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Gerard Cohen-Vrignaud's new monograph *Radical Orientalism: Rights, Reform, and Romanticism* is a contribution to the growing number of publications that analyse the complexity of the representations of non-European cultures in Romantic European literature from outside the paradigm of postcolonial studies. Cohen-Vrignaud focuses his study on Romantic examples of what he calls "Radical Orientalism". This notion departs fundamentally from the Saidian understanding of Orientalism as a form of representation that invariably subjugates overseas territories, such as the Middle East and India, to European imperialism. Instead, Cohen-Vrignaud reads his sources through the lens of Radical Orientalism, a term coined by Saree Makdisi to describe a form of representation of the Orient in which the imaginary Oriental Enemy is used to articulate radical-liberal criticism of European forms of government. Cohen-Vrignaud expands the use of Makdisi's term beyond the 1790s into the Romantic era, and modifies its definition by emphasizing that although Radical Orientalism vilified the Other to promote reforms at home, it also encouraged solidarity between marginalized Britons and oppressed subjects overseas. Cohen-Vrignaud also disagrees with Makdisi's proposal that Radical Orientalism necessarily promoted bourgeois projects of political reform and instead argues that a diversity of class perspectives can be found within this form of representation.

In the first section of the book, Cohen-Vrignaud discusses his theoretical stance and distances himself from the branch of postcolonial studies that "subordinates the motives behind Orientalist allusions and narratives to the act of discursive appropriation itself" (7). Openly drawing from feminist and queer approaches, as well as borrowing from Marxist and historicist analyses, Cohen-Vrignaud sets aside the problem of representation in favour of analysing the material and economic conditions of Imperial politics. He suggests the excessive attention to discursive elements derives from an "interpretative manoeuvre, [through which] representation tout court becomes colonial, stripping empire of its material history in military violence and economic expropriation" (8). From this stance, he tries to overcome the problem of reading all Oriental representations as equally colonialist, in order to prove that Radical Orientalism might be used as a way of promoting radical reform and creating solidarity between oppressed groups across the globe. Cohen-Vrignaud does not deny the existence of discursive domination in Orientalist representations, but rather he asserts that not all of these representations promote colonialism to the same degree nor have this action as their central aim. In the chapters that follow, Cohen-Vrignaud sets out to prove this point through close readings, historicist readings and discursive analyses of a wide-ranging set of primary sources, including political pamphlets, satirical caricatures and the works of Lord Byron, Percy Shelley and Mary Shelley.

The chapters are structured around the different fundamental rights of liberal democracy, promoted or disputed within Radical Orientalist texts. The first chapter addresses the right to bodily integrity. Through an analysis of images of Muslims and Southern Europeans in William Beckford's *Vathek* and Lord Byron's *The Corsair*, Cohen-Vrignaud demonstrates how these texts promote an ideology of physical violence that questions the violations to the liberal right of "freedom from [physical] state violence" (20) in Britain. This questioning is achieved by opposing Western bodily integrity to an image of seductive and emasculating Oriental brutality. According to the author, the use of images of oriental state violence as a coded representation of the attraction and fear produced by Western forms of political violence is at the root of the neglected relationship between the Gothic novel and Orientalism. The second chapter analyses the rights that derive from the right to petition and the right to legitimate assembly, which also include the rights of protestors to physical safety and the right to free public speech. Through a close reading of Percy Shelley's *The Revolt of Islam* and *Hellas*, and Byron's *Don Juan*, Cohen-Vrignaud demonstrates that representations of "mob" violence and tyranny as endemic in the Orient were used by radicals to validate rebellion with the intention of supporting the radical belief that the people, including the lower classes with no property, must take part in statecraft.

Chapters three and four analyse the role played by the emerging discipline of political economy in Radical Orientalism by focusing on property rights. Chapter three addresses this topic from a macroeconomic perspective, analysing how representations of Oriental political economy were used to illustrate the relation between despotic economic systems and social inequity, scarcity, overwork and loss of physical health. Through a close reading of Shelley's *Swellfoot*, the author demonstrates that radicals presented an "ideological linkage of elite pleasure, Orientalism, and national economy" (123) in order to promote changes in taxation and property rights. Chapter four extends this analysis to the microeconomic level, focusing on how the Orientalist notions of Muslim fatalism, inactivity and indolence were used to promote the idea that subjects inside Britain had to be economically instructed out of their barbarism through the new discipline of political economy, in order to acquire the liberal values of industry and become productive, and appropriately masculine, citizens.

In the last chapter, Cohen-Vrignaud analyses the complex role of the Byronic infidel in Byron's *Lara* and *The Giaour*, and how their disregard for moral perdition foreshadows the conflict between liberal and libertarian ideologies that took place after the 1830s. Through a queer approach to the texts, the author demonstrates that Byron's representations of non-heteronormative eroticism in Oriental landscapes were intended to overturn the liberal values of self-restraint by problematically extending the aristocratic right to license to the general population.

Radical Orientalism complicates the generalised reading of Romantic Orientalism as either colonialist or escapist, providing it with a more complex and sometimes contradictory political meaning. For the most part Cohen-Vrignaud's prose is clear and engaging, although some passages are dense and require a second reading. The author addresses a wide range of political, historical, aesthetic and ideological relations between texts, contexts and authors. However, there is a strong disparity in the attention given to the analysis of each text, and most of the in-depth discussion relates to the works of Percy Shelley and Lord Byron. Moreover, the analysis of satirical caricatures are rarely accompanied by detailed aesthetic analyses of the caricatures themselves. In spite of these issues, the complex interweaving of ideological analysis, close readings and historicist analysis that Cohen-Vrignaud

presents is successful in demonstrating the efficacy of Radical Orientalism as a concept, and the book will be of significant interest to scholars working on Romantic Imperialism and Romantic radical politics.

Author Biography

Valentina P. Aparicio has completed a BA in Hispanic Literature and Linguistics at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile and an MSc in Literature and Society (Enlightenment, Romantic and Victorian) at The University of Edinburgh. In January 2017, Valentina will join the English Literature PhD programme at the University of Edinburgh with a research project on Robert Southey's poetical representations of non-European societies. Some of her research interests include Romantic literature and politics, transatlantic studies, intellectual history and ecocriticism.