In the 19th century, the theme of the city becomes more and more important in literature, and travel literature speaks of this growing interest. This paper will set out to analyse the hypostases of the city in travel literature, starting from three case studies, three authors who are first of all painters: Eugène Delacroix, Eugène Fromentin and Gustave Guillaumet. Landscapes or descriptions which concentrate on only one aspect of the city, we will ask ourselves which are the elements retaining the attention of the painters? We will make the distinction between *paysage de ville* and *paysage ubain*, in order to show the place occupied by the Arab city in the European imaginary, this neuralgic point where these two cultures meet and confront to one another. Can we speak about the construction of a myth of the Arab city?