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François Pouillon and Jean-Claude Vatin, eds., *After Orientalism: Critical Perspectives on Western Agency and Eastern Re-appropriations*, Brill, 2015, 289 pp., \$71.00 US, ISBN: 9789004282520.

The debate on Orientalism began over five decades ago. Most recognize Edward Said's *Orientalism* as the catalyst of an academic endeavor to critique colonial and postcolonial knowledge production on the Orient within the Western world. However, the editors of this volume, François Pouillon and Jean-Claude Vatin, suggest the need to reevaluate Said's position within the genealogy of the political critique of colonial science, positing that the debate began and impacted the humanities and social sciences prior to Said's work. While using Said as a springboard, the purpose of this volume is not to deconstruct the pros and cons of Said's *Orientalism* in an attempt to refute his particular thesis on the subject. Instead, these scholars identify the limitations placed on research as a result of both the theoretical framework posited by Said as well as the ideological underpinnings of both his work and that of subsequent scholars building on his work. This collection of essays successfully broadens the scope of research and debate on Orientalism.

The volume is composed of four parts. Part 1, "Alternative Historiographies of Orientalism," begins with a series of historiographical essays intended to support the argument that the history of Orientalism is neither uniform nor unequivocal. Part 2, "Other Imperialisms," explores the history of Orientalism in the context of non-Western empires engaged in "internal Orientalism." Part 3, "Recovering Non-indigenous Heritages," examines how post-colonial states incorporated knowledge acquired under colonial rule into the formation of national identities. Part 4, "Inventing Orientalist Traditions," re-examines the cultural creations born in the encounter with foreigners and reframes these encounters as indigenous productions.

Part 1 begins with François Pouillon questioning, "What is to be done with Orientalism today, given changes in the disciplines, in knowledge regimes, in the very function of the museography, given the popularization of indigenous productions in what is now called 'airport art?'" (15). While Pouillon does not offer an answer to this question, it is clear the objective is to incite a critical engagement with Orientalism, as both theory and subject. In an effort to move beyond the dichotomy of those who understand colonial science as "pure science, independent of all powers-that-be," and those who claim that "it is no science at all because its idea of the universal camouflages domination by the West," Pouillon identifies an area of possible scholarly engagement. The subjects that potentially limit the opposition between these dichotomous positions are peripheral figures of colonialism (10). One example provided by Pouillon are the *barki*, Algerian back-up troops abandoned by French

colonial powers to the retribution of their brothers (13). Through an exhibition of both benefits and costs accrued by peripheral figures our understanding of the hierarchy existing between Orientalism's center and periphery becomes nuanced, revealing "exceptions, differences, and some degrees of play" concerning Orientalist science and politics.

In the second essay, Robert Irwin identifies the "real discourses of Orientalism" as both multiple and varied. Irwin argues that *Orientalism* and subsequent works influenced by Said, "have actually closed off areas of enquiry and, though there has certainly been debate, that debate has been conducted within restricted parameters" (18). Using Said's work as a frame of reference, Irwin explores and dispels arguments presented in *Orientalism*. In doing so, Irwin effectively displays the parameters of the debate on Orientalism and how it disregards certain historical realities. As evidence he cites the French Empire's close collusion with colonial administrators, academics, and artists in North Africa (18), how British Orientalism differed greatly from German or French Orientalism as a consequence of their respective university systems (25), how Orientalist studies began within the confines of the clergy and church for religious purposes (20), and how European productions of Orientalist artwork resulted from the demand of Americans and their fascination with the Orient, and not as the result of a certain political agenda that posited the Orient as "uncivilized" (28). In engaging with Said's *Orientalism* in this fashion, however, Irwin falls into the same polemical trap he accuses other pro-Said scholars of falling into, but from the opposite perspective. That is, in trying to simply present "historical facts" Irwin reduces the power structures in play to the context of European churches and fails to ask or explain how or why it is that Americans became fascinated with Orientalism and its artistic renderings. In sticking with the "facts" Irwin construes Orientalists and their productions as if they are categorically benign and simply a consequence of spiritual endeavors and market demands, presenting an overly simplistic historical reality.

Léon Buskens and Baudouin Dupret's contribution to this volume, "The Invention of Islamic Law," provides an alternative historiography of Islamic law. In analyzing examples from Dutch and French traditions of the study of Islamic law, they deconstruct the notion of Islamic law through the reconstruction of its genealogy. They demonstrate how Western legal positivism defined knowledge normatively and thereby compelled an "invention" of the positivist conception of *shari'a*; in other words, their genealogical investigation reveals the ways in which Islamic law was an Orientalist legal invention fashioned by the West with the purpose of codifying normativity. However, as Buskens and Dupret argue, Islamic scholars and jurists greatly participated in this process and not only in the context of colonial domination (47).

Zakaria Rhani's essay focuses on intellectuals Fatema Mernissi, Abdelkebir Khatibi, Abdallah Laroui and their works. For Rhani, these intellectuals fall into a category of scholars who, in their efforts to deconstruct Orientalism, fail to recognize the reality of individuals living in the "Orient." Rhani contends that "de/postcolonialism should not be presented as radically different from the colonial and pre-colonial periods but critically continuous with—and critical of—their sociological and ethnographic productions" (63). The anti-anthropology tendencies of developmentalist sociology and ideological nationalism, characteristic of the intellectuals' works examined in this essay, requires a re-reading of the colonial and Orientalist heritage. Rhani cautions that any critique of Orientalism failing to re-read these works through a lens uncolored by the aforementioned frameworks, "will work against rather than for the liberation of individuals with particular histories living in a real society" (63). For Rhani, post-Orientalists are just as capable of essentializing individuals by ignoring their realities.

In her chapter, Jessica M. Marglin traces the development of the historiography on Jews in Islamic North Africa. She points out how, “the myth of Islamic tolerance...developed as a counter-myth among Maghribi Jews and Muslims who wanted to debunk the lachrymose view of North African history” (64). The historiographical spectrum on Jews in the Islamic world, with interfaith utopia at one end and Muslim persecution of Jews on the other, is methodologically limiting. Marglin points out that both of these historiographical trends seek to answer whether or not Jews were victims of Islamic rule. This positions Jews as either victims, denying them of their agency, or ignores the social and religious inequalities among Jews and Muslims. Calling for the dissolution of this spectrum of scholarly production, Marglin suggests a more fruitful direction in historiography would involve understanding how Jews interacted with Muslims on a “quotidian basis” (73).

Olivier Herrenschmidt’s article rounds out this section and deals with the impossibilities facing Western social science researchers in a postcolonial world. These challenges compel him to posit the question: “So where do we stand now?” (82). Herrenschmidt begins the essay with a personal account of an encounter he had with a professor in Hyderabad. Upon describing his research, the professor quickly categorizes and dismisses Herrenschmidt as a “Western leftist with a left universalism.” He contends that this personal anecdote is emblematic of a larger trend that delegitimizes Western social scientists whose research focuses on people and places outside of the West on ideological grounds. Refusing to give in to this line of critique, Herrenschmidt draws upon the work of Max Weber to argue that comparative research “enables us to understand and learn about each other above and beyond resentments and anathema,” suggesting this warrants the continuation of scholarship by Western scholars on non-western topics, places, and subjects (85).

The first essay in Part 2 is Ethem Eldem’s work focusing on the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire and how the conditions of Ottoman acceptance of Western superiority gave way to Ottoman Orientalism. Circumventing self-hatred, the Ottoman Elite projected Orientalist tropes onto Arabs, Kurds, and Bedouins within the empire. Relying on the existence of the Ottoman Empire’s position between East and West created an ambiguous Orientalism that maintained respect for the core of the empire by focusing on the “othering” of certain sectors of the population (96). The question remains, how prolific was this particular discourse? While Eldem gives Osman Hamdi Bey and Halet Efendi as examples, who else contributed to this awkward relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Orientalism?

Emmanuel Szurek makes a case for an “internal Orientalism” where Turkey is concerned. The questions guiding this essay, entitled “‘Go West’: Variations of Kamalist Orientalism,” include: Was Kemalist Orientalism the result of an internalized, external Orientalism? Or should it be understood as a vernacular form of Orientalism, transcending the separation between East and West? Szurek explains the Kemalist model of Orientalism as one that mobilizes “the binary of east-west axiology through the mixture of three key components” (104). These three compatible and contradictory components include: anti-imperialism, mimetic Orientalism, and vernacular Orientalism. Szurek commendably argues Kemalist Orientalism was not simply a reaction to “the West,” but instead represented a flexible set of discursive tropes and representations that allowed the, “progressive, secularist, nationalist camp (the West within) to be separated from the reactionary, clerical, Kurdish or backward camp (the Orient within)” (105).

In Chapter 10, Stéphane A. Dudoignon identifies two turning points in the history of the political management of Muslim-background national cultures in the USSR in 1958 and 1976. For Dudoignon these moments in history indicated significant steps in the “diffusion

of Oriental scholarship in [Russian] mass culture” (132). He further contends, this exposure to Oriental scholarship made possible rapprochements during the 1980s between secular and Islamic intelligentsias affecting profoundly the political landscapes of countries like Azerbaijan and Tajikistan.

Elisabeth Allès examines the “internal Orientalism” of China in the final article of Part 2. This “internal Orientalism,” according to her, developed over centuries in China (134). Populations living on the frontiers of the empire were continuously subjected to assimilation policies in an effort to create an institutionalized understanding of minority nationalities. Focusing on 1980s and 1990s China, Allès contends that minority groups were constructed as “other” in diametric opposition to modern Han identity. In this period the Chinese state established a framework of “internal Orientalism” through the use of reforms and cultural expressions to solidify Han identity as the national identity of China.

Part 3 begins with Jean-Gabriel Leturcq tracing the historical trajectory of Cairo’s Museum of Islamic Art. Leturcq identifies the museum’s location in “the land of Orientalism” (145) as unique, prompting the question: “[C]an displaying Arab Art in an Arab country constitute an ‘oriental’ answer to Orientalism?” (145). For Leturcq the answer is in the affirmative. He analyzes how the museum reflects, confronts, and contests definitions of Arab art and its evolution into Islamic art. He contends that Egyptian knowledge of the art displayed in the museum intersected and influenced the academic models formed by European centers of Orientalism.

Emmanuelle Perrin examines the genealogy of Egyptian folklore as understood by the Egyptian, Ahmad Amin (1886-1954), a reader of the Orientalist Edward Lane. Perrin examines and explains the relationship between Amin’s *Dictionary*, a work detailing the mores and customs of Egyptians, and English Orientalist Edward Lane’s 1833 book, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*. Perrin argues that the content of the works reveal a filial, inter-textual relationship. Amin’s focus on women and religion, cornerstones in the construction of Western representations of the Orient, shows how the material he reused from Lane reflected Orientalist perceptions. Perrin’s article discloses the importance of investigating the “over-determination” induced by Orientalists productions (163).

In his contribution to the volume under review, Nicholas S. Hopkins features Egyptian intellectual history regarding the debate between reformism and science, more specifically in the context of anthropology. Anthropology as an intellectual pursuit in Egypt developed in the 1930s. Hopkins identifies Mohammad Galal (1906-1943), with his academic training, fieldwork, and publication of an anthropological study, as the first professional Egyptian anthropologist (175). In summarizing his academic career and accomplishments it is clear Hopkins’s objective is to situate Galal within the anthropological tradition during Egypt’s interwar period. Galal’s training under the French anthropologist Marcel Mauss influenced his whole career, revealing another example of how colonial knowledge induced the way indigenous intellectuals understood their own society.

After obtaining independence, some Libyans chose to translate colonial writings written about their country. One such scholar, Mohammed Khalifa Tillisi (1930-2010), is the subject of Mouldi Lahmar’s essay. Lahmar examines Tillisi’s critical reading of the Italian colonial officer Enrico De Agostini’s depiction of his country. Tillisi rebuked the empirical accuracy of De Agostini’s work and discerned which parts of his work could be reused to write the “true history of his country” (188). This endeavor is compelled by the need to determine the relationship between Libyans and the state. Colonial officials presented the relationship between individuals and the state as hierarchical, with tribes and ethnic groups holding the lowest positions in society—a model that would not suffice in a newly independent Libya.

For Lahmar, it is in the investigation of identity formation vis-à-vis Orientalism that holds potential for productive research in the future.

Sylvette Larzul's chapter opens Part 4 by tracing the reception of *Arabian Nights* from the perspective of the Arab world. Popular opinion in the medieval Arab world denigrated the work. Upon contact with the European world, however, the book garnered esteem and experienced a positive renewal of opinion in the Arab world. In the context of postcolonial criticisms of Orientalism the text once again was maligned as an Orientalist production. By focusing on the history of the reception of the book, Larzul shows how "the work was constructed...through a sort of double mirroring relationship between the Arab and Western worlds" (217). This study points to how the reception of a work of literature is less a reflection of the inherent value of the work itself and instead provides insights on the dominant mode of thinking among its evaluators.

In delineating the history of carpet making in Morocco, Alain de Pommereau exposes how carpet weaving played a significant role in the formation of national identity. For example, the "Rabat" carpet prefigured the choice of capital city for a new state in the Sharifian Empire. This article challenges existing scholarship which argues that Moroccan weaving practices originated in local traditions. According to de Pommereau the "tradition" of the Moroccan carpet is neither traceable to a single moment in history nor identifiable with one specific group of historical actors. Instead, this history is "the result of a long, multi-dimensional process in which both sides of the Mediterranean played a part" (234). In other words, carpet weaving played a role in the construction of national identity in Morocco while simultaneously being recognized as a Turkish import. Also focusing on Morocco in her chapter, Claire Nicholas discusses contemporary Moroccan fashion and cultural tourism industries. She underlines how people residing in the "Orient" are skillful in their self-representation through their engagement and disengagement with categories of traditional dress (248-249). Contemporary Moroccan fashion designers and professionals in the industry navigate their way through a global fashion system, while adeptly maneuvering around cultural difference. However, depending on the circumstances, there is an adoption and negation of the stereotype of artisan in their quest for recognition pointing to Orientalist influences.

Mercedes Volait's study focuses on nineteenth-century art collectors in Egypt. This essay depicts how the passions of French and Egyptian art lovers who partook in the commerce of Islamic art objects in Orientalist interiors aimed to preserve Egypt's cultural heritage. Volait contends that these figures changed the perception of Islamic art by providing access to the artifacts and endowing them with value. With careful attention to the art acquired and the acquirers themselves, Volait emphasizes how we can better understand the practice of collecting Orientalist art and thoughtfully deconstruct "selective sorting systems and misunderstandings at the core of all cultural interaction" (253).

The final essay of *After Orientalism* serves as more of a conclusion to the collection than as a stand alone article. In "After Orientalism: Returning the Orient to the Orientals," Jean-Claude Vatin evaluates the overall affects of this volume, ascertaining that the plurality of Orientalism and the relationship of varying figures to the discourse are undeniable. Furthermore, Vatin asserts the need to revise old hypotheses concerning Orientalism because the paradigms they produce—domination and sectorization, the separation of disciplines implicated by Orientalism, and the idea that scholarly views were disparate and out of sync with popular views—are no longer relevant (272). Vatin proclaims that these essays yield a broader understanding of interconnections, exchanges, and overlapping transferences.

Orientalism and its creation of the “Orient” is not only a Western production—meaning it is not simply an external process—but one that was negotiated, reformulated, and appropriated internally. *After Orientalism* successfully shows that Orientalism, in all of its varied forms, is worthy of theoretical engagement and debate. Even more powerful is the argument that by reframing our understanding of Orientalism scholars are presented with new research opportunities. This is shown time and again in this volume. One area of research opened up by the objectives of this book, however unaddressed by its content, is gender. As a touchstone of Orientalism gender holds the possibility for even more innovative scholarship regarding the negotiation of identity formation vis-à-vis Orientalism. The importance of this work rests in the emphasis on Oriental actors within their past and present formulation of their world.

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