotic landscapes. As Said argues "Orientalism is premised upon exteriority, that is, on the fact that the Orientalist, poet or scholar, makes the Orient speak, describes the Orient, renders its mysteries plain for and to the West" (20-21). Accordingly, the exoticness of the East, as a region, is revealed within either literary texts or in the works of the scholars of the Orient. The examples from romances

presenting the Eastern landscape should not only be taken as literary settings but also as the corresponding other, as Said states, “[t]he two geographical entities [East and West] [...] support and to an extent reflect each other” (5) and contribute to the formation of the identity of the West as a geographical identity, as its cultural identity. As Suzanne Conklin Akbari argues “The use of geographical knowledge in the exercise of power can be seen [...] in the basic, binary opposition of East and West fundamental to the manifestation of Orientalism” (22). This fundamental expression of Orientalism, the Occident’s positioning itself by defining the position of the Orient as exotic, shows the use of power through discourse.

The representations of the geographical aspects of the East, especially the Middle East since the West and the East had contested borders in this region, were always given with the name of the cities and locations, which were familiar to the audience in the Middle Ages as the Crusades provided these bits of information about the Middle East and Levant. The romance, *Richard Coeur de Lyon*, narrates the crusade of Richard the Lionheart and in the process it gives the names and descriptions of the disputed lands of the Middle East:

Before that tyme a gret cuntre  
That was beyonde the Grykkssche see,  
Acres, Surry, and fele landes,  
Were in Crystene mennes handes,  
And the croys that Cryst was on ded,  
That bought us alle fro the qued,  
And all the cuntre of Bethlem,  
And the town of Jerusalem,  
Off Nazareth and off Jerycho,  
And alle Galilee alsoo. (*Richard Coeur de Lyon* ll. 1261- 70)

Creating the vision of the East, the romance discusses the great landscape beyond the Greek Sea (modern Aegean Sea) and goes on naming Christian sovereign states of the Holy Land. Before giving the descriptions of the Christian states of the Holy Land, the landscape between the Holy Lands and the Greek Sea goes unmentioned. Said, discussing the aims of Orientalism, states that it “is a field with considerable geographical ambition” (50). This geographical ambition results in describing the Orient with “indiscriminate size plus an almost infinite capacity for subdivision” and the

ambiguity of these descriptions as a “confusing amalgam of imperial vagueness and precise detail” (50). Thus, as *Richard Coeur de Lyon* mentions the lands between the Greek Sea and the Holy Land, while giving precise detail about the Kingdoms of the Levant. Still, the representation of the Holy Land, being a distant Christian oasis in the middle of the Saracen desert, in itself becomes an exotic geography since it is different than the geographical aspects of Western Europe.

In the romance *Kyng Alisaunder*, mythical locations, which were believed to be out of the limits of this world, are presented and mentioned as probable locations that can be seen. Alexander the Great’s venture into unknown lands of the East results in his finding the great images of Hercules as narrated in the following lines:

Hy comen to the on werldes ende ;  
 And there hy founden thing of mynde :  
 Of pure golde two grete ymages  
 In the cee stonden on brasen stages ;  
 After Ercules hy weren y-mad,  
 And after his fader of golde sad. (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll.5582-5587)

These golden statues, representing the demigod Hercules, son of Zeus, also show the fabulous wealth and riches of the East that reaches back to mythical times. Furthermore, these statues should not be confused with “the Pillars of Hercules, which were anchored by the demigod on either side of the Strait of Gibraltar” (Frojmovic and Karkov 134). This mythical and exotic landscape, honouring a demigod, stands close to another mythical place, the Garden of Eden, creating the image of an East which is the cradle of humanity, civilisation, and wealth while being obscure, unknown and intriguing. Hence, the attribution of these aspects to the East represents the important side of the East.

The fear and awe that the unknown represents are negated and reduced to a sense of wonder and exotic – in the sense of being unfamiliar - through the narration of the East in the romances. As the distance grows between the West and the East, the representation of the East takes a different turn, it becomes more mythical than real. In the romance *Kyng Alisaunder* the reflection of the Garden of Eden is given as follows:

Beyonde the dragouns, gripes, and beste,  
 Paradys terrene is righth in the Est,  
 Where God Almighty, thorough his grace,  
 Fourmed Adam our fader that was. (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll. 5684-87)

Alexander overcomes various enemies which are represented as dragons, griffons and other beasts. Hence, the mythical and exotic creatures again promote the existence of the exotic in the East. Beyond these monsters lies the Garden of Eden, in the easternmost part of the world. The biblical representation of the East, incorporated into the romance, also presented “[o]n world maps, this can be seen in the prominent position given to the Earthly Paradise: located in the extreme east, its rivers extend throughout the world, eternally linking the populated world to the now-forbidden Garden” (Akbari 52). This representation of the location of paradise on Earth emancipates the imagination of the audience, thus an imaginary Orient can be formed to contain an achievable heaven for the West.

Geographical definitions and differences of the Orient and the Occident form an understanding of the self for both parts of the opposition. However, the Occident, by defining the Orient, exercises power over it and reforms the Orient as an exotic, sensuous, unreasonable other. Said, discussing the creation of the Orient through Occidental intervention states that

A line is drawn between two continents. Europe is powerful and articulate; Asia is defeated and distant. Aeschylus *represents* Asia, makes her speak in the person of the aged Persian queen, Xerxes' mother. It is Europe that articulates the Orient; this articulation is the prerogative, not of a puppet master, but of a genuine creator, whose life-giving power represents, animates, constitutes the otherwise silent and dangerous space beyond familiar boundaries. (57)

The Occident being the genuine creator employs its apparatuses such as literature to define the borders of the Orient. Thus, the adversities the romances pronounce and the definitions the romances provide enable the West to create its authority over the East. Bryan S. Turner explains,

The Orient is constructed in western ideology as a permanent and enduring object of knowledge in opposition to the Occident as its negative and alternative pole.

Orientalism creates a stationary East through the essentialisation of the divergent cultural phenomena of oriental societies into a unitary, integrated and coherent object for scrutiny of western literary and scientific discourse. (3)

The position of the Orient, placed by the Occident, both geographically and metaphorically, is a place for scrutiny. The West can scrutinize the exotic places and the exotic inhabitants that belong to the East and deliver its judgement while forming its self.

In conclusion, in the idea of exoticism in the physical representations of the Easterners and the idea of exoticism in the representation of the geographical aspects create the binary opposition of the Western norms. Physiologically, the deformed or different representations of the Eastern bodies become a cornerstone for Western normality. The dichotomy between these representations of the deformed and malfunctioning bodies of the East, and the Western representation of the knight provides the necessary reason and drive to defend the identity of the West. Furthermore, presentation of the unnatural, mythical and exotic landscapes and geography of the East with varying climates, structures and riches stimulates the West to discover and plunder the East. Justifying this drive with the self-claimed representation of the superiority over the East, the West defines and dominates the East.

## **CHAPTER II: THE REPRESENTATION OF THE EAST AS THE CULTURAL, RELIGIOUS OTHER, THE ENEMY**

The exotic representation of the East in the romances, which is studied in the first chapter, illustrates how the different representations of the East created the East in the Western perspective. The religious and cultural differences between the East and the West and the representation of the East as the enemy in the romances from the Orientalist perspective will be the focus of this chapter. The romances as the popular literature of the period can be considered as the reflection of the view of the East from the Western perspective. Hudson states that “[t]he Middle English romances are potentially popular literature. Mediators made them more accessible - in this sense the stories have been popularised” (39). Since the Orientalist ideology can be spread through mass media and popular entertainment (Said 26), the romances were the vehicles through which the West reflected its ideal self in the form of the chivalrous knight but at the same time the Western ideal was set against the East. Their main function as entertainment was supported by various perceptions about the East, referring to its religious, cultural and political difference. The aspects of Orientalism that define the boundaries that are set by the West to define and control the East can be observed and exemplified through these romances. The repeated pattern of representing differences such as religious practices as in the example of the polytheistic image of Islam, different representations of the female figures as strong and having the power to exercise their will as opposed to the ideal concept of the submissive European Christian woman and the East as the final and ultimate antagonist against the West can be observed in the romances. Hence, this chapter aims to illustrate the Orientalist representations of the East which is constructed by the West. Said states that “[c]ontinued investment made Orientalism, as a system of knowledge about the Orient, an accepted grid for filtering through the Orient into Western consciousness, just as that same investment multiplied – indeed, made truly productive – the statements proliferating out from Orientalism into the general culture” (6). The Orient was not directly accepted into the consciousness of the West, it had to be shaped and reshaped, then reduced to something that the West could control and manipulate.

To observe the representation of cultural-religious differences and enmity between the East and the West a number of romances will be useful in exemplifying and analysing the context of Orientalism in the Middle Ages such as *King Of Tars*, *Sir Isumbras*, *Sir Ferumbras*, *Siege of Melayne*, *Bevis of Hampton*, *King Horn*, *Guy of Warwick*, *Richard Coeur De Lion*, *Knight of Courtesy and the Fair Lady of Faguel*, *Sultan of Babylon*, and *Kyng Alisaunder*. These non-Arthurian romances have been chosen as they depict the East as the religious other; they represent Islam as a polytheistic religion, they represent dominant females, and they include the Crusades as their themes and portray worthy Saracen heroes who are to be converted to Christianity. Accordingly, multiple perspectives of religious conquest and conversion, military conquest, enemies of the crusaders, female figures with willpower and agency, and the religious other are at the centre. Religious, cultural and military perspectives of Orientalism, which define and limit different parts of the East, positively reinforce the Western identity which has been in the process of making. As stated, the Orient has never been exempted from the Western gaze, in fact, it has always been its primary focus since it is both geographically and culturally adjacent to the West. Thus, these romances give the representation of the East by the West, from an Orientalist point of view.

The binary point of view of Orientalism, which is an explanation for a two-sided interaction where one of the sides is dominant or exercising power over the other, becomes the main point to explain the representation of the East in the Middle English romances. Said states that

from its earliest modern history to the present, Orientalism as a form of thought for dealing with the foreign has typically shown the altogether regrettable tendency of any knowledge based of such hard-and-fast distinctions as 'East' and 'West': to channel though into a West or an East compartment. Because this tendency is right at the center of Orientalist theory, practice and values found in the West, the sense of Western power over the Orient is taken for granted as having the status of scientific truth. (46)

The articulation of the idea that any information produced by the West about the East achieves the status of truth can also be applied to the romances that contributed to the construction of the East. As stated the romance genre is one of the channels through which the East is brought to the West. For that reason, the romances are prime examples

of the reflection of Orientalism in the Middle Ages as they convey the ideas of their period to larger audiences. Furthermore, the representation of the East is not limited to romances. Travel writing and religious tracts also depicted the East and the Easterners in detail both realistically and fantastically.

The Orient, from the Orientalist point of view, mainly existed as the cultural other. Excluding the enmity and religious conflicts, the cultural differences between the East and the West accumulated through several representations of the East with substandard reflection of the real Eastern traditions. In the romances, the representations of these cultural traits were some distorted forms and variations of the Western traditions. Since it is the West, who defines or describes the East in these romances the portrayal of the East can never be objective. In fact, Dagenais and Greer state that

The story of the Middle Ages has largely been told from a northern European perspective, a perspective that pushes the Iberian Middle Ages to an exotic, orientalized fringe. Thus the grammar of the Middle Ages allow statements like 'Spain never developed true feudalism' or 'the epic tradition in Spain is relatively poor.' These seem natural. They sound authoritative, disinterested. But were we to make a statement like 'France never developed true Taifa states' or 'the Kharja tradition in medieval England remains relatively poor,' we would be greeted with bewildered looks, at best. (440)

It is the West that diagnoses the problems, it is the West that sets the norm, hence anything unlike their perceptions is not a cultural standard that needs to be studied. The superimposition of the Western values over the East, and then criticising through the romances and hagiographic works promote the Orientalist ideology, and in turn this ideology both limits and relegates Eastern culture. Heffernan states that "there is remarkable Oriental influence discernible in medieval romances enough, in fact, to call for a reconsideration of the textual exchanges as well as other cultural interactions linking English and European romance" (2). Even though there is Oriental influence on the West, the projection of Western culture over the Orient dominates in the genre.

The difference of religion in the Middle Ages defined almost every aspect of the relation between the East and the West. Religious unity of Europe in the Middle Ages became the infrastructure of what will be Western identity. Loomba states that "[i]n medieval and early modern Europe, Christian identities were constructed in opposition

to Islam, Judaism, or heathenism (which loosely incorporated all other religions, nature worship, paganism and animism)” (106). One of the reasons that the romance exists is the chivalric ideal, which has one of its three roots in Christianity. Along with military prowess and courtly love, Christianity is the foundation of chivalry (Barber 95). Hence, through the chivalric tradition the romance genre employs religion and religious conflicts as its motifs. Romances included religious patterns, which indicates the importance given to Christianity. The other beliefs were mainly discarded as heathenism which generally included the representation of Islam. Despite the fact that Islam is strictly monotheistic, it is represented as a polytheistic religion. Islam is assigned pagan elements in romances like *The Sultan of Babylon* or *The Siege of Milan*, usually a trilogy of gods, namely Mahoon - or a variant of the name Muhammad - Apollo and Tervagaunt. By setting a trilogy of gods as if to match the trinity of Christianity, in a subversive way, romance creates a common ground for the discussion of religion. Menocal states that “[t]he view Europeans held of the religion itself was one that not only did not reflect the fundamentals of Islam, such as its strong and basic monotheism, but that assumed it to be either a pagan religion or a Christian heresy” (44). In the romances *King of Tars* and *Sir Isumbras*, the polytheistic representation of Islam promotes a reflection of it that emphasises the falsity that is attributed to Islamic belief.

*King of Tars* is a romance which predominantly promotes the Christian faith as the supreme reality. Furthermore, as Elias also points out, to emphasise the supremacy of the Christian belief this romance includes the Saracen other (43). In the romance, the Sultan of Damascus falls in love with the daughter of a Christian King of Tars who refuses the marriage on the grounds that he is not a Christian. The Sultan of Damascus, enraged, razes King of Tars’ city and kills his men, in the end, the Princess accepts to marry him to save the lives of Christians. Before the consummation of their marriage, the Sultan asks the Princess to convert to his own religion, which is Islam, although not named, which is misrepresented. The Princess accepts Islam but she is still a Christian at heart. After they consummate their marriage, the Princess gives birth to a lump of meat, which angers the Sultan as he claims this is the result of the deception of the Princess about her conversion to Islam. The Princess urges the Sultan to pray to his

gods to give form to this formless abomination to which the Sultan obliges and prays to his gods at the temple. This ends in failure and the Princess gets the lump of meat baptised after which it miraculously becomes the most beautiful baby ever born. After this miracle, the Sultan converts to Christianity and declares war on all his lords and barons, who refused to convert to Christianity, with the help of his Christian father-in-law.

It is clear that the motif of religion is on the foreground. For the glorification of Christianity, it is not simply enough to praise the virtues of this religion, there is also a need for antagonism. Since the concepts of Hell and Satan were already present in Christianity, a new challenge had to be presented. Hence Islam is introduced as a polytheistic religion. Strickland states that “[i]n both medieval art and literature, and better than any other exotic group, Saracens embody the idea of the ‘foreign’ as a bearer of physical, cultural, and religious difference that ultimately facilitates self-knowledge” (66). In the romance *King of Tars*, the Sultan of Damascus is physically, culturally and religiously different hence, he becomes the antagonist. Thus, Christianity saves both the Sultan’s body and soul. This particular transition illustrates the effect of religion on every aspect of medieval life. As Hornstein argues, “the *King of Tars* and the historical analogues which clarify its subject matter illustrate the kind of literary result one would expect from European interests, both economic and religious, in the East” (404).

*King of Tars* portrays religious conflict through a confrontation and the transformation of the physical body. Calkin claims that “[t]he relationship between individuals’ physical appearances and their religious affiliations was very much a concern in the later Middle Ages” (219). As Calkin suggests, *The King of Tars* depicts a black Saracen Sultan, whose skin colour changes to white after his conversion. Hence, the beginning of the romance focuses primarily on the religious conflict as the Saracen Sultan wishes to marry a Christian princess:

The los of hir gan spring wide  
In other londes bi ich a side,  
So the soudan herd it say.  
Him thought his hert it brast ofive  
Bot yif he might have hir to wive

That was so feir a may. (*King of Tars* ll. 19-24)

The fame of the lady has spread so wide that upon hearing the fairness of her complexion the Sultan falls madly in love with her. Introducing the core of the conflict through a love affair serves to create a part of the problem while the different religions play a greater role in this conflict. The reaction against the marriage offer of a Saracen represents not only the reaction of King of Tars but also reflects the general representation of Islam in the eyes of the West as a rejected, heretical and unacceptable faith:

Bi Him that dyed on the rode,  
 Ich wald arst spille min hert blode  
 In bateyl to ben yslawe.  
 Y nold hir give a Sarazin  
 For alle the lond that is mine.  
 The devel him arst to drawe,  
 Bot sche wil with hir gode wille  
 Be wedded to him, hirselve to spille.  
 Hir thoughtes nought Y no knawe, (*King Of Tars* ll. 40-48)

Swearing an oath on Jesus Christ, the King promises to spill his own blood before giving his daughter to a heathen. The distinction between the two religions sets up the tone for the romance. Still, the representation of the practices of both faiths and how one prevents the marriage conveys the idea that defending one's faith is not only about faith, but also about culture, the identity that this religion represents. In relation to this, Loomba states that "religious difference thus became an index of a metaphor for racial, cultural and ethnic differences" (93). Stating that the marriage is only possible if the Princess accepts the Sultan's wedding proposal, the King rejects the offer on the grounds of religion. This rejection on religious grounds others the Sultan and it shows similarities to the later articulations of Orientalism which rejects the colonized in any form of social relations on equal grounds. The West imposes its own cultural standards on the encounters with the East and the East's culture and religion are not taken into consideration.

The rejection of the marriage, as the Princess does not agree to marry the Sultan, serves to create an enmity between the two kingdoms that eventually leads to the devastation

of her country. Islam is presented as if it were a polytheistic religion to awaken a sense of fear. The Princess is threatened by the processes and formalities of a religious pattern and she takes refuge in her Christian belief which in return promises protection:

Thurth might of Jhesu, Heven king,  
 Spac to hir in manhede  
 In white clothes als a knight,  
 And seyde to hir, "Mi swete wight,  
 No tharf thee nothing drede  
 Of Ternagaunt no of Mahoun.  
 Thi Lord that suffred passioun  
 Schal help thee at thi nede." (*King of Tars* ll. 446-453)

In the romance, the name of god as "Allah" is never mentioned. Instead, the name Mahoun is used, which is a derivative name for the prophet Muhammad. Mahoun, in these representations, is usually accompanied by gods called Termagaunt (Tervagaunt, Tervagant) and Apollo. However, in this particular romance, Mahoun is accompanied by more than two gods that are added to the pantheon describing the Saracen gods. Although Islam is monotheistic, by these references it is stripped of its divine nature to the level of a primitive and pagan religion:

Sche kist Mahoun and Apolin,  
 Astirot and Sir Jovin.  
 For drede of wordes awe,  
 And while sche was in the temple  
 Of Ternagant and Jubiter,  
 Sche lerd the hethen lawe ( *King of Tars* ll. 496-501)

The Princess does not forsake Jesus Christ and Christian belief, but still she acknowledges and seems to accept the 'Saracen' belief by kissing "Mahoun," "Apolin" (Apollo), "Astirot," "Jovin" (Jove), "Ternagant" and "Jubiter." The depiction of Islam as a polytheistic religion from the Western perspective is a common practice to stigmatise the belief. In relation to this attitude Edward Said states that "a great deal of what was considered learned Orientalist scholarship in Europe pressed ideological myths into service, even as knowledge seemed genuinely to be advancing" (63). Depicting the Princess kissing the figures of Mahoun and Apollo, the romance constructs one of the core concepts of Islam as "[m]ost of the classical era Muslim

scholars considered painting and sculpting as ‘haram’ [forbidden]” (“Resim” 580). Any worship of sculpture or painting was forbidden as it was reminiscent of pagan worship of idols. Other than defying one of the fundamentals of Islam, the romance gives the names of “Jovin” and “Jubiter,” who are basically the different names of the same god (Hamilton, 25) which is taken from pagan religion. This particular ignorance or conscious neglect of the belief of the Saracens - Islam may not be the right word as it is not named but the reference to Muhammad suggests it- distorts the image of the Saracens. When the contact points of the two religions in the Middle Ages, which are Al-Andalusia, the Crusades or trade, are considered, it would not be a mistake to deduce that these misrepresentations were undertaken on purpose. Thus, the rival of Christianity is reduced to a heathen religion in the eyes of the Christians.

The antagonism between Islam and Christianity as reflected in the romances does not only focus on the basic concepts of Islam. Norako states that “[b]orn of increasing concerns over the spread of Islam, crusades-inspired literature flourished in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century England” (166). The idea of the temptation that the Saracen belief is common, it offers is a recurring pattern, the Saracens trying to lure the Christian heroes to their own belief by offering them land, wealth or the hand of a princess (*Sir Isumbras* ll 220-245) is not rare. Similar to *King of Tars* where there is the theme of conversion in *Sir Isumbras* the same theme is also employed. *Sir Isumbras* is considered as a “homiletic romance” (Mehl 90), that is, it is based on a hagiographic tale. In this case, the romance is the secular version of the hagiographic tale of Saint Eustace (Hudson 6). This particular relation to hagiography explains the religious tone of the romance; however, since *Sir Isumbras* is a romance, it ends with the reunification of the lost family members, which is more in keeping with the genre of romance. Norako argues that

The romance’s textual adaptability likely stems from its simultaneous deployment of themes and typologies from hagiography and chivalric romance – a combination that has made the romance difficult to place generically but that ultimately facilitates its treatment of crusading. (168)

In *Sir Isumbras*, during the confrontation between the Sultan and Sir Isumbras, the Sultan offers to convert Sir Isumbras to the Saracen faith by promising to give gold and

noble clothes to him on the condition that Sir Isumbras abandons his gods. Sir Isumbras is on the verge of starvation because of his acceptance of the divine plan, which offered him to suffer early or late in life to atone his sins (*Sir Isumbras* ll. 35-60). He chooses to suffer while young and strong, hence loses everything he has, and becomes a poor pilgrim, but even in this state he refuses the Sultan's offer, stating that his faith cannot be bought (*Sir Isumbras* ll. 251-267). This incident shows how Orientalist ideology rejects to submit to the culture or belief that it depicts as the other. Christianity becomes a part of the Orientalist ideology, which the West deems as the dominant part of the binary opposition between the Saracen faith and Christian faith. However, there is an effort to hide the political, economical and military strength of Islam and there are misrepresentations so that the West does not lose this dominance over the East and the Easterners. Therefore, Western ideology protects itself from being absorbed by a foreign culture or faith.

Christianity and Islam/Saracen belief are the two sides of an everlasting conflict. The Western perspective, as reflected in the romances *King of Tars*, *Siege of Milan* and *Sultan of Babylon*, presents a failing image, an inferior, less developed, and almost pagan depiction of Islam. Following the pattern of failed conversion, the romance *Siege of Milan* introduces another failed conversion theme, however this time it has a historically accurate representation. *Siege of Milan*, is incomplete, however, it contains enough material to be analysed from the perspective of the Orientalist approach. In the romance, Sultan Arabas, while fighting against the Christians, ransacks Rome and other areas of Italy and besieges Milan. Charlemagne, upon being divinely informed that Milan is under siege, sends Roland and after Roland's defeat at the hands of the Saracens, he assembles his army to take Milan back. The romances that include the deeds of Charlemagne and his peers reflect multiple encounters with the Saracens. These encounters, as in the example of *Siege of Milan*, force both sides to understand and convert to the other religion. Furthermore, Diane Vincent states that

Conversion is a familiar topos of Charlemagne romances; a reader repeatedly finds Christians and Saracens calling upon each other to convert and believe this, that or the other, often adding inducements like beautiful and rich views, powerful friends, lands, and rescue from imminent death. (103)

*Siege of Milan* not only gives a religious opposition but also presents a political confrontation that is dominated and manipulated by the concept of religion. Hence, the concept of Jihad, which is the struggle to convert ‘heathens’ to Islam through military action, can be observed in as Sultan Arabas tries to bribe and then threaten the duke of Milan so that:

The sawdane sent hym messangers free  
 And bade him torne and hethyn bee,  
 And he solde have his awenn:  
 Melayne that was the riche cite  
 And alle the lanndis of Lumbardye,  
 And to his lawe be knawenn  
 ‘And if he will noghte to oure lawe be swornne,  
 He sall be hangede or other mornne  
 And with wild horse drawen;  
 His wyffe and his children three,  
 Byfore his eghne that myghte see,  
 Be in sondre sawenn.’ (*Siege of Milan*, ll. 49-60)

Despite the detailed description of the punishment awaiting the duke of Milan he rejects the offer of conversion (*Siege of Milan* ll. 73-84). This rejection signifies the fact that upholding Christianity and with it their own culture and identity is more prevalent in these romances like *King of Tars*, *Siege of Milan*, *Sultan of Babylon*. Through this sense of superiority, it can be deduced that the West promotes the preservation of its beliefs and customs with romance.

Resisting conversion is an attempt to protect the identity of the West. In *Siege of Milan* defending Christianity is also defending and defining one’s own self. Randall Styers states that “[a]s we consider the history of Christianity, we can see how the efforts to consolidate and maintain Christian identities constantly depend on the demarcation of the non-Christian heretic, the apostate” (853). In the romance, there is a second attempt to convert Roland to Islam and it also fails. The Sultan asks Roland to renounce the “false lawes” of France, and bids him to declare his love for “Seyn Mahoun” (ll. 393-396). This section of the romance reveals the miracle which demonstrates the true faith according to Western perspective. To degrade Christianity and the faith of the Christian knights the Sultan prepares a test for the Christian faith itself and he orders his men:

‘Goo feche one of theire goddis in,  
And if he in tis fire will byrne,  
All other sett att noghte.’ (*Siege of Milan* ll. 422-424)

The Sultan aims to burn one of the Christian gods, this action furthers the depiction of the Saracens as ignorant about Christianity as the Christians are ignorant about Islam. This representation reflects the ideas of the Christians, they are imprinting their own ignorance on the Saracen. As the Saracens bring a wooden cross which has been pillaged from a nearby Church (*Siege of Milan* ll. 425-427), the Christian knights beg Christ for a miracle:

Thou that was born of may,  
Schewe thou, Lorde, thi miracle this day,  
That with thi blode us boghte (*Siege of Milan* ll. 431-433)

The Saracens consider the cross “one of theire goddis,” which implies that the Saracens consider the Christian faith as a polytheistic one. Maxime Rodinson states that “[t]he image of Islam was not simply drawn from the Crusades, as some have maintained, but rather from the Latin Christian world’s gradually developing ideological unity” (7). By making the Saracen speak, the West defines Islam and the Saracen through their own words, producing a more reliable reflection for the Western audience. Roland’s wish for the miracle to prove the supremacy of the Christian faith is answered. No matter how hard the Sultan and his men try to burn the cross with brimstone, mixing it with pitch and tar, the cross does not burn (*Siege of Milan* ll. 435-465). The miracle itself is a statement against the ‘false’ beliefs of the Saracens, proving the supremacy of the Christian faith by showing that God is on the Christians’ side. Furthermore, the cross combusts blinding the Saracens and gives the Christian knights a chance to escape (*Siege of Milan* ll. 470-480). Adding to the representation of the supremacy by not burning, the cross avenges itself and the Christian knights by continuing the miracle. Said states that “there is the motif of the Orient as insinuating danger. Rationality is undermined by Eastern excesses, those mysteriously attractive opposites to what seem to be normal values” (57). Similarly, the Oriental Sultan is a danger to the stability of the Western world, he makes irrational decisions such as burning a cross to prove that the Christian god is false.

The presentation of aspects of Christianity, in comparison with the aspects of Saracen belief, creates a dichotomy where the romances, having been written from the Western perspective, stand for the glorification of Christianity. In Middle English romances, as Sencer Tonguç states

God had arranged a tournament, as it were, between Heaven and Hell, represented by Christ and Mohammed, respectively, or Christianity and Islam. We are left in no doubt as to which side fights for the right faith; and because the Christians are always in the right and the Saracens in the wrong, the former came out the winners. Against the Christians who have powerful support of the true God, the Saracens and their gods [...] are utterly helpless. (17-18)

Tonguç clarifies the dominant ideology that Middle English romances convey. Hence, to present a deeper sense of differences and how the West perceived the Saracen faith - Islam - how idolatry and paganism influenced this perception, create an image of Islam which takes its place as the ultimate adversary of Christianity.

In parallel with othering through religious practices, the sexual identities are also a matter of importance in creating distinctions between the East and the West. The condition of women in the Middle Ages was clearly defined and depicted by the Church and the Church Fathers. Tertullian, was deemed as one of the greatest Church Fathers, almost an equal of Saint Augustus (Nicolaidis 2), and he created the image of the woman, which shaped the rest of the Catholic Church's theology and the culture of the West. By addressing women, Tertullian claims "*You* are the devil's gateway: *you* are the unsealer of that (forbidden) tree: *you* are the first deserter of the divine law: *you* are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. *You* destroyed so easily God's image, man" (Tertullian.org, par. 1; emphasis in original). Condemning womanhood in general, Tertullian associates the temptress Eve motif with every woman. In the later periods, the Church Fathers endorsed Virgin Mary as the part of Holy Trinity and presented her as the epitome of good womanhood (Robertson 187). The condition of women in the Middle Ages is never as bright as it was reflected in the romances; however, there is a difference between how the Western and Eastern women are depicted in romances. In romances, women are usually depicted as the lady of the castle or the beloved of the hero. This status of the character adds a certain degree of importance and agency to women; however, in practice, the women of the Middle Ages

suffered from stereotypification and patriarchy as the romances of *Knight of Courtesy* and *Siege of Milan* exemplify. They were almost commodities and trade goods, and their social condition in the romances just served to fit them to the role that was attributed to them as reflected in the romances such as *King of Tars* and *Sultan of Babylon*. The problematisation of the existence of women in both medieval narrative and social life is also evident in the romances. Various representations of Christian women and the Saracen women enable the romance to convey both a particular point of view of women in society and provide an insight to how the West perceives the East. Joanna Charbonneau and Desiree Cromwell comment on this aspect and state that

The depiction of Saracen women who become loving and loyal wives to the western knights – of course after their conversions – problematizes cultural ideas about both gender and non-Christians. Non-Christian women, recognized for their potentiality to represent values and virtues implicit in Christianity, thus function by pointing out the failures of fictive Christian women whose evil could disrupt social and familial cohesion. (101)

As the romance *Octavian* suggests, evil women figures in the Christian society create problems for the Christian knight; however, the good Saracen woman is submissive to her Christian lover. For instance, Floripas from *Sultan of Babylon* reflects a positive side of women, which is expected from a good Christian wife. Considering the patriarchal system, the representation of women in the romances includes marginalising, pushing the females to predetermined places and roles, limiting their existence. Christian women were expected to be meek, obedient and submissive to their fathers, husbands or guardians (Ward 4). On the other hand, the representation of Eastern women is different in that they are portrayed as strong, independent characters and as characters who have the potential to use their own initiatives. Said states that “history is made by men and women, just as it can be unmade and re-written, always with various silences and elisions, always with shapes imposed and disfigurements tolerated, so that ‘our’ East, ‘our’ Orient becomes ‘ours’ to possess and direct” (xiv). Said emphasises that it is not only men who create history and influence the society, the place and actions of women also shape and influence the society, in fact, through their maternal power, even more than men. Furthermore, the Saracen women usually convert to Christianity, allowing the West to overcome and dominate the East which serves the Orientalist ideology. The West can be said to symbolically conquer the reproductive

powers of the Saracens by capturing and converting their women. Thus the West removes the East's power of regeneration as a society. The Saracen woman's conversion and undermining her father's authority, forces the Orientalist hegemony which the West employs to hold control over the East. However, the representation of the Christian women in these romances usually includes the representation of either Virgin Mary or Eve the temptress. In the romances *Octavian* and *Sultan of Babylon* the representations of the Oriental and the Occidental women are exemplified

The romance *Octavian* represents two types of Western women: the embodiment of evil in the person of the emperor's mother and the embodiment of good with the emperor's wife. This situation can be best expressed in these words "the good wife versus the wicked mother-in-law" (Charbonneau and Cromwell 101). These two women are the portrayal of the Western woman, one using her influence to accuse her daughter-in-law the other one just lacking agency and suffering obediently until divine intervention proves her rightfulness. The emperor and his wife, after not being able to conceive a child, decide to build a "ryche abbey" (ll.76) to gain the favour of God, who in turn miraculously helps the wife to conceive twins. Since the romances are sourced in and depict Christianity, the motif of miracles is common in the Middle English romances. However, to draw a comparison between two female figures, this miracle of conceiving twins is a signifier of the good nature of the wife of the emperor. The evil mother sets up a scheme, which convinces the emperor that he is cuckolded:

'Nay,' sche sayde, 'sone myne;  
 'Therr ys never neythyr of them thyn:  
 That lykyth me full ylle!  
 For thou might no chylde have,  
 Thy wife hath take a cokys knave,  
 That wyll Y prove be skylle' (*Octavian* ll. 112-117)

When the betrayal theme is used in the romance to accuse the lady of the castle, the agency of the mother figure is represented in an evil way. To discourage Christian women from acting like these evil figures and to present a good example, the representations in the romance depict both figures. The good, angelic woman usually is represented as passive; she endures the hardships she encounters. The wife of the

emperor meekly accepts her fate and cannot or does not defend herself against the accusations:

The lady sawe no bettur red  
 But that sche schulde be dedd  
 That day upon the fylde;  
 Wyth sory hert, the soteh to telle  
 Before the emperowre on kneys sche felle  
 And bothe hur hondys uphelde.  
 ‘Grawnt me, lorde, for Jesus sake;  
 Oon orison that Y may make  
 To hym that all may welde;  
 And sythen on me do yowre wyll:  
 What dethe that ye wyll puy me tyll,  
 Therto Y will me yelde.’ (Octavian ll.241-252)

The Lady’s resolution and submission to her lord and to Jesus creates a contrast between the good and the evil representations of women in the Middle Ages. In the Middle Ages, a woman, especially a wife, was expected to be obedient and meek as the example in this specific romance reflects. However, it is important to point out that the representation of the Saracen women who convert willingly to Christianity, presents a picture of women who are active agents in the plots of the romance. Contrary to the passive, ideal woman representation, the Saracen lady actively takes part in the shaping of her own destiny. In the romance *Sultan of Babylon*, Dame Floripas, the daughter of the Sultan, falls in love with Guy, one of the twelve peers, saves the lives of Roland and Oliver, kills her own governess to keep her silent and finally marries Guy and causes his father’s downfall. As the symbol of reproduction, the conquest and conversion of the Saracen woman also reflects the conquest of the future of the Saracens. She is an active agent in shaping her own destiny and she is a Saracen lady, who is converted to Christianity to marry the knight she loves. Unlike her Western counterparts, Floripas is represented as a clever, strong, and active woman. While the Orient is associated with female agency, the Occident is associated with male agency. The active Eastern woman figure is in contrast with the passive and obedient Western woman figure. They fit their roles which are constructed for them by Western patriarchy.

The romances illustrated the concept of the enemy as the East, against which the knights take on their quests, in addition to other opponents. In the Arthurian corpus of

romances, there are multiple stereotypes of enemies mainly focusing on Morgana la Fey or a rival knight who challenges the court of King Arthur as in the example of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. However, in the Middle English metrical romances the main enemy, or at least the enemy in the sub-plot, is the East and the Saracens. Heavily influenced by the contemporary Crusades, the romances reflect the historical interaction. The othering of the East is a process in the Middle Ages, and the dichotomy between the East and the West gradually became more and more relevant and visible. However, in the Middle Ages, the constant confrontation between the East and West, between the Saracens and Westerners, and between Muslims and Christians escalated to the constant representation of the enemy, through which the West exerted its dominance and hegemony. In relation to this Kofi Campbell states that “[t]he Saracens are there to make clearer the bounds of England and Christianity” (232). The attempts of the West to procure its own identity in defence against the East are evident in these romances as they reflect the East as the ultimate enemy.

The enmity between the East and the West is the core concept, without it the dichotomy and the binary opposition through which the West identifies itself is deficient. Since, in the Middle Ages, the incursion and expansion of the East and the Saracens further into Europe, the control of the trade routes by the East made them actual threats to the West and their interests. The West is almost conditioned to associate every kind of conflict with its hostile relationship with the East. In the romance *King Horn*, Saracens are the enemy of England; however this enmity does not come from the East. In the romance, Horn’s father, the King of Sudene, King Murry, is killed by the invading Saracen raiders who take over Horn’s country and leave him and his friends to die in a rudderless boat. After going through several adventures, which includes a fight against a Saracen giant, Horn comes back to his home to conquer and take back his rightful heritage. Still, the most important question is the identification of the invaders of the British Isles as the Saracens. *King Horn* depicts the Saracens not only invading England but also Ireland and other minor Isles in between, as well. In the romance, the first encounter with the Saracens is described as follows:

Arived on his londe,  
Schipes fiftene

With Sarazins kene  
 He axede what hi soghte  
 Other to londe broghte. (*King Horn* ll. 39-44)

As indicated, the Saracens used ships to invade England. These ships are similar to the ones which were used in the raids of the Vikings. Diane Speed, similarly, states that “[t]he only non-Christian invaders who came after the English themselves had arrived were the Scandinavians, and the Saracens of the poem have come to be identified as Danes or Vikings under another name, with the origins of the story set in preconquest times” (564-565). As Speed suggests the use of the name Saracen refers to a different context than the words Eastern Muslim people would normally suggest. Hence, it can be claimed that the text does not directly refer to a Saracen invasion but employs the term Saracen to imply a general enemy. Naming the enemy as Saracens, who are “symbolic of Scandinavians killing King Murray of Sudenne, representing southwest Scotland” (Ege 21), the Orientalist stereotyping indicates another dimension. In this respect, it can be argued that the enemy archetype that is associated with the Saracens was so culturally absorbed that the name Saracen could even be used to define a Viking raid, which shows how deep the implemented enmity is.

The romances that are discussed below make use of another stereotype that is associated with the Saracens and the East, that is, the figure of a giant as the enemy. In the first chapter, the giants are discussed as exotic beings, and in contrast to this discussion, in this chapter the giants will be referred as hellish and unchristian depictions. The giant is not an uncommon motif in romances and the giants are usually associated with the Saracens, as supernatural and hellish enemies as in the examples described in *Guy of Warwick*, *Bevis of Hampton*, *Octavian* or *Siege of Milan*. It can be argued that the prototype of the giant as the enemy of the Judeo-Christians has its roots in the Bible. In the Old Testament, the story of David versus Goliath can be presented as the prototype for the giant motif in the romances. Hence, the romances usually depict a Saracen giant fighting a Christian knight or soldier. Goliath, the champion of the Palestinians, challenges the Israelites and their King, Saul, in single combat. Being of a height of six cubits and a span, Goliath of Gath is a gigantic warrior; still he is shot with the sling of David the Shepherd and then beheaded (Samuel 17. 1-25). In *King Horn*, the Giant

challenges the court of the King of Westernesse, stating that he will fight three warriors, if they win they can have the land; however if the Giant wins, the Saracens will take over the land (*King Horn* ll. 815-824). King Horn slays the Giant, and thus proves himself as a worthy warrior to become a king (*King Horn* ll. 885-895). As Herzman, et al. state “fighting a giant and defeating him is the stuff of which the legendary kings are made (the battle of David and Goliath is one outstanding Scriptural example)” (66). This romance epitomises the meaning of the enemy with the Saracens. Projecting the probable Viking invaders as Saracens, *King Horn* stereotypes the concept of the enemy and names them as Saracens even though they are not Easterners.

The Saracens, as the primary adversaries in the Middle English romances, are not portrayed in depth, they lack individualising details, and the stereotyping of the enemy is evident in *Guy of Warwick* as well. Since the text does not reflect the Saracens in depth, the only recognizable motive for enmity is religion. In this respect, the romance of *Guy of Warwick*, which has multiple versions and translations in the Middle Ages, makes use of the Saracens as the other in the religious, military and social sense. *Guy of Warwick* tells the tale of the famous English hero, Guy, who is a knight renowned for his heroism on the battlefield. Yet after his marriage with Felice, he devotes himself to God and leaves everything behind to go to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage. The romance covers his journey and how he becomes a part of the struggle in the Holy Land, how he returns to his homeland to find the people in distress and shows a final act of heroism after which he dies in a hermitage.

In this romance, the Saracens are used as minor implementations for the plot. The Saracens in *Guy of Warwick* are not the primary enemy figure, they are the other and function as a chapter in the representation of the heroes' life. The inclusion of the Saracens indicates the mindset of the West, the Orientalist point of view. Thomas H. Crofts claims “romances such as *Guy of Warwick*, *Sultan of Babylon*, *Richard Coer de Lyon* utilize the figure of the Saracen in an early form of Orientalism, situating in the racial and religious Other all those things against which medieval Christendom was defined” (84). In *Guy of Warwick* the Saracens do not only exist as a part of the plot but also as the contenders for the sovereignty of the Holy Land. Furthermore, unlike in the

romance *King Horn*, the representations of the Saracens are historically more accurate in *Guy of Warwick*. The lines depicting the first encounter are as follows:

For blithe worth Y never more:  
 Alle mi sones ich have forlore  
 Thurth a batayl unride,  
 Thurth Sarrayins that fel wore  
 To Jerusalem thai com ful yore  
 To rob and reve with pride. (*Guy of Warwick* ll. 589-594)

Earl Jonas explains to Guy that he encountered and fought with the Saracens, who ravaged and ransacked Jerusalem. Introducing a more complex plot through a simple conflict, the romance employs simplification of representing the other. Earl Jonas continues to narrate his fight referring to King Triamour and how he defeated him although his forces were smaller in number in comparison to his:

Thurth mi fiftene sone  
 Were the geauntes overcome  
 And driven down to ground.  
 Fiftene amirals ther wer nome,  
 The king gan fle with alle his trome  
 For drede of ous that stounde.  
 Ich and mi sones withouten lesing  
 Out of that lond we driven the king  
 And his men gaf dedli wounde. (*Guy of Warwick* ll. 601-609)

Overcoming a force greater than his own, Guy displays courage and heroism and Earl Jonas is represented as the superior West. Since the West defeats a larger force than their own, the Christians are presented as the more valorous and heroic of the two sides. In this case, the Saracens are not just the enemy; they also act as a foil for the West to emphasise their superiority. Furthermore, in accordance with the negative portrayal of the Saracens, the romance represents the moral inferiority of the Saracens by depicting them as treacherous:

In a brom feld ther wer hidde  
 Thre hundred Sarrayins wele yschridde  
 With helme and grimly brond,  
 Out of that brom thai lepen anon  
 And bilapped ous everichon  
 And drof ous alle to schond. (*Guy of Warwick* ll. 619-624)

Ambushing the Earl and his sons, the Saracens achieve victory through deceit. Tyrell Jr. also displays an Orientalist approach stating that “Arabs are basically murderers and that violence and deceit are carried in the Arab genes” (qtd in Said 287). In the generalisations and stereotyping of the Orientalist approach, the concept of deceit is historically connected to the Orientals. This connection is significant as the West categorises and defines the East with given prejudices. However, it should be noted that the concepts of ambush and deceit were not totally rejected by the West, in fact, they were the tactics which were used in medieval warfare by the knights. The knights also used ambush manoeuvres and tactics both in battle and in tournaments to practice these moves (Kaeuper 164). Because of the fact that the main aim of the tournaments in the Middle Ages was to practice warfare, the tactics of ambush and deceit can be seen as a vital practice to prepare real battles. This shows that the use of deceit on the battlefield was common in the West as well. Although this was the case, the concept of deceit is associated with Arabs; it is a biased, Orientalist point of view since the West makes use of the same tactics.

In the romance, *Guy of Warwick*, two different battles against the supernatural enemies that are associated with the Saracens are narrated. Since the giants are described with a different physiology and they are superhuman in size and strength, they are associated with the Saracens. The giants are not only represented as the stereotypical enemy, but also as the enemies of normality. In the romance, the first giant is described as follows:

Than dede he com forth a Sarrayine -  
 Have he Cristes curs and mine  
 With boke and eke with belle -  
 Out of Egypt he was ycome,  
 Michel and griselich was that gome  
 With ani god man to duelle.  
 He is so michel and unrede  
 Of his sight a man may drede  
 With tong as Y thee telle;  
 As blac he is as brodes brend,  
 He semes as it were a fende  
 That comen were out of helle. (*Guy of Warwick* ll.733-744)

The Saracen is described to be as black as burnt nail and looks like a devil that came out of hell. He is the challenger that the Sultan brings forward for the trial by combat. The particular use of the words like “as black as burned nails, fiend or came out of hell,” is intended to create a specific picture and establish specific associations. Direct reference to hell and fiends indicates that the fighting will be done against an unholy being, with that in mind, the enmity goes beyond the personal level and becomes a part of the conflict between good and evil. The problem with this representation is that evil is almost always associated with the Saracens.

In addition to this, Guy fights another giant, but within a different context. The Danish invaders of England bring an African giant with their army whose name is Colbrond who wreaks havoc on the English army and gives great harm to the country:

A geaunt he hath brought with him  
 Out of Aufrike stout and grim,  
 Colbrond hat that gome.  
 For him is al Ingland forlore  
 Bot Godes help be bifore  
 That socour sende hem some.( *Guy of Warwick* ll. 2815-2820)

In a similar way to Colbrond’s representation as the Saracen champion of the Danes, *King Horn* represents another Saracen giant as an invading force. The representation of this giant in *King Horn* differs in the aspect that the Viking invaders are also depicted as Saracens. The correlation between the concept of the enemy and the Saracens is so strong that even a Viking invasion can be supported by a Saracen or the Vikings can be represented as Saracens, as we observe in *King Horn*. Despite the supernatural qualities attributed to the giants, othering is evident and real. With the identification of a giant with the Saracens, Orientalist othering works on multiple levels; Saracens are othered as the enemy, furthermore, the giants are othered as abominations and aberrations to reality. Rosalind Field comments on *Guy of Warwick* and asserts that “its very directness and lack of narrative ambiguity make the story of Guy into a powerful propaganda tool” (16). That is, this tool, apparently, is used to define the East as the other, as the romance gives differences between the East and the West. *Guy of Warwick*

presents a negative image of the East for the Western audience to create a sense of self by depicting a negative other.

There were other points of contact between the East and the West such as those in Spain and Sicily as stated before, where peaceful collaboration over trade, knowledge and economic interaction took place. There was also conflict and clash of interests, which led to serious problems. Those encounters were undertaken in highly organised Western Crusades against the Muslims of the East. The concept of enmity was not limited to fictional representation, the historical references to the relations between the East and the West are also important factors in representing the East as the enemy and the other by the West. In this respect, the Crusades are the epitome of the encounters between the East and the West. Romances usually tap into this source, especially while defining the pilgrimages or tales from the Holy Land. The romances reflecting the clash between the East and the West through Crusades such as *Richard Coeur de Lyon, Knight of Courtesy and Fair Lady Faguell*, represent these encounters with different approaches. Carol Heffernan states that “nineteenth century scholars, pointing to Arabic and Middle Eastern sources and analogues for many medieval romances virtually suggested that the romance form emerged from the meeting of Saracen and Crusader” (1). The romance genre came into being as a result of multiple factors, still the Crusades influenced its creation and the representation of the East. Since the “Crusaders brought home some knowledge of this [Saracen] world, and romance writers were catering for the new awareness, just as cheap novels of the Wild West were to cater for thousands of readers who had never seen the Rockies” (Bennett 123). With every bit of information gathered about the East, the Orientalist point of view was weaved into the romances. However, Albert Classen adds another perspective to the conflict between the East and the West:

The Crusades and the subsequent wars between the Christians and the Arabic Muslims (later especially the Turks) represented just one dimension, but below the military surface we can always and rather easily recognize countless cultural, linguistic, mercantile, and perhaps even literary and artistic contacts of great profit for both sides. (6)

The interaction between the West and the East as Classen states is not limited to military conflict. Nevertheless, *Richard Coeur de Lyon, Knight of Courtesy and the*

*Fair Lady Faguel* directly give the Crusades as their topics to formulate their tales within the East-West conflict.

*Richard Coeur de Lyon* narrates the heroic feats of Richard the Lionheart during the Third Crusade in 1189-1192 as well as before and after his travels to the Holy Land especially Acre and Jerusalem. Crofts and Rouse state that the “romance [RCdL] has proved to be particularly fecund ground for the analysis of the nature of medieval Englishness” (81). Focusing primarily on the encounter between the East and the West during the Third Crusade, this text provides a rich source for the representation of the Orient and the Orientals. The romance prepares the audience for the oncoming adventures of Richard the Lionheart who fights against the Saracens in the Holy Land. The unholy alliance between Earl Roys and Sultan Saladin results in the loss of the True Cross, Acre and upon which Duke Myloun and Duke Renaud are beheaded hence causing turmoil in the already troubled Holy Lands (*Richard Coeur de Lyon* ll. 1200-1320). Losing the Holy Lands to the Saracens, according to the romance, Pope Urban urges Christians to take arms and defeat the invading Saracens (*Richard Coeur de* ll. 1323-1340). However, the representation is not accurate as Pope Urban II was the endorser of the First Crusade. It was Gregory VIII, who was the Pope during the Third Crusade (Runciman 10). Thus, the romance may refer to names and places but the historical accuracy is not there. It may be argued that the romance was not trying to be historically accurate, but trying to create an impression. Hence, the representations and depictions of the Saracens and the Orient is used to create an impression of the East for the audience.

Richard Lionheart is depicted as the hero who rushed to the aid of those who were suffering under the rule of the Saracens. After referring to the Saracen conquests, the situation of the Christians, their torment is given:

How the Sawdon has fyght begunne,  
The toun of Acres he has wunne  
Thorwgh the Eerl Roys and hys trehcherye,  
And al the kyngdom of Surrye.  
Jerusalem and the Croys is lorn,  
And Bethleem, there Jhesu Cryst was born,  
The Crystene knyghtes ben hangyd and drawe;

The Sarezynys have hem now islawe,  
 Crystene men, children, wyf, and grome.  
 Wherefore the lord, the pope of Rome,  
 Is agrevyd and anoyyd  
 That Crystyndom is thus destroyyd.  
 Ilke Crystene kyng he sendes bode,  
 And byddes, in the name of Gode,  
 To wende thedyr with gret hoost,  
 For to felle the Sarezynys bost. (*Richard Coeur de Lyon* ll. 1355-1370)

The representation of the condition of the Holy Lands and Christians living there under Saracen rule is almost an encouragement for the West to act, this representation is propaganda against the East and the Saracens. Particularly referring to the punishments of the Christian knights, who are hanged and drowned, although the specific details are not included in the text, and portraying the Saracens as ruthless murderers who kill children, women and men without any distinction, convey an Orientalist point of view. The Saracens are represented as ruthless killers with no morals in contrast to the ethical norms of chivalry which preached against attacking defenceless civilians. The romances upheld chivalric norms. Nancy Bisaha, concerning the civilians, states that

In the decades leading up to 1095, Frankish bishops first proclaimed the “peace of God” in the hope of restraining the landless members of the warrior class who regularly attacked peasants and townspeople and plundered church property. Peaceful non-combatants, they declared, were not to be harmed by warriors under the pain of excommunication. (288)

Bisaha argues that the Church hoped to control the rampant knights and soldiers. Since these “warriors” attacked and ransacked the towns and churches, the Church tried to contain them with the threat of excommunication. However, the ideal chivalric conduct represented in romances shows that they protect the Church and the meek, however the reality was different. The Church tried to overcome the unruly knight problem with the Crusades and threats of excommunication. Still the Christian practices in the Crusades are recorded to reflect slaughter to the extent that the romance *Richard Coeur de Lyon* included a mass killing of Saracens (*Richard Coeur de Lyon* ll. 3748-3754).

While, in the romance *Richard Coeur de Lyon* the incidents took place during the siege of Acre are described, it also employs the device of divine intervention to show the support of God of the Christians. Presenting Islam as a polytheistic religion, the

romance foregrounds Christian supremacy in the mind of the West as Richard the Lionheart executes Saracen prisoners. The executions are described as follows:

And taken Sarezynes syxy thousandes  
 And knytte behynde hem here handes,  
 And ledes hem out of the cyté,  
 And hedes hem withouten pyté  
 And so schal I telle Saladyn  
 To pray me leve on Appolyn!”  
 They were brought out of the toun,  
 Save twenty he heeld to raunsoun.  
 They were led into the place ful evene;  
 There they herden an aungell of hevene,  
 That seyde, “Seygnyours, tues, tues,  
 Spares hem nought — behedith these!”  
 Kyng Richard herde the aungelys voys,  
 And thankyd God and the Holy Croys. (*Richard Coeur de Lyon* ll.3739-3752)

The angel’s blessing and command “tues, tues” – kill, kill – promotes the execution, showing that Christianity is the true faith and their God approves of their actions. Beheading sixty thousand Saracens, which is an exaggeration and a part of the romance tradition to emphasise heroism, to show the rightfulness of Christianity is a way to impose the Western domination of the East. Symbolism “us versus them” in a religious context, perpetrated the Orientalist point of view. Furthermore, with the representation of the direct support of the angels, Christianity is portrayed to justify the beheadings.

Although the Crusades are mostly the central point of conflict, whenever they are employed as a theme, they are also used as minor subplots to support the main plot and are used as testing grounds for the knights who want to prove their courage and valour. In this respect, the romances include crusades and fighting against the East to provide the necessary quest for the knights to earn fame. Furthermore, the love affairs in some of the romances necessitate the knight to partake in the crusades as a sacrifice and obligation. *The Knight of Courtesy and Fair Lady Faguell* employs a knight who fights for his honour and to prove his worth. Thus the representation of the East as a challenge, an obstacle to overcome nurtures an understanding of the East.

*The Knight of Courtesy and Fair Lady Faguell* is a relatively short romance dealing with courtly love and a knight’s sacrifice for his lady. It is “derived from a well-known

French story, which was worked up into the long romance *Le Chastelain de Couci* in the thirteenth century” (Rickert I). The Knight of Courtesy is a courteous knight, as his name suggests, and because of his fame, he is invited to Lord Faguell’s court. The Knight falls in love with the Fair Lady of the court, who in return loves the knight but they vow to keep their love chaste. This representation of courtly love is betrayed by a jealous knight who misinforms the lord of the castle saying that the couple consummated their love. The lord of the castle, upon hearing this accusation, challenges the Knight of Courtesy to go on a Crusade to fight for his faith to get rid of him. The Knight of Courtesy goes to Rhodes to fight against the Saracens, eventually succumbing to defeat and death. This part of the romance is historically taken “from the Third Crusade to the siege of Rhodes in 1443” (Rickert I). He orders his page to take his heart to the Lady; however, the Lord of the castle intercepts this package. He has the heart cooked and then given to the Lady. When he reveals what he has done to her, the Lady repents and accepts only the Sacrament as food. Even though the representation of the Crusades is episodic and serves the plot, the choice of the Saracens as the opponents or as the quest is remarkable in that, it portrays the common concept of the enemy in the collective mind of the West. In the romance the Knight’s entrance to the battlefield against the Saracens is stated as follows:

The knight of courtesy came into the felde,  
Well armed right saft did ride,  
Both knightes and barans him behelde,  
How comely he was on eche fide. (*The Knight of Courtesy* ll.337-340)

The Knight of Courtesy is described as a sight to behold especially drawing a contrast with his surroundings he stands as the Christian knight. With no historical accuracy or without any effort to achieve that, the romance employs the crusades as the common ground of conflict between the West and the East. How the knight falls on the battlefield is described in detail:

Than came twelve Sarazins in a rought,  
And the knight did fore asaile,  
So they beset him rounde aboute,  
There began a stronge bataile.  
The knight kest foure unto the grounde,  
With foure strokes by and by,

The other gave him many a wounde,  
For ever they did multiplie. (*The Knight of Courtesy and Fair Lady Faguell* ll. 361-368)

As a single knight facing multiple foes, the Knight of Courtesy defeats four of them, but eventually falls down because of the wounds he received during the fight. Emphasising how a single Christian knight can overcome many Saracen opponents and can only be defeated by multiple Saracens attacking at the same time reveals the incompetency of the Saracens and the strength of the Christian knight. It can be stated that the Saracens and the East are used to glorify the hero of the romance, hence they are merely opponents to be defeated. This is the representation of the Saracens as secondary or complementary for Western culture.

The romances, while narrating the relationship between the East and the West, make use of diverse devices in their introduction of the East as the other. Romances primarily focus on the hero, the story revolves around the knight, in some cases the lady. In the romances there are types rather than individuals, some traits may be given, yet, there is not sufficient different attributions to consider these characters as individuals. However, as the common antagonists of the romances, the Saracens usually suffer stereotypification and massification. The Saracens who are depicted in detail are usually either kings or the ones who would be converted to Christianity. In the romance *Octavian* the massification of the Saracens into one single concept paves the way for the Orientalist approach to the East. This aspect of Orientalism enables the West to define the East as a singularity.

In *Octavian*, the Saracens are an essential part. The romance includes “violence, warfare, and heroism and the Crusading response to the Saracens” (Field 21). The existence of the Saracens serves an important role for the heroes of the romance to discover their true nature and parentage, and gives them the opportunity to prove their worth. Massification of the Saracens also creates a faceless enemy, so there is less to sympathise with the other. In the romance, the invasion of France is described only through numerical details:

Aftur thys hyt was not longe  
 In Fraunce felle a were stronge;  
 An hondryd thousande were there y-lente,  
 Men, that redy were to fight,  
 Thorowowt the londe they went.  
 They broke castels stronge and bolde:  
 Ther might no hye walls them holde,  
 Ryche townys they brente!  
 All the kyngs, ferre and nere,  
 Of odur londys that Crysten were,  
 Aftur were they sente. (*Octavian* ll.757-768)

The description of the Saracens is limited to their number and a list of their destructive action. In the romance, no personal detail of these people is given, they are only described as a horde. This representation of the Saracens as a mass focuses on the stripping of the identity, which promotes the West to create an identity for the other. Hence this text provides a blank space, a *tabula rasa*, for the West to fill in.

Romances dealing with the Saracens and the East tend to picture an East that is either pristine which needs to be obtained and possessed or a corrupt world of Saracens who should be defeated and subdued. Conquering and controlling the East is what Orientalism strives to achieve. Hence the romances that deal with the subjugation and conquest of the East like *Kyng Alisaunder* and *Richard Coeur de Lyon* present different aspects of the East and how it should be handled in each case. The militaristic tone of these conquests of the East depicts the use of force in subduing the East. Although perceived as a formidable opponent, the East is bound to fall since the West physically, morally and ethically has the upper hand. Said states that

From the very same directorate of paid professional scholars enlisted by the Dutch conquerors of Malaysia and Indonesia, the British armies of India, Mesopotamia, Egypt, West Africa, the French armies of Indochina and North Africa, came the American advisers to the Pentagon and the White House, using the same clichés, the same demeaning stereotypes, the justification of power and violence (after all, runs the chorus, power is the only language they understand) in this case as in the earlier ones (xv)

These romances also employ the same language, which is the language of power that inserts assumptions and conclusions about the other. Stereotyping and narrating the

conquest of the East by using clichés lead to the theme of conquest, hence the West justifies military action over the pacified East.

*Kyng Alisaunder* narrates the tale of the conquests of Alexander the Great who “lead[s] Macedonians to the outermost limits of the Orient” (Stone 18). The figure of opposition, Darius, tries to stand his ground but he is destined to be defeated no matter how great a warrior or king he is. Wreaking havoc and delivering destruction, Alexander continuously presses eastward. After defeating his enemies in North Africa, he besieges Tyre. Yet, the inhabitants of the city, who are confident of their ability to defend themselves, insult him;

Up they sette heore mangonelis,  
And alblastres with quarellis,  
And sendith, Alisaunder to say,  
“He go to Macedoyne and play!  
“His berd he schal hore, his folk schal sterve,  
“Or any mon of Tyre him serve.” (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll. 1593-1598).

Trusting their “arbalests” and “mangonels,” which are medieval siege weaponry, the defendants of the city taunt Alexander and bid him to go back home to Macedonia. Enraged, Alexander gives orders to his soldiers to attack the city:

Out of wit he was anoied:  
He hette quyk, without pite,  
His man to asaile that cite.  
*Dieu mercy!* to mychel harme  
Many knighth there gan him arme. (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll.1600-1604)

With the phrase “*Dieu mercy!*” Alexander rejects any responsibility for the outcome of the battle and leaves the rest of it to God. Alexander, after a long and arduous siege, conquers Tyre, continues his journey towards the East to defeat Darius. The story of the conquests of Alexander the Great is the first representation of the West against the East on a major scale. Hence this romance provides the Orientalist approach, even though it is composed in the late Middle Ages. However, the theme of conquest, which presents the East and the Easterners as total enemies, makes the romance take an Orientalist

approach to the East. The ongoing hostility between Alexander and Darius results in deeper conflict over the lands of the Persian Empire:

His chymbe belle he doth rynge,  
 And doth dassche gret taborynge;  
 Over all the ost he doth cryghe,  
 They wentyn on hasto Darie,  
 And sette fuyre, and wilde bround,  
 Anon in kyng Darie's lond.  
 Heo brente castel, and eke cite,  
 Al right down, withoute pite. (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll. 1852-1859)

Repeated themes of conquest, razing cities to the ground, burning the lands or destroying them with sword, are used to justify the actions of Alexander. Using the brute force of his army, he proves that the holder of power has the right to exercise it. One of the core concepts of Orientalism, the power relationship and hegemony, are present in this approach as Alexander exercises his power over both the land and the people. Lampert-Weissig states that "Orientalism also has an 'imaginative meaning' as writers, artists, intellectuals and politicians constructed a vision of the Orient," (12). This argument should also include military leaders. Since the vision of the Orient is a cultural construct in the eyes of the West, the conquerors contribute with their own vision to this construction. In addition to that, the romance reinforces these conquests, repeatedly presenting the militarist victory over the lands of the East. Thus, showing the audience how to deal with the other, the East, the example of Alexander becomes a guideline for the Western ideology for the generations to follow him. Furthermore, in the beginning of the romance there are didactic lines (Bennett 134) which explain how to live life as a Christian and how to enjoy the works of literature as they also sing of God and "Seynt Mary" (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll. 1-50). Having reached Arabia, Alexander does not stop his war efforts and continues to destroy and conquer the cities, which are on his path:

Sixty citees, in that quarter,  
 Heo forbrente with wildefuys;  
 And many thousand was y-spillid,  
 Knyghtis, sweynes, ladies and child. (*Kyng Alisaunder* ll. 1902-1905)

Alexander and his army are the representation of the West. They do not stop until the conquest and taming of the East is complete. Furthermore, as Ashurst states “[a]s regards Alexander’s career as a conqueror, the poet’s approval is unequivocal” (266). This continuous conquest is the result of how the East is perceived by the West. Especially this romance makes use of exoticism and presents an untamed, different, awe inspiring land that needs to be introduced to the norms of the West. Hence, the theme of conquest illustrates how this ‘untamed’ East should be civilised, through the exercise of power. Alexander defeats his enemy and destroys the remnants of the resistance with the military conquest which makes the goal at controlling and defining the East possible.

The conquest theme in the Crusades has religious motifs working in the background as the main aim of the Crusades was to purge the presence of other faiths from the Holy Lands. Unlike the romance *Kyng Alisaunder*, the romance *Richard Coeur de Lyon* introduces a more realistic approach to the theme of conquest. With a more limited vision, or with a more realistic attitude, *Richard Coeur de Lyon* limits its military scope mainly to the Holy Lands other than some small skirmishes during Richard the Lionheart’s journey to the Holy Lands. The clash between the crusaders and the Saracens is also a more common and more familiar theme since the historical representation were more familiar to the audience of these romances. The direct approach to the Christian and Muslim dichotomy and the representations of the members of these religions depicts a historical story. Still, to fight for the control of the Holy Lands required special attention of the West and this resulted in multiple crusades. Hence, *Richard Coeur de Lyon* represents a more grounded reflection of conquest and fighting between the East and the West.

Richard the Lionheart, in his attempt to defeat the Saracens and to win the Holy Lands back for the Christians, uses ingenious devices:

Gunnes he hadde on wondyr wyse,  
 Magneles of gret queyntyse,  
 Arweblast, bowe, and with gynne,  
 The Holy Lond for to wynne.  
 Ovyr al othere wyttirly,

A melle he made of gret maystry,  
 In myddes a schyp for to stande  
 Swylke on sawgh nevere man in lande. (*Richard Coeur de Lyon* ll.2651-2659)

Bringing different siege weaponry, mangonels to throw huge rock to cities and arbalests to strike the defenders with bolts, *Richard Coeur de Lyon* portrays the importance given to the Crusade and the conquest of the East as these special machineries are put to work. As John Finlayson argues “[t]he dominant matter of *Richard* is not love, the marvellous or the divinely inspired supernatural, but battle: not individual jousts, but combat against the Saracens in order to regain the Holy Places” (168). More importantly, the West, being technologically more advanced, also undermines the East as a civilisation. Furthermore, in addition to the siege machinery, Richard the Lionheart demonstrates a mechanical “mervayle” (ll.2863) to drive away the Saracen besiegers of Acre:

Of torches maad with wex ful cleer;  
 Ovyrtwart and endelang,  
 With strenges of wyr the stones hang,  
 Stones that deden nevere note:  
 Grounde they nevere whete no grote,  
 But rubbyd als they were wood.  
 Out of the eye ran red blood  
 Before the trowgh ther stood on,  
 Al in blood he was begon,  
 And hornes grete upon hys hede:  
 Sarezynes therof hadden grete drede.  
 For it was within the nyght  
 They were agrysed of that syght,  
 For the rubbyng of the stones,  
 They wende it hadde ben mennes bones.  
 And sayd he was the devyll of hell,  
 That was come them to quell. (*Richard* ll. 2664-2680).

These lines suggest that Richard the Lionheart devised a devilish looking monster mill, which has never ground wheat but only bones to create a sense of dread in the enemies. The bloody millstone and horn like structures give this machine a supernatural appearance, which helps to scare the Saracens. Richard the Lionheart conquers and overcomes his enemies through the strength of mind and skill, not brute force. It shows that the Saracens are both superstitious and cowards, not rational and fearless like their

Western counterparts. It also seems to assert intellectual superiority with the technological references.

*Richard Coeur de Lyon* represents a spiritual war as well as struggle for conquering lands. Richard the Lionheart defends Acre, fights for Jerusalem and other cities in the region. However, his concern is not to conquer new lands for himself. In fact, Saladin offers him land and lordship on the condition that Richard the Lionheart abandons Christ and worships Mahowne:

And yif he wolde Jhesu forsake,  
 And Mahowne to lord take,  
 Of Surrye he wolde make hym kyng,  
 And of Egipte, that ryche thyng,  
 Of Darras, and of Babyloyne,  
 Of Arabye and of Cessoyme,  
 Of Affryk, and of Bogye,  
 And of the lond of Alysaundrye,  
 Of grete Grece, and of Tyre,  
 And of many a ryche empyre,  
 And make hym he wolde Sawdoun anon  
 Of al Ynde unto Preter Jhon. (*Richard Coeur de Lyon* ll. 3703-3714)

Evidently, the spiritual aspect of the conquest theme overcomes the military aspect of the conquest as Richard refuses to be the “Sawdoun” of all the lands. Unlike Alexander, Richard the Lionheart’s conquest is spiritual, his Christianity is more important than the lands that he can acquire. Furthermore, resisting the conversion indicates the belief in the supremacy of his culture and religion. Even though Richard the Lionheart does not conquer Jerusalem, he proves the supremacy of Western culture and religion to the Easterners as he defeats Saladin and his army, saves Acre and does not succumb to the temptation that the offer of Saladin brings.

The spiritual and military conquest in the general sense indicates the involvement of nations or large groups of people as the aim is to convert or conquer the other religion or country. However, on the individual scale, the concept of conquest differs as it becomes conversion, a much more peaceful and convincing way of defeating a Saracen. The idea of converting the worthy Saracen knight into Christianity works in line with subduing and taming of the crude East which is an Orientalist practice which aims to

dominate and assimilate. The romances *Sultan of Babylon*, *Sir Ferumbras*, and *King of Tars* present examples of worthy Saracens who are converted to Christianity to complete their knightly virtues. The immersion of the worthy Saracen in the Western culture without the religion is a matter of discussion, since the attribution of the Western cultural norms of the chivalric ideal to the Saracen warrior is problematic as there are cultural differences and there is no concept of knighthood among the Saracens.

In the romances *Sultan of Babylon* and *Sir Ferumbras*, the conversion of Sir Ferumbras is given in detail. In both romances, the character Sir Ferumbras displays knightly valour and bravery, and is courteous to his enemies, shows compassion and courage on the battlefield even though he is a Saracen prince. In *Sultan of Babylon*, he is the son of the Sultan, King of Alexandria, and the introduction scene of Sir Ferumbras is closer to a courtly tournament rather than the battlefield:

To King Charles he gan ride  
And said, 'Sire King, that arte so kene,  
Upon trwes I come to speke with the.  
If thou be curteis, as I wene,  
Thou wolte graunte a bone to me,  
That I mighte fight uppon this grene,  
With Rouland, Olyvere and Gye,  
Duke Neymes and Ogere i-mene,  
Ye and Duke Richarde of Normandye -  
With al sex attones to fight. (*Sultan of Babylon* ll. 1058-1067)

Sir Ferumbras challenges any six of the knights of Charlemagne but does that in the manner of the chivalric romance. Similarly, the romance *Sir Ferumbras* presents the same story of challenging any six of the twelve peers as *Sultan of Babylon* does:

Thanne cryde he "Charlis, with the berde! herkne what y speke:  
Send me thee beste knyght of thy furde and myn anger for to wreke,  
Duk Roland, other Olyuer and other any of thy route,  
And fighte y wile with hem her and beo thay noght so stoute. (*Sir Ferumbras* ll.94-97)

Employing the same motif of challenging the peers, the romances shed light on the character of Sir Ferumbras and introduce him in a knightly manner as he invites the peers to a duel as if he is in a tournament. The reason for this representation can be that the romance rejects the totalitarian approach to the Saracens by portraying the chivalric

members of the “others.” Sir Ferumbras loses the fight and the challenge to the peers of Charlemagne and then accepts to be converted into Christianity:

The Kinge commaunded Bishope Turpyn  
 To make a fonte redye,  
 To baptise Ferumbras therin  
 In the name of God Almyghtye.  
 He was cristened in that welle.  
 Floreyne the Kinge alle him calle;  
 He forsoke the foule feende of helle  
 And his fals goddis alle. (*Sultan of Babylon* ll. 1475-1483)

His conversion suggests that he has always been worthy, but was misguided. The representation of the Saracen who has knightly values is important; however, converting that Saracen knight to Christianity presents an image of the Saracens who can only be converted and become one with Western culture if they are honourable. This idea also suggests that they can only be converted to Christianity if they are eligible in the sense of the Western cultural standards. The Orientalist practice of subduing and assimilating the other is represented with the conversion of not any other but the worthy Saracen.

In *King of Tars*, the Saracen Sultan also converts to Christianity, but this time the conversion takes place not because of the worthiness of the Saracen Sultan but because of the miracle that he witnessed. Still, the Sultan is a noble warrior but not as chivalric as Sir Ferumbras since he does not feature in the chivalric introductions or brave challenges. Also, he does not abide by the rules of courtly love tradition, he fights and conquers the people of his beloved although she refused to marry. Still, his conversion brings an even more drastic change upon him. The miraculous transformation following the conversion indicates that Christianity is the true destination where he finds the truth:

The Cristen prest hight Cleophas;  
 He cleped the soudan of Damas  
 After his owen name.  
 His hide that blac and lothely was  
 Al white bicom thurth Godes gras  
 And clere withouten blame.  
 And when the soudan seye that sight,  
 Than leved he wele on God almight;  
 His care went to game. (*King of Tars* ll.919-927)

As the text indicates, the Sultan's skin colour turns from black and hideous to pure white after being baptised. The skin colour is associated with both religion and purity. Referring to his blackness as "loathly" is a part of the othering process, the Sultan cannot be a Christian, cannot be a person who belongs to Western culture if he does not change. The racism, the foregrounded othering can only be cured by God; otherwise, the person is doomed to suffer from it. This representation of ideology in the text promotes the Orientalist perception of the East and the Saracens. As Akbari states

Religious conversion of the Saracen as depicted in literary texts is commonly accompanied by bodily metamorphoses, ranging from a dramatic black-white colour change to more subtle physiological shifts in which the violent, irascible Saracen becomes a pacific, tearful Christian. (4)

The pacified Saracen, metamorphosed into a Christian knight, strengthens the claim of the supremacy of the Western belief as it civilises the other, "black and violent" Saracen. Referring to the Saracens as devils of hell, these representations try and undermine the credibility and values of the other faith.

These Middle English romances that are studied in this chapter present perceptions of early Orientalism that can be observed through enmity, religious differences, representation of women and the assimilation of the other. Multiple perceptions of the Orient through different points of view of seeing the East as enemy, differences between the Eastern and Western women or converting the worthy Saracen and leaving the rest out aim to show the Orientalist understandings which promote the idea that "the West[...] is rational, developed, humane, superior, and the Orient [...] is aberrant, undeveloped, inferior" (Said 300). Providing multiple insights to these Orientalist ideas, the Middle English romances comply with most of the definitions that Said introduces in *Orientalism*. Military, religious and social differences between the East and the West are defined and examined, and how the romances employ these differences and how much they reflect the Orientalist ideology become the basis of the argument. As Said states "since one cannot ontologically obliterate the Orient, one does have the means to capture it, treat it, describe it, improve it, radically alter it" (95). The romances which are studied capture, describe, and alter the way the Orient is as they produce information and perception of the East.

## CONCLUSION

Although Said formulates Orientalism for the post-colonial period and the European colonialism from the eighteenth century onwards, his theories about the representation and depiction of the Orient as the other are also applicable to the Middle Ages. The postcolonial mindset that can be found in the Middle English romances, specifically the Orientalist point of view, describes the attention that is given to the Orient during the Middle Ages and how the Orient is perceived through various approaches in the romances. Referring to the Orient as the other and focusing on the differences between the Orient and the Occident, the romances - *Richard Coeur de Lyon*, *Kyng Alisaunder*, *The Sultan of Babylon*, *Bevis of Hamptoun*, *King Of Tars*, *Sir Isumbras*, *Sir Ferumbras*, *Siege of Melayne*, *King Horn*, *Guy of Warwick*, *Lion, Knight of Courtesy* and *the Fair Lady of Faguel* - which are studied in this work exemplify the representation of the Oriental other in all its aspects. Edward Said, while describing the differences between the East and the West, also defines who creates the other. Said states that “[e]ach [...] era produces its own distorted knowledge of the other, each its own reductive images, its own disputatious polemics” (vii). Hence, it can be claimed that the other is something produced through positive, negative and neutral attributions. In the case of Orientalism, the other is constructed with the information, which is both produced and assessed by the West. The West imaginatively produced some of the information about the East, however the view of the Orient was also based on observation. Said argues that the representation of the Orient is, to some extent, based on the observations of the East, and points out that “[i]t would be wrong to conclude that the orient was essentially an idea, or a creation with no corresponding reality” (Said 5). Thus, the West constructed the East through both observation and imagination.

The representation of the other, describes the Orient through the Western gaze. Edward Said, while building his argument in *Orientalism*, creates the definition of a pre-existing ideology that the West uses to other the East. Because of this binary system, which indicates the existence of an “other,” the dichotomy and the differentiation between the East and the West become possible. Said argues that this binary opposition is the core of the othering process, as the West favours itself and denounces the East. According to

Said, the West defined itself as “rational, virtuous, mature, [and] ‘normal’” (40). This definition of the self results in attributing the antonyms of the mentioned concepts to the East, creating an “irrational,” “dishonest,” “immature,” and “abnormal” East. The Orient, as the other, is represented in the literary texts, politics, or cultural reflections of the West. Said uses Karl Marx’s words as an epigraph, and later, as a reference in his book *Orientalism*, those who employing for the East “can not represent one another, they must themselves be represented” (Marx 98). However, there are arguments stating that Said used this quotation out of its context. Criticising Said, Habib states that, “[n]ot only does Said thus coolly substitute eastern peoples for French peasants; by a sleight of hand he also converts Marx’s word ‘representation’, meaning political representation, into ‘depiction’” (n.p.). Although the context is different, these words indeed reflect the attitude of the West when the representation of the East is taken into consideration. Giving the Orient no voice to speak for itself, the West controls the way the Orient exists. Thus, the Orient, in the Middle English romances which are discussed in this study is othered and reflected only from the Western perspective.

We see that no matter how much othered and depicted negatively by the West, the Orient, at the same time, is reflected as the place of Biblical origins, as exotic, and as an alluring land which is untamed, and as a challenge for the West to control and overcome. The Orientalist is fascinated by the exoticness of the Orient. The difference between the East and the West triggered the West to create knowledge about the Orient to discover and define the East. The exoticism, which is reflected in the romances, such as *Kyng Alisaunder* and *Bevis of Hamptoun*, are included in the different representations of the peoples and the lands of the East. These representations produce knowledge and information which are biased and one-sided. As Strickland argues exoticism is not always negative:

[i]n modern critical literature, exotics, aliens, enemies, foreigners, and monsters are often treated as analogous or closely so; and in contemporary medieval literature, any of these constituencies, however defined, might also exhibit exotic characteristics. This combined situation suggests another way to understand the medieval exotic: as a *quality* rather than as a limited set of real or imaginary ‘outside’ groups. But if the exotic is a quality, it is one that just as often carried positive connotations as negative ones. In later medieval art and literature, persons

or creatures are now fearful and repulsive, now intriguing and desirable. As a particularized brand of alterity, the exotic exuded ambivalence. (59-60)

Accordingly, the exotic Orient in the Middle Ages can be observed in both positive and negative ways. On the one hand, all the exotic races that are defined with certain “abnormal” aspects in the romances are clearly judged to be found evil or innocent. The Middle English romances analysed in the first chapter of this study present the exotic East with all of its characteristics and show that the Orientalist representation of the East as exotic existed in the Middle Ages by focusing on the representation of different races as exotic beings and different geographies that are exotic and alien to the West.

The main cultural points of interaction in the Middle Ages between the East and the West, namely Muslim Spain and its *Reconquista*, the ancient trade routes, and the Crusades, shaped the reception of both cultures in one another’s eyes. As the attitude towards the East is relative to the context of war or trade, the roots of the representation of the East are important. The unseen yet surely existing barrier between the East and the West was lifted during these encounters. Muslim, Christian, and Jewish scholars in Toledo and other cities of Al-Andalusia participated in translation activities. These translations included the texts of ancient philosophers, which in time became the foundation of the European Renaissance. Menocal, considering the effect of these translations states that “Arabic ‘translations,’ particularly in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, contributed decisively to the intellectual revival of Europe of that time” (89-10). The cultural influence of the East on the West was not only limited to the translation of the ancient philosophical texts. Eastern literature has its influence also on European culture and literature. In the courts of the French nobles, the songs and the music of the Arabs provided entertainment (Menocal 28). One of the important roots of the romance genre, which is the core of this study, based in these songs. Although Burrow cites the sources of medieval romance in Ancient Greece, Christianity and French poetry (1-5), he does not mention Al-Andalusian poetry as a predecessor of romance. On the other hand, Menocal argues that Provençal poetry was in the Hispano-Arabic sphere (83-86), which is a more comprehensive approach considering the cultural effects of the Arabic influence on Europe. This particular information is also

important in the sense that the East, which is represented or misrepresented in the romances, is described and othered through its own invention.

The second of the important cultural interactions between the East and the West is the Crusades. Other than their struggle with the Andalusians, the Europeans, for the first time, encountered the East on a large scale and directly with these military incursions. The effect of these encounters can be seen in the romance tradition in detail. Although the cultural impact is limited in comparison with Andalusians, the Crusades provided an insight to the East as the enemy. The romances reflected this insight by making their plots take shape around conquest and enmity as their heroes take action against the Saracens most of the time. The Crusades became the testing ground for the knights and the heroes of the romances, as discussed in the previous chapters of this work; hence, it can be said that the romances narrate the encounter between the West and the East with a certain mindset which reflects the West as the self and the East as the other. The Saracens and the East are depicted generally in a negative light to emphasise the virtues of Christianity and the West. The Saracens' attitude to the Christian pilgrims who want to visit the Holy Land and the ones who are already living there are represented as cruel and violent to justify the West's actions and promote the West's virtues.

The Middle English romances which are included in this study show that the East and the Saracens were the enemy of the West and they were the reason behind the conflict between the West and the East. During the Crusades, the East and the West clashed and fought for the sovereignty in the Holy Land, and the romances used these as the main points of interaction between the East and the West. It is clear that going on intermittently for almost two hundred years, the Crusades helped the West to know and understand its adversary. However, as argued above, Orientalism is observed in the representations of the East in the romances which tends to stereotype the Saracens and the East while describing them as the enemies of the West. It is significant that the name "Saracen" is given to anything or anyone who is not a Christian; even the presumed Viking invaders are given the name Saracen in *King Horn*. Indeed, ascribing monstrosities to the Saracens, the West undermines the normality of the East and constructs its own perception of "normal" in opposition to the ascribed "abnormalities."

Trade, on the other hand, is more complicated in terms of creating points of contact. Since the ancient times, the East and the West contacted and traded various goods and products. However, in the Middle Ages, trade with the East represented the exotic and valuable goods like spices, pearls, precious stones and textiles which created a fabulous and rich image of the East. In the romance *Kyng Alisaunder*, the riches and the exoticness of the East are described, and it is probable that trade contributed much to the creation this image of the East. Since trade is not as ideologically motivated as the interaction between the West and Al-Andalusia, and the Crusades, trade's reflection of the East inclined to be more positive as it represents the riches of the East. In the romances, the trade usually takes place in the context of slave trade to support the plot; however, the positive and rich image of the East is given through the goods that trade provides.

The East in the romances is represented in different ways. Still, one of the most common form of representation in the romances is the use of the hyperbole. In the romances, the numerical exaggerations are common in representing the number of the Saracen soldiers. In *The Sultan of Babylon*, for instance, the army of Saracens is "an hundred thousand" (ll. 110) strong. The massification of the East, stripping of the identity through huge numbers, illustrates the Orientalist nature of the romance. Furthermore, exaggeration of the physical representation is one of the most commonly used techniques in the romances. *Bevis of Hampton*, *Guy of Warwick*, *The Siege of Milan* are the romances, which are discussed in this study, that employ giants as adversaries for the heroes of the romances. The gigantic and monstrous figure of Saracens shows that the West perceives its enemy as outlandish and abnormal. The exaggerated features of the Eastern people are both positive and negative. The extremely rich people of India or the people with non-normal anatomies, who are mentioned in *Kyng Alisaunder*, also create an image of the East from positive perspectives.

As we have seen the Western heroes are depicted with ordinary attributes; they are knights of no supernatural size or power. However, there are representations of knights

who perform superhumanly. Nevertheless, these actions are represented as miracles or as the manifestations of God, so they are perceived as normal. The dichotomy which is created by the conditions of normality that are depicted in the romances, reflecting the strength of the Western heroes as God's grace and the othered features of the Eastern people as the works of devil portrays the Orientalist understanding of the East. The culture that produces these works, namely the Western culture, creates a line of defence against foreign influences by othering the East.

The idea that the East has worthy heroes and knights is unrealistic as the Eastern culture does not have the status of knighthood. Furthermore, the economic system and political administration that is called feudalism, which provides the background for knighthood is not present in the Eastern culture. However, in the romances there are worthy, heroic Saracens who are always defeated in battle and convert to Christianity. In the romances, such as *The Sultan of Babylon*, *King of Tars* or *Sir Ferumbras*, the representation of the "worthy" Saracen warrior shows how the West perceives the Eastern heroes; as subjects to be converted. This representation reflects the attitude of the West towards the East which has worthy heroes; however, they are to be converted. Still, this representation of the honourable adversary works in favour of the West, as it converts the worthy opponent, assimilates her/him, and makes her/him one of the Christian heroes. Picking the worthy Saracen to convert, the West strips the East of its values and valuables. Furthermore, picking "only" the worthy enemies in these romances also implies that the Western values and Christianity are superior to the Eastern values and Islam since only the knightly Saracens are converted.

In conclusion, the Middle English romances show that the Orientalist discourse that can be found in the Middle English romances shape and convey an image of the East which is created by the West. The depiction of the exotic in both negative and positive ways, the othering of the East as the enemy, religious adversary, and potential converts to Christianity in the romances present Orientalism and a struggle for identity creation through binary oppositions. Hence, it can be argued that Orientalism as a practice cannot be limited to a certain time and space; it can be found whenever and wherever East and West came into contact. Furthermore, the romances provide depictions and

representations of the East for the European audience to discuss and create their own versions of the East.



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## APPENDIX I: ORIGINALITY REPORTS



HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ  
YÜKSEK LİSANS/DOKTORA TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ORJİNALLİK RAPORU

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ  
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA

Tarih: 16/02/2018

Tez Başlığı: Orta İngilizce Romanslarında Doğu ve Doğuların Şarkiyatçı Temsili

Yukarıda başlığı gösterilen tez çalışmamın a) Kapak sayfası, b) Giriş, c) Ana bölümler ve d) Sonuç kısımlarından oluşan toplam 107 sayfalık kısmına ilişkin, 16/02/2018 tarihinde şahsım tarafından Turnitin adlı intihal tespit programından aşağıda belirtilen filtrelemeler uygulanarak alınmış olan orijinallik raporuna göre, tezimin benzerlik oranı %2' dir.

Uygulanan filtrelemeler:

- 1- Kabul/Onay ve Bildirim sayfaları hariç
- 2- Kaynakça hariç
- 3- Alıntılar hariç
- 4- 5 kelimeden daha az örtüşme içeren metin kısımları hariç

Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Tez Çalışması Orijinallik Raporu Alınması ve Kullanılması Uygulama Esasları'nı inceledim ve bu Uygulama Esasları'nda belirtilen azami benzerlik oranlarına göre tez çalışmamın herhangi bir intihal içermediğini; aksinin tespit edileceği muhtemel durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.

Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.

*Ali Belenli*  
16.02.2018

Adı Soyadı: Ali Belenli

Öğrenci No: N09148344

Anabilim Dalı: İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı

Programı: İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı

Statüsü: ☐ Y.Lisans ☐ Doktora ☒ Bütünleşik Dr.

## DANIŞMAN ONAYI

UYGUNDUR.

*Prof. Dr. F. Burçin EROL*

Prof. Dr. F. Burçin EROL



HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
THESIS/DISSERTATION ORIGINALITY REPORT

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Date: 16/02/2018

Thesis Title: Orientalist Representation of the Saracens and the East in the Middle English Romances

According to the originality report obtained by myself by using the Turnitin plagiarism detection software and by applying the filtering options stated below on 16/02/2018 for the total of 107 pages including the a) Title Page, b) Introduction c) Main Chapters, and d) Conclusion sections of my thesis entitled as above, the similarity index of my thesis is 2%.

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I respectfully submit this for approval.

*Ali Belenli*  
16.02.2018

Name Surname: Ali Belenli  
Student No: N09148344  
Department: English Language and Literature  
Program: English Language and Literature  
Status: ☒ Masters ☐ Ph. D. ☐ Integrated Ph.D.

**ADVISOR APPROVAL**

APPROVED.

*F. Burçin EROL*

Prof. Dr. F. Burçin EROL

## APPENDIX II:ETHICS BOARD WAIVEW FORMS FOR THESIS WORK

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                       |             |             |           |                |                           |           |                           |          |                                                                                                                       |
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|  <p><b>HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ<br/>SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ<br/>TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ETİK KURUL İZİN MUAFİYETİ FORMU</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                       |             |             |           |                |                           |           |                           |          |                                                                                                                       |
| <p><b>HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ<br/>SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ<br/>İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Tarih: 16/02/2018</p> <p>Tez Başlığı: Orta İngilizce Romanslarında Doğu ve Doğuluların Şarkiyatçı Temsili</p> <p>Yukarıda başlığı gösterilen tez çalışmam:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. İnsan ve hayvan üzerinde deney niteliği taşımamaktadır,</li> <li>2. Biyolojik materyal (kan, idrar vb. biyolojik sıvılar ve numuneler) kullanılmasını gerektirmemektedir.</li> <li>3. Beden bütünlüğüne müdahale içermemektedir.</li> <li>4. Gözlemsel ve betimsel araştırma (anket, ölçek/skala çalışmaları, dosya taramaları, veri kaynakları taraması, sistem-model geliştirme çalışmaları) niteliğinde değildir.</li> </ol> <p>Hacettepe Üniversitesi Etik Kurullar ve Komisyonlarının Yönergelerini inceledim ve bunlara göre tez çalışmamın yürütülebilmesi için herhangi bir Etik Kuruldan izin alınmasına gerek olmadığını; aksi durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.</p> <p>Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.</p> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;"> <br/> 16.02.2018 </div> <table style="width: 100%; margin-top: 10px;"> <tr> <td>Adı Soyadı:</td> <td>Ali Belenli</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Öğrenci No:</td> <td>N09148344</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Anabilim Dalı:</td> <td>İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Programı:</td> <td>İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Statüsü:</td> <td> <input type="checkbox"/> Y.Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Doktora <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bütünleşik Dr. </td> </tr> </table> | Adı Soyadı:                                                                                                           | Ali Belenli | Öğrenci No: | N09148344 | Anabilim Dalı: | İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı | Programı: | İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı | Statüsü: | <input type="checkbox"/> Y.Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Doktora <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bütünleşik Dr. |
| Adı Soyadı:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Ali Belenli                                                                                                           |             |             |           |                |                           |           |                           |          |                                                                                                                       |
| Öğrenci No:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | N09148344                                                                                                             |             |             |           |                |                           |           |                           |          |                                                                                                                       |
| Anabilim Dalı:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı                                                                                             |             |             |           |                |                           |           |                           |          |                                                                                                                       |
| Programı:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı                                                                                             |             |             |           |                |                           |           |                           |          |                                                                                                                       |
| Statüsü:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Y.Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Doktora <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bütünleşik Dr. |             |             |           |                |                           |           |                           |          |                                                                                                                       |
| <p><b><u>DANIŞMAN GÖRÜŞÜ VE ONAYI</u></b></p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 50px;"> <br/> Prof. Dr. F. Ercin EROL </div> <p>Detaylı Bilgi: <a href="http://www.sosyalbilimler.hacettepe.edu.tr">http://www.sosyalbilimler.hacettepe.edu.tr</a></p> <p>Telefon: 0-312-2976860      Faks: 0-3122992147      E-posta: <a href="mailto:sosyalbilimler@hacettepe.edu.tr">sosyalbilimler@hacettepe.edu.tr</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                       |             |             |           |                |                           |           |                           |          |                                                                                                                       |



**HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
ETHICS BOARD WAIVER FORM FOR THESIS WORK**

**HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE TO THE DEPARTMENT PRESIDENCY**

Date: 16/02/2018

Thesis Title: Orientalist Representation of the Saracens and the East in the Middle English Romances

My thesis work related to the title above:

1. Does not perform experimentation on animals or people.
2. Does not necessitate the use of biological material (blood, urine, biological fluids and samples, etc.).
3. Does not involve any interference of the body's integrity.
4. Is not based on observational and descriptive research (survey, measures/scales, data scanning, system-model development).

I declare, I have carefully read Hacettepe University's Ethics Regulations and the Commission's Guidelines, and in order to proceed with my thesis according to these regulations I do not have to get permission from the Ethics Board for anything; in any infringement of the regulations I accept all legal responsibility and I declare that all the information I have provided is true.

I respectfully submit this for approval.

*Ali Belenli*  
16.02.2018

Name Surname: Ali Belenli

Student No: N09148344

Department: English Language and Literature

Program: English Language and Literature

Status: ☐ Masters ☐ Ph.D. ☒ Integrated Ph.D.

**ADVISER COMMENTS AND APPROVAL**

*F. Burgin EROL*

Prof. Dr. F. Burgin EROL