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New Findings on Orient-Occident Crossings in Literature

[book review *Borders and Beyond:
Orient-Occident Crossings in Literature*]

Новые сведения о переходах между Востоком и Западом в литературе

[рецензия книги *Borders and Beyond: Orient-Occident Crossings in Literature*]

Orient in literature is the topic often used by Western authors in fiction or the poetry. The aim of the editors was to break away from Eurocentric traditions in studies on literature. The articles collected in this volume, written by both Orientalists, and researchers of native literature, are trying to continue the discourse about common issues in the literature, and to examine the borders from different points of view, representing diverse and distant cultures, their similarities and differences.

In the first part, *Limitations and Borderlands in Oriental Poetry* Muneerah Bader Almahasheer in “Adaptations and Evocations of Orientalism in Nāzik al-Malā’ika’s Poetry” in analysing the poetry of Nāzik al-Malā’ika. He seeks to understand to what degree it can be considered Oriental. Mohammad Amin Mozaheb in his study “An In-depth Comparative Study of Victor Hugo and Shahriar’s Poetry” compares poetry of two of the most famous writers: the Turkish Seyyed Mohammad Hossein Bahjat-Tabrizi, and the French Victor

Hugo. “Crossing Borders in the Opposite Direction. An Influence of Western Elements in Contemporary Chinese Poetry” by Daniela Zhang Cziráková explores an influence of the Western literature and the Western elements in the poems of Chinese poets, Chen Dongdong, Song Lin, Tang Xiaodu and Zhao Si. While some of the poems are bearing strong Western features, the others have been inspired rather by Chinese ancient literary tradition.

In the second part, *Literary Boundaries – Ethical Limitations: Classical Literatures of the Orient*, Zane Šteinmane in “Borderlines of Morality: Exploring the Ethos of the *Mu’allaqa*” is taking closer look at *Mu’allaqa*, an anthology of poetry from the pre-Islamic times (*al-ġāhiliyya*) probably compiled by the collector Ḥammād ar-Rāwī around the 8th century. Arzu Sadykhova in her study “Formation of Plot Canon in Arabic Literature: The Case of Love Stories About Poets of Bedouins” describes the love stories about the Bedouins poets, which appeared after the death of the poets as the commentaries to their verses. Most of these stories are about unhappy love with sad ends. “Poetic Souvenirs: The Meaning of Ise Monogatari in Sōkyū’s Miyako no Tsuto” by Adam Bednarczyk explores travel diaries of the Japanese early medieval and medieval literature, bearing remarkable self-reflective features.

The third part, *Orient-Occident Historical and Social Borders in Literature*, focusses on the historical and social problems connected with Orient and Orientalism, and the propaganda. Tetiana Derezhyska in the study “The “East-West” Dichotomy in the English Modernist Novel: An Imagological Perspective” debates about the image of the “the Orient” in colonial or colonialist literature. Author analyses the colonialist narratives the novels of Leonard Woolf and Edward Forster. Magdalena Kubarek in her paper “Between Literature and Ideology. *Ad-da’wa Al-Islāmiyya* in the novels by Naġīb Al-Kaylāni” explains the term *adda’wa* - a verbal noun from the verb to “invoke/ invite/ pray”, which is in the Arab world an equivalent to original meaning of the term “propaganda” relating to the spread of the faith, exhorting to truth and giving a good example. Olivier Harenda in “The Boundaries of Historical Accuracy: Contemporary Re-reading of Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*” examines the historical quality of Salman Rushdie’s novel and its possible interpretations in nowadays. Benjamin Sutcliffe in “Trifonov’s Turkmenia: Optimism, Despair and the Intelligentsia” describes the image of Turkmenia in the prose of Iurii Trifonov. Karolina Marzec

in “Bringing the Orient to the Empire – an Analysis of Frances Hodgson Burnett’s *a Little Princess and The Secret Garden*” explores postcolonial perspective in children literature written by Frances Hodgson Burnett.

The forth part, *Crossing Borders in Travel: Journey in Oriental Literature and Inspired by Orient*, starts with a study by Tomasz Ewertowski “The Great Wall of China in Polish and Serbian Travel Writing (from the 18th until the Middle of the 20th Century)”, in which author analyses representation of the Great Wall by Polish and Serbian travelogues in the period from the 18th century until the middle of the 20th century, e.g. Serbian diplomat Sava Vladislavić, or Polish aristocrat Paweł Sapieha, who travelled in Asia in 1888-1889. Magdalena Lewicka in her “*Ar-Rihla* in the Service of *An-Nahḍa*. Rifā ‘a at-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s Concept of Crossing Geographical and Cultural Boundaries” describes travel experience from Paris by Aṭ-Ṭaḥṭāwī. It is not only detailed description of a European country in Arabic until 1834, but also presents the political, social, cultural and educational institutions as a model for his homeland. Małgorzata Sokołowicz in her study “Crossing the Borders of Decency. Gustave Flaubert, Maxime Du Camp and their Oriental Journey” presents the Orient seeing by the sexually deprived Western authors as synonymous of eroticism, love passion and decadency.

Fifth part, *Multidimensionality of Cultural, Social and Emotional Borders in Oriental Literature*, consists of two studies. In the first, Milica Obrenović “The World of Haruki Murakami – a Hidden World of Ourselves” presents novels written by Japanese author and his vision of hidden worlds, what often occurs in his works. Gözde Begüm Uyanık in “The Role of Translation in Identity Formation: A Case Study of Turkish Translations of *Martine*” offers a study of translations children’s book *Martine*, written by Belgian Marcel Marlier and Gilbert Delahaye in French. The paper “*The Story of Isamiga: An Analysis of a Miyakoan Epic Song*” by Aleksandra Jarosz is devoted to an analysis of a folk song in Miyakoan, endangered minority language of Japan. Olga Nowicka in the “Crossing Boundaries: From Private to Public Space. Memoirs of Antjarjanam” author presents memoirs of antjarjanams, Nambūtiri Brāhman females, who used to live in seclusion. Author notices their frustrations of their status, but also a reform movement within the Nambudiri community, which caused a crucial change among antjarjanams.

The book presents various studies of the scholars from many countries executing the discourse of Orient and Orientalism from different sides. It offers a precious occasion to see the issue from many perspectives. As an interesting and informative work, the analyzed book is a valuable supplement to the publishing series “Orient in Literature – Literature of the Orient”, consisting of well-received books, such as *Granice i pogranicza w perspektywie orientalistycznej: szkice o literaturze i kulturze* (Bednarczyk et al., 2017a) and *Rethinking Orient: in search of sources and inspirations* (Bednarczyk et al., 2017b), among others.

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