Sharmani Patricia Gabriel and Bernard Wilson (Eds), *Orientalism and Reverse Orientalism in Literature and Film: Beyond East and West*. London and New York: Routledge, 2021. 234 pp. ISBN: 9780367615222.

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Since its publication in 1978, Edward Said's *Orientalism* and his subsequent arguments in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) have played a significant role in identifying the essential scope of postcolonial scholarship across disciplines. Said's focus was on nineteenth- and twentieth-century British and French representations of the Middle East, and Orientalism was posited as the ideological framework for the discursive interpretation of colonization as well as the articulation of subaltern identities (Roddan 168-169). This notion of Orientalism explicates, within the discussion and debate of postcolonial studies, how the "West" (Europe and the United States) has structured a perplexing interpretation of the "Arab" and "Muslim" world (Ranji 1137). According to Said (1978), these depictions produce a reductionist and empirically incongruous understanding of the Other (the Orient), additionally perceiving the inhabitants of Asia, North Africa, and the Middle East through a Western-centric perspective (Kerboua 8-9). Orientalism is thus a method of coping with "questions, objects, qualities, and regions deemed Oriental" (Said 72), premised on "the Orient's special space in European Western experience" (1). Without approaching Orientalism as a discourse, Said proposes the impossibility of comprehending the historical and contemporary interactions between the West and the East, as well as the structured authoritative discourse by which these interactions are executed. This ensures the continuation of mistreatment and deliberate distortion of the Orient because it lends moral authority and political legitimacy to the perceived global dominance of Europe (Donzé-Magnier 3).

Orientalism and Reverse Orientalism in Literature and Film: Beyond East and West, edited by Sharmani Patricia Gabriel and Bernard Wilson, arguably fills the gaps and needs that still persist in this dichotomous discourse. Graham Huggan's illuminating Foreword to this volume indicates how this collection of thirteen chapters (including the introduction), like other studies on Orientalism, confronts a myriad of problems, including the challenge of shifting the long-established terms of discussion in this field. In their introduction, Gabriel and Wilson cite globalization as one of the reasons why, in the more than four decades since the publication of Said's *Orientalism*, the world, both "East" and "West," has experienced significant geopolitical,

structural, and intellectual shifts. These changes and their repercussions are made one of the coordinates for intervention in this volume. According to the editors, the book focuses primarily on how the dissemination of knowledge and the representation of cultures that were once regarded as unquestionably Other have transitioned in response to "changes in power discourses and relationships, on political, cultural, religious, and ideological grounds" (2). In this regard, the volume explores the notion that to comprehend Orientalism, one must first transcend "complacency or taken-for-grantedness" (5) to detect what has been overshadowed and deemed inaccessible by the oppositional boundaries that have been generated between East and West. To transcend Orientalism's distinctions is not to transcend Orientalism in its entirety; rather, it is to use specific tropes of Orientalism in a highly effective manner, as the editors argue. In this frame of reference, the volume takes a decolonial turn in that the twelve chapters that follow the well-structured introduction incorporate cosmopolitan perspectives on diversality and knowledge production.

The volume is divided into three parts, namely "(Neo)Imperial desire and re(pro)ductive stereotypes", "East-West travel and cultural translation", and "Re-Orienting national history and glocalizing contexts," and its contributors comprise scholars and academics from all over the world, including both established and emerging voices in their fields. The opening chapter by Julie F. Codell highlights how, in an Orientalized environment, the ambivalent position of the female as both colonizer and colonized becomes perceivable. Codell depicts how the film *Abdul the Damned* (1935) "explores several intertwined topics: psychoanalytic themes of masquerade, narcissism, voyeurism; Orientalism as a female fantasy; and the role of white women in colonialism, all converging on what I call 'female harem desire" (17). She argues that while the film glosses over factual accuracy with Orientalist imaginings about the harem, which appears to be a meeting place for East and West, the interaction reinforces Orientalist prejudices and the strategical supremacy of white colonial powers. The second chapter in this section by Bernard Wilson analyzes three cinematographic depictions of Japanese society and culture: *The Last Samurai*, *Lost in Translation*, and *Kill Bill Volume 1*. Wilson illustrates how these cinematic interpretations of Japanese society and culture over the past century, despite their ostensibly divergent narrative purposes, employ fundamentally similar binarizing and orientalizing techniques. In addition, Wilson investigates the extent to which the cultural stereotypes and ethnocultural categories depicted in these three films, which feature *Japaneseness* as a central element of their discourse, can be seen to be stereotypical Western clichés operating within the conceptual framework of Orientalism. In the concluding chapter in this section, Lucian Țion makes it clear that the popularity of Yul Brynner in the role of King Mongkut, Rama IV of Siam, was unmatched by any other role in the actor's professional life, and that "this undoubtedly helped make Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein's 1951 stage production of *The King and I* one of Broadway's most emblematic musicals of

the twentieth century" (52). Comparing Hammerstein's *The King and I* (1956) with Andy Tennant's *Anna and the King* (1999), Țion contends that Tennant's emphasis that the Leonowens franchise was based on historical fact—compared to a somewhat slippery reimagining of history at work in the Rodgers/Hammerstein musical—surreptitiously reinstates the Western imperialism that enabled Anna to make the journey to Siam and operate as an alleged intermediary of modernization in the Orient.

The second section consists of four compelling chapters that investigate literary correlations between Orientalism and "Orientalism in reverse". The first chapter by Nicholas O. Pagan examines John Steinbeck's *East of Eden* (1952) to demonstrate how the text functions as an intertext or pre-text for subsequent depictions of the same ethnic and national clustering in Chinese American fiction of the end of the twentieth century. Pagan explains certain "ways in which *East of Eden* establishes a movement from East to West which is not merely geographical but also highlights a need for East–West cross-cultural collaboration and understanding" (70). Moreover, he argues that the novel exemplifies an innovative endeavour in American literature to compare and contrast issues of East–West (particularly Chinese–White American) cooperation and coordination with the complicated matter of translation. The second chapter by Yu Min Claire Chen demonstrates that while nineteenth-century European travel literature perceived the foreign as distinctively exotic and as the Other, early twentieth-century modernist texts considered the Other as necessary for a more comprehensive understanding of the self. In this context, this chapter examines the concept of self-identity as it is evidenced in otherness in the writings of Victor Segalen (1878–1919), whose paradigm shifting conceptions of the Other were ignored during his life time. Chen analyses "the encounter between the East and West and [showcases] the ways in which an understanding of exoticism can be reimagined in Segalen's posthumously published works, *Essai sur l'exotisme* (*Essay on Exoticism*, written during 1904–1918), *Equipée* (1915), and *René Leys* (1917), which offer representations of China" (83).

Asl Degirmenci Altin's chapter begins with the author's personal note that demonstrates that the plight of immigrants and refugees worldwide has been a significant issue over the past several decades, exposing "Orientalist discourses surrounding immigrants from the global South and East" (96). Altin cites the Pakistani author Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West* (2017) as an example of the literary interpretation and perspective of immigrants and refugees. Through the novel's main characters, Altin demonstrates how this novel transcends the traditional preconceptions of the East, Eastern women, and Islam. She also illustrates how the novel defies new Orientalist rhetoric that emphasizes binary distinctions between immigrants and natives by envisioning "a possible future in which the influx of immigrants is not merely tolerated but celebrated" (97). Hisashi Ozawa's chapter explores the philosophical commonalities between East and West by utilizing the companionship and interactions

of British author Aldous Huxley and Japanese author D.T. Suzuki. Ozawa explores a cultural shift that exemplifies utopian research's criticism of its own supposition that utopias and utopianism have never existed in non-Western cultures. Here, the author examines Huxley's 1962 novel *Island,* which is arguably the most well-known story that uses East–West discussion and debate, to demonstrate "the relation between Huxley's *Island* and Suzuki's social thought post-World War II by focusing on their utopianism, particularly their idea of making the best of the Eastern and the Western as well as their Buddhist, pacifist, and ecological visions" (112). This section concludes with David Huddart's chapter, which focuses on the question of the misrepresentation of other cultural contexts. To answer this question, this chapter "interprets detailed examples of the kind of personal reflection that experts themselves engage in, specifically those in the business of cultural translation, acutely aware of the problems of taking one text and rendering it in another language" (128). In doing so, the chapter concentrates on the memoirs of renowned translator Edward G. Seidensticker, but also takes into consideration other researchers on Japanese culture who wrote over a lengthy period of time and whose knowledge and experience are intertwined with their personal lives.

The concluding section of this volume argues that any effort to reaffirm the supremacy of a national or regional culture could exacerbate cultural conflict. Qiao Li demonstrates that even though the construction of the Orient has ramifications for Arab nations, Islam, and the Middle East, narratives of "the Orient" also have considerable implications for other geographical regions such as China, Japan, and South Korea. His chapter examines the films of the Fifth Generation of Chinese filmmakers, including Zhang Yimou. Qiao argues that Zhang's *Red Sorghum* (1987) transcends the binaries of Orientalism, asserting "that the perceived latent Eurocentrism/Orientalism of Chinese films reflects Western scholars' preoccupation with theories concerning the dualism of dominance/resistance between East and West" (146). Qiao questions the hegemony of Orientalist frameworks in the Western study of Chinese culture by relying on his understanding of Chinese cultural particularities to demonstrate how auteur directors like Zhang project "the national" and how these auteur visions could act in the global arena. Sheng-Mei Ma's chapter reverses the whites' Orientalization of "off-white" figures to China's Orientalization of "off-yellow," darker-hued characters. Ma focuses on how "the national symbol becomes a symbol of peace as the New China fashions its own identity vis-à-vis its Orient of ethnic minorities, Asiatic neighbours, Africans, and others" (173). The overall understanding of the intricacies and ramifications of Chinese immigrant and Chinese American works of literature in reference to Orientalism must be expanded, and Melody Yunzi Li's chapter reflects precisely this perspective. Specifically, it examines "the ways in which geographical locales and orientations, particularly South, East and West, function in Sinophone Chinese American literature, and the attempts in this literature to move beyond previously hegemonic North-South and East-West

dichotomies, both at an external level [and] internal level within the American geographical landscape" (187). The concluding chapter of the section as well as the volume by Sung-Ae Lee explores the interconnections between scripts and genres, conceptual frameworks that share critical components like stereotypical event patterns, but are fundamentally distinct from each other. Lee argues that where a genre may serve as a forum for dialogue between Eastern and Western cultures, the script may transmit distinguishable subtleties.

In addition to being cognizant of the greater concerns of the field within which they encapsulate their work, the editors and contributors also pay careful attention to the specificities and intricacies highlighted by the texts with which they engage. The diversity of the texts, genres, time periods, approaches, and methods covered in this collection demonstrates that Orientalism is neither an institutionally cohesive nor homogeneous field of research. This volume not only marks a turning point for future research and interventions in inter/multidisciplinary approaches to Orientalism and Reverse Orientalism, but also emphasizes radical, diverse, and decolonial academic discourses in which borderless thinking is possible. It encourages us to transform academic accountability and prerogatives so that they emanate from reciprocity and plurality rather than power structures and epistemic mechanisms of exclusion and privilege.

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