

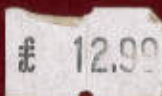
# ORIENTALISM

CHRISTINE PELTRE

The product of painters on the move, Orientalism was first and foremost a question of territories – territories lying mainly within the confines of the Ottoman Empire. The map – read from the point of view "not of the geographer, but of the painter", as Eugène Fromentin put it during his travels in Algeria – was standard equipment for a whole group of 19th-century artists. The encounter between the intimate and the foreign, between like and unlike, defines the roving life and is the essence of Orientalism.

"The world is less real than the force that drives our inner life," wrote Ella Maillart – one of the great woman travelers of the 20th century. Orientalist works are not just the product of map-reading or of changes in artistic fashion, they reflect the contact between real places and an imagination shaped by a specific context. Out of these culturally filtered comparisons between "here" and "elsewhere" emerged Western interpretations that merit our interest and understanding. From Delacroix to Paul Klee, this book retraces the evolution of a movement whose significance and complexity are at last coming to be recognized.

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roduction 8

neets unlike

eographies 16

stantinople and the Ottoman Empire 20

t 30

o: "half African" 40

ca" from Tangiers to Tunis 48

a 68

Art history and the East 74

"Picturesque travels" 78

The Orient in Paris around 1830 84

The apotheosis of color 93

A new bestiary 100

Ethnographic realism 106

Anthropological sculpture 119

Palms and sand: landscape 122

Photography 132

Western readings 140

Water of passion: from Sardanapalus to

Shahrazade 145

Western spirituality 156

Time of the Crusades 168

Invention of the Mediterranean 182

Is colonialism? 192

Influence and after 196

From decoration to collection 200

Architecture 210

Modernity 216

"Colonial art" 228

East-West dialog? 238

Further reading 247

Index 250