



Istanbul Exchanges: Ottomans, Orientalists, and Nineteenth-Century Visual Culture

By Mary Roberts

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In *Istanbul Exchanges*, Mary Roberts offers an innovative way of understanding Orientalism by shifting the focus from Europe to Istanbul and examining the cross-cultural artistic networks that emerged in that cosmopolitan capital in the nineteenth century. European Orientalist artists began traveling to Istanbul in greater numbers in this period, just as the Ottoman elite was becoming more engaged with European art. By the 1870s, a generation of Paris-trained Ottoman artists had returned to Istanbul with ambitions to reshape the visual arts.

Drawing on materials from an array of international archives, Roberts reveals that the diverse cultures and motivations that coalesced in this vibrant milieu resulted in a complex web of alliances and exchanges. With many artistic initiatives receiving patronage both from foreign diplomatic communities and from the Ottoman court, visual culture became a significant resource for articulating modern Ottoman identity. Roberts recasts the terms in which the nexus of Orientalist art and the culture of the late Ottoman Empire are understood by charting the nodes and vectors of these international artistic networks. *Istanbul Exchanges* is a major contribution to the transnational study of modern visual culture and global histories of art.

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Editorial Review

From the Inside Flap

"Mary Roberts offers a new perspective on the networks between European and Ottoman artists. She deconstructs familiar binary formulas and presents a complicated nineteenth-century world of empires connected through intricate artistic exchanges. Capitalizing on recent interdisciplinary theories and scrutinizing the negotiations, moves, and countermoves of nineteenth-century Ottoman diplomacy, she reveals how mobility of artworks redefined cultural boundaries."—Zeynep Çelik, Distinguished Professor, New Jersey Institute of Technology and Rutgers University

"Roberts ascribes significant agency to Ottoman artists, patrons, and audiences as she brings to life a vibrant and dynamic artistic scene. Her focus on individuals and networks rather than institutions; her consideration of the mobility of artists and artworks rather than their origins; and her careful delineation of the Ottoman audience for Orientalist works distinguish *Istanbul Exchanges* as an innovative, even progressive account of Orientalist painting."—Emine Fetvacı, Associate Professor, Boston University

"Mary Roberts paints a sophisticated portrait of the late Ottoman empire and its complex art world. In doing so, she provides a completely new and compelling framework for understanding 'Orientalism.' This book will be one of the key art-historical publications in the burgeoning field of global nineteenth-century studies, and indeed in that of global modernism."—Tim Barringer, Paul Mellon Professor, Yale University

About the Author

Mary Roberts is John Schaeffer Associate Professor in British Art at the University of Sydney and the author of *Intimate Outsiders: The Harem in Ottoman and Orientalist Art and Travel Literature*.

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