

## **Ambivalent Spaces: The Moorish City and the Instability of Colonial Discourse in Anglo-American Travel Writing on Morocco**

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### **Abstract**

This article provides a postcolonial reading of Anglo-American travel narratives on Morocco during the early twentieth century by accentuating the spatial dimension of colonial discourse. While existing scholarship on travel writing has largely focused on Orientalist representation and the construction of cultural difference, less attention has been allotted to the spatial dimension of these accounts as a site of negotiation between colonial authority and native agency. Drawing on the theoretical insights of Edward Said, Michel Foucault, Mary Louise Pratt, and Homi K. Bhabha, this article scrutinizes how Moroccan cities, courts, and domestic interiors operate as ambivalent contact zones within Anglo-American travel writing. Through close readings of travel narratives by Isabel Anderson, Frances Macnab, and Edith Wharton, this paper argues that spaces not only serve as tropes for colonial scrutiny but also enable the emergence of alternative discourses articulated by native figures. These spatial encounters undermine the discursive foundations of colonial authority and reveal the limitations of Orientalist knowledge. By re-negotiating space as a discursive trope, this study argues that the politics of spatiality function as cross-cultural terrains where colonial power is multi-handed, resisted, and at times reversed, thereby exposing the inherent instability of colonial discourse.

**Keywords:** postcolonial space, travel writing, Morocco, ambivalence, contact zone