The Socio-Political Representation of Colonial Algeria in the French Animated Series Petite Casbah (2024)

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Abstract

Animated cartoons often portray complex historical and socio-political realities through simplified characters, visual symbolism, and narrative techniques. The French colonization of Algeria (1830–1962) was marked by political domination, social inequalities, cultural tensions, and resistance, culminating in the Algerian War of Independence (1954–1962). Set in Algiers in 1955, the French animated series *Petite Casbah* (2024) provides a fictional representation of Algerian society during this period. This study examines the representation of colonial Algeria through the first two episodes of the series, employing qualitative content analysis supported by historical contextualization and postcolonial interpretation. The analysis is guided by Frantz Fanon's postcolonial perspective on colonial domination and resistance. The socio-political elements identified are classified into five categories: society, culture, education, politics, and conflict. Each category is examined through narrative and visual features, including scene distribution, character interactions, dialogues, visual elements, and animation techniques. The findings reveal that the first episode predominantly foregrounds colonial conflict through the representation of police authority, the arrest of Malek, and the unequal relationship between colonial institutions and Algerian individuals. The second episode places greater emphasis on social conditions, educational aspirations, and everyday interactions, while visual elements in both episodes contribute to the representation of cultural identity. Although conflict is less explicitly structured in the second episode, it remains central to the narrative development. From a postcolonial perspective, the study demonstrates how the series represents colonial power relations through institutional authority, social inequalities, and the everyday experiences of Algerian characters and also it highlights the interconnectedness of socio-political dimensions in constructing a nuanced representation of colonial Algeria.

Keywords: *Algeria, Animated Cartoons, Colonialism, Postcolonial Representation, Socio-Political Context*