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Carter Vaughn Findley, *Enlightening Europe on Islam and the Ottomans: Mouradgea d'Ohsson and His Masterpiece*. Leiden: Brill, 2019. xii + 398 pp. €68.00/\$82.00 U.S. (hb). ISBN 978-90-04-36312-0.

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In his 1842 catalog of the manuscript collection at Vienna's Oriental Academy, where generations of Habsburg diplomatic interpreters were trained for service in the Ottoman Empire, Albrecht Krafft remarked that panels of Ottoman calligraphy and imperial edicts were displayed in the study room of the academy alongside a picture of the Istanbul library of Mehmed Ragıp Paşa. [1] We can identify today the panels that were displayed by the pinholes in their mountings, and, although Krafft does not specify, we can name the likely source of the picture: Enlightenment Europe's most ambitious—and lavishly illustrated—account of Ottoman society, Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson's *Tableau général de l'Empire Othoman*.

Krafft's observation on the academy's decor came to mind as I read Carter Vaughn Findley's *Enlightening Europe on Islam and the Ottomans: Mouradgea d'Ohsson and His Masterpiece*. Findley's study, while single-minded in its near exhaustive focus on an individual, d'Ohsson, and his *Tableau*, is a window into the multilingual diplomatic world of Istanbul d'Ohsson inhabited and mobilized to produce his great work. This was the world the Oriental Academy students anticipated when they looked up from their study of an Ottoman dictionary or the court chronicles of Naima to gaze at d'Ohsson's engraving, but one rarely captured so well, both because of the demands of linguistic mastery and archival study it places on the historian and because it resists the framework inherited from Edward Said.

The Oriental Academy's choice of decor was not motivated by some desire for domination or vague yearning for the East. Rather, the students understood the Ottoman library for what it was: a modern institution of learning, not much older than the *Tableau*. They could consult a catalog of the library among their school's manuscripts, and they knew that the academy's most famous graduate, Joseph von Hammer, had, in another Istanbul library depicted in the *Tableau*, studied the great Turkish commentaries on Hafiz that allowed him to translate the Persian poet into German (a work that inspired Goethe to write his *West-East Divan*). Nor was this anything new in Krafft's time. Much like the Americans who traveled to Germany in the nineteenth century to study classical philology, generations of Istanbul-based orientalists had long immersed themselves in an Ottoman tradition of scholarship that encompassed centuries of Turkish, Persian, and Arabic historical and literary work. For much of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, Ottoman learning made orientalist careers.

Enlightening Europe on Islam and the Ottomans is an account of such a career, following it in its totality, from Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson's Ottoman sources to his Istanbul diplomatic networks and Parisian engravers and printers. D'Ohsson's *Tableau général de l'Empire Othoman* was an illustrated survey of Ottoman political and religious life, and a work of collaboration between Istanbul and Paris. Findley's background as an historian of the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, as well as a particularly rich tradition of research on d'Ohsson, inform a study that is striking in the deftness with which it follows its protagonist among distinct cultural contexts. The result is a rare glimpse into the life cycle of orientalist knowledge.

Findley's book brings to mind recent work exploring the circumstances and practices of early modern oriental studies through orientalist manuscripts and correspondence. This new scholarship has followed the same path as Findley, but in the opposite direction, retracing orientalist knowledge from Western Europe back to Ottoman scholars and institutions. A chapter on the formation of Western European manuscript collections in Alexander Bevilacqua's 2018 *Republic of Arabic Letters* put French diplomatic correspondence in conversation with İsmail Erünsal's work on Ottoman book history and Meredith Quinn's dissertation on reading in seventeenth-century Istanbul. [2] Natalie Rothman, a specialist on Venetian-Ottoman relations, has recently sought to put dragomans like d'Ohsson at the center of the history of oriental studies. [3] Perhaps the clearest predecessor for Findley's work is Alastair Hamilton and Francis Richard's study of the seventeenth-century orientalist André Du Ryer, a work of similar scope and attention to detail, and it is fitting that *Enlightening Europe on Islam and the Ottomans* appears in the "History of Oriental Studies" series Hamilton edits with Jan Loop. [4]

Reading *Enlightening Europe on Islam and the Ottomans*, my only regret is that Findley does not engage more directly with this post-Said literature on oriental studies and, for the most part, avoids broader questions about the history of orientalist scholarship. Findley does situate d'Ohsson at the cusp of an "epistemic shift" (following Foucault), but in general the emphasis is on d'Ohsson's exceptionality and his "liminal" character. D'Ohsson was no orientalist. "Rather, as a half-French Armenian Catholic *oriental...*," Findley writes, "he *traveled to Europe* in order to give the reading public of the Enlightenment what no one else could" (ix).

This is true as a response to a narrow Saidian critique of d'Ohsson, but it misses one of the insights of recent scholarship (and the lesson of the Oriental Academy engraving): Istanbul was likely the center of early modern oriental studies, its principal site of knowledge production. Some of its practitioners were Eastern Christians, many were university-trained philologists from Western Europe, still others Christian converts and *madrassa*-trained Muslim scholars. Far from the exception, D'Ohsson and his trajectory from Istanbul to Paris were representative of an intellectual moment marked by close contact between Ottoman and Western European elites and support for the study of Turkish and Arabic as languages of trade, diplomacy, and scholarship. In so thoroughly documenting d'Ohsson's life and work, Findley depicts this world looking over d'Ohsson's shoulders and offers points of comparison with the orientalists who lived and learned alongside the merchants and diplomats of eighteenth-century Istanbul.

D'Ohsson was born in Istanbul, the son of an Armenian Catholic father and a French mother (herself the daughter of a clerk in the French consulate in Izmir). Like many orientalists of the time, he began his career as a dragoman (interpreter), and worked at the Swedish embassy, where he was later appointed diplomat. Also much like these orientalists, in bringing his work to a European audience, d'Ohsson had to navigate both the Ottoman capital, where he collected

information, acquired manuscripts, and commissioned paintings, and Western Europe, where he sought patronage and worked with printers and engravers. Fortunately, Ottoman diplomacy was a lucrative business, and d'Ohsson used his earnings from trade and support from his father-in-law, an important Armenian financier in the Ottoman Empire, to move to Paris and prepare the *Tableau's* publication.

Findley's book gives a comprehensive account of d'Ohsson's *Tableau*, with detailed analysis of its contents and reproductions of its more than two hundred engravings. It will no doubt serve as a helpful guide to the *Tableau* as a historical source. D'Ohsson's *Tableau* was a singular achievement: the Enlightenment's most ambitious account of Ottoman life. Even today, the *Tableau's* engravings are striking in their documentary view of the Ottoman capital, with a dignity and attention to detail made all the more remarkable by the century of exoticizing orientalist art that followed its publication. They depict professions at court, religious and state ceremonies, mausoleums, manuscripts, and diverse other aspects of Ottoman society. For each, Findley has written descriptions that explain and contextualize.

Findley's meticulously documented account of the genesis and publication of the *Tableau* offers an important case study in the extensive collaborative enterprise, stretching from Istanbul to Paris, that produced orientalist knowledge. In this, as in the work itself, the breadth of d'Ohsson's activity was exceptional. He wrote his account of Ottoman society from manuscripts he had collected in Istanbul. He commissioned paintings that served as the basis for many of the engravings that appeared over the three folio volumes of the *Tableau* (the first two volumes were published in 1788 and 1790, and the third was completed by his son in 1820), and he went to great lengths to gain access throughout the capital, sending his artists to Istanbul's palaces, tombs, and mosques. In Paris, d'Ohsson hired Charles-Nicolas Cochin, once one of France's premier engravers, to direct and coordinate the production of the plates, overseeing the work of the many artists who designed, copied, and engraved them. This was a risky venture in print speculation, an enormous investment in hopes of winning the subscriptions of a trans-imperial European elite.

Findley's study is itself, in a sense, the product of collaboration, the culmination of a number of studies that marked a growing interdisciplinary interest in d'Ohsson as a border-crossing cultural intermediary. Findley recounts his own discovery of the *Tableau* as a graduate student—following the example of the Turkish historian İsmail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı—when he mined it for information on the late eighteenth-century Ottoman state. After that, two Turkish scholars paved the way, shedding light on the Ottoman context of d'Ohsson's work. Using a broad range of Ottoman archival sources, Kemal Beydili was the first to complete the picture of d'Ohsson's life, detailing his activities in Istanbul and his interactions with the Ottoman court. The art historian Günsel Renda in turn reconstructed much of the Ottoman portion of d'Ohsson's visual program—the paintings he commissioned that later served as models for the *Tableau's* French engravers—helping identify d'Ohsson's artists and their sources. A 2001 conference in Istanbul brought together Beydili, Renda, Findley, and others, and offered a vision of d'Ohsson from a variety of disciplinary perspectives (the proceedings were published in 2002 as *The Torch of Empire*). [5] *Enlightening Europe on Islam and the Ottomans* joins these earlier strands of scholarship with Findley's own research on d'Ohsson's extensive diplomatic correspondence in Swedish archives and his collection of manuscripts and Ottoman printed books, now in Lund University Library. In the process, Findley covers a remarkable variety of material, approaching each with the same empirical focus, attention to detail, and accessible presentation of evidence.

The book is roughly divided into two parts, moving from d'Ohsson to the *Tableau* itself. An introduction (chapter one) offers a concise overview of d'Ohsson's historical moment, situating him in his respective Swedish, French, and Ottoman political contexts. Chapter two charts his life from his birth in Istanbul, through his career as an interpreter in the Swedish embassy to the end of his stay in Paris, where he organized the publication of the *Tableau*. Life in Paris was expensive, and the *Tableau* did not generate the expected interest, and chapter three follows d'Ohsson as he returned home, by way of Vienna, where he assisted the Ottoman ambassador Ebu Bekir Ratib Efendi's own fact-finding mission on Habsburg institutions and governance. On his return to Istanbul, d'Ohsson presented his work to Selim III, and offered the sultan recommendations for reform. D'Ohsson's return also marked the beginning of another stage of his career. In 1795, Sweden appointed him diplomat in Istanbul. In 1799, d'Ohsson returned to France, where he survived on a modest Swedish pension and died in 1807. Findley's account of d'Ohsson's life is thoroughly documented, precise, and engaging, and he quotes throughout from the diplomatic correspondence that forms the bulk of his source material. Findley has an eye for the telling detail, with rich footnotes that add context and give a sense of the broader correspondence.

The second half of the book puts the *Tableau* under a microscope, alternating between analysis of the work and a descriptive catalogue of the *Tableau's* engravings (as well as a number of related drawings and paintings). Chapter four gives an overview of the genesis of the *Tableau*. Here, building on the work of Renda and Christian Michel [6], Findley teases out through documentation and informed speculation the contributions of the network around d'Ohsson participating in the *Tableau* project: the Istanbul artists who painted for him, the French artists and engravers who reworked and reproduced these images, and his censors, printers, and patrons. The chapters that follow turn to the work itself. Chapter five surveys the structure of the *Tableau* and d'Ohsson's sources. Chapters six and seven examine d'Ohsson's treatment of Islamic practices and Islamic law, with an insightful focus on his reliance on two works: the seventeenth-century commentary by Mehmed Mevkufati on Ibrahim al-Halabi's *Multaqa al-Abhur*, a standard sixteenth-century compendium of Hanafi jurisprudence, and 'Umar al-Nasafi's 'Aqa'id al-Islam, a treatise on fifty-eight articles of Islamic dogma. Chapters eight and nine look to d'Ohsson's representations of the Ottoman Empire's religious hierarchy and religious orders. Chapters ten and eleven address d'Ohsson's depictions of the hierarchy and ceremonies of the Ottoman state. Finally, chapter twelve offers a succinct summary of d'Ohsson's main arguments and themes, and discusses the *Tableau's* reception up to the present.

Exhaustive in its scope and meticulous in its presentation of sources, *Enlightening Europe on Islam and the Ottomans* will be the authoritative work on d'Ohsson and the *Tableau*. Readers interested in the Ottoman Empire will find it an accessible and comprehensive guide to an important historical source, and scholars of the Mediterranean will find a wealth of material on diplomacy, trade, and communication in eighteenth-century Istanbul. The book is also engagingly written, especially considering the density of information, and contains much of general interest. One highlight is Findley's richly detailed discussion of d'Ohsson's diplomatic entanglements in Istanbul in the wake of the French Revolution. These involved, among other things, rumors of Jacobinism and a late night session with the Imperial Divan's translator over how to render the undiplomatic informality of the new "revolutionary" style into Ottoman Turkish.

Above all, Findley's work is an important contribution to the history of oriental studies. In the breadth and variety of his research and the consideration of Ottoman alongside Western

European sources, Findley offers a model for future scholarship and a step towards a more complete understanding of the exchange of knowledge in Istanbul and the Eastern Mediterranean in the eighteenth century.

NOTES

[1] Albrecht Krafft, *Die arabischen, persischen und türkischen Handschriften der k.k. orientalischen Akademie zu Wien* (Vienna: 1842), p. 4.

[2] Alexander Bevilacqua, *The Republic of Arabic Letters: Islam and the European Enlightenment* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2018); Meredith Quinn, "Books and Their Readers in Seventeenth-Century Istanbul," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 2016).

[3] Natalie Rothman, "Dragomans and 'Turkish Literature': The Making of a Field of Inquiry," *Oriente Moderno* 93.2 (2013): 390-421.

[4] Alastair Hamilton and Francis Richard, *André Du Ryer and Oriental Studies in Seventeenth-Century France* (Oxford: Arcadian Library in association with Oxford University Press, 2004).

[5] Kemal Beydilli, "İgnatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson (Muradcan Tosunyan), Ailesi hakkında kayıtlar, 'Nizâm-i Cedîd'e dâir Lâyihası ve Osmanlı İmparatorluğundaki Siyâsî Hayatı," *Tarih Dergisi* 34 (1983-1984):247-314; Günsel Renda, "Ressam Konstantin Kapıdağlı Hakkında Yeni Görüşler," in *19. Yüzyıl İstanbul'unda Sanat Ortamı*, pp. 139-162; Sture Theolin, et al., *The Torch of Empire: Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson and the Tableau général of the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century* (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2002).

[6] See two works by Christian Michel : "Une entreprise de gravure à la veille de la Révolution: Le Tableau général de l'Empire Othoman," *Nouvelle de l'Estampe* 84 (1985):6-25, and *Charles-Nicolas Cochin et l'art des Lumières* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1993).

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