

**ROBERT IRWIN: FOR LUST OF KNOWING: THE  
ORIENTALISTS AND THEIR ENEMIES. 410 PP. LONDON: ALLEN  
LANE, 2006. ISBN 0 713 99415\***

**Remzi Avcı\*\***

**Öz**

Robert Irwin'in kaleme aldığı on bölümden bir araya getirilen bu kitap, Edward Said'in Oryantalizm kitabına bir reddiye niteliği taşır; fakat bu kitabın Said karşıtı yazılan eleştirisi kitaplarından ayıran önemli bir tarafı var. Irwin, bu çalışmasında oryantalizmi öncelikle bilimsel bir disiplin olarak betimler ve onu tarihsel gelişimi içerisinde inceler. Kritiği yapılan bu kitap, oryantalizmi akıcı bir dil ve katı akademik üsluptan kurtararak ele alır. Bu bağlamda İngiliz, Fransız, Alman, Hollandalı ve Rus oryantalistlerin çalışmalarına odaklanır ve oryantalistlerin farklı metodolojilerini disiplinler-arası bakış açısıyla mukayese eder. Irwin bu çalışmasında Said'in tezlerinin aksine oryantalistlerin metin üretiminde siyaset ya da ideolojinin etkili olmadığını; aksine kitabın başlığının vurgusundan da anlaşılacağı gibi ortak bilim arayışlarının etkili olduğunu iddia eder. Dokuzuncu ve onuncu bölümleri Said tartışmalarına ayıran yazar, burada kapsamlı bir eleştiriye girer ve kendine özgü farklı üslubuyla onlarca Said reddiyeleri olmasına rağmen kitabı akıcı, kolay okunabilir bir düzeye çekmeyi başarır. Bu yazı, Irwin'in çalışmasını hem içerik hem de yöntem olarak tahlil etmeyi amaçlar.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Oryantalizm, Edward Said, filoloji, Arabiyat, İslam, polemikçi Oryantalizm

For Lust of Knowing is a response to Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978); however, there is an important aspect that distinguishes Robert Irwin's work (2006) from other Said's critiques. The author deals in this book with orientalism as an academic discipline within its historical development. In this respect, it can easily be compared to German Arabist Johann Fück's *Die arabischen Studien in Europa bis in den Anfang des 20th Jahrhunderts* (1955), which chronologically examines the history of Arabic Studies in Europe. Irwin revisits orientalism in its historical context with a wide post-1955 bibliography including Said's criticisms in his work and uses a methodology without making

\* Kitap İncelemesi/Critical Review; DOI: 10.32330/nusha.1427763

\*\* Doç. Dr. Mardin Artuklu Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi, Tarih Bölümü, e-posta [remzavci@gmail.com](mailto:remzavci@gmail.com), Orcid ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8539-9203>

it boring with pure academic writing. With the title, *For Lust of Knowing* -when the whole book is considered- it is clear that the author of the book clearly takes a position against Said's theses from the very beginning. In fact, Irwin claims that orientalists -with some exceptions, such as the Dutch orientalist Snouck Hurgronje- did their job for the lust of knowing; that is, they did not serve political-imperial projects and did not produce such a discourse. As controversial as some of Said's claims are, it is equally controversial for the author of this book to argue that orientalists did their job only for the love of knowing. It could also be argued that there is a contradiction between the content of the book and its title. Irwin skilfully deals with the motivations of polemical orientalists in the first chapters. Although there are no detailed arguments between orientalism and colonialism in the book, when it is analysed as a whole, one can easily conclude about the historical development of polemical orientalist studies aimed at debunking Islam. In the seventh chapter, where he talks about Russian orientalism, traces of the relationship between orientalism and imperialism can easily be found. This book discusses academic orientalism in its historical development. In this framework, it focuses on the work of English, French, German, Dutch, and Russian orientalists and compares their different methodologies and unique characteristics of their approaches. However, although the author classifies these differences chronologically in a good way, he does not categorize them separately. This methodology makes the book quite complicated.

Irwin underlines the significance of orientalist institutions and organizations historically and draws attention to the existence of an orientalist network. Orientalism means the production and transfer of texts and this process has developed within a network. Orientalists such as Jean-François Champollion, Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer, Johann Gottfried Ludwig Kosegarten received education from Silvestre Sacy. Orientalists such as Ignaz Goldziher, Martin Hartmann, Victor von Rosen, Johann Gottfried Wetzstein received their education from Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer. The historical development of orientalism cannot be understood without analysing this network.

The actors, journals and institutions that make up this network are not completely independent of each other. This network is often not shaped for the sake of a common ideal. Each orientalist who is part of the network has a different motivation channel. The network, whose existence can sometimes last for a long time and sometimes for a short time, is shaped within specific purposes and complex relationships (Avci, 2021, pp. 25-27.)

The author offers to the reader a comprehensive historical-chronological and disciplinary perspective on the history of orientalism. He examines this

process of disciplinization in the traditions of English, French, German, Dutch, and Russian orientalism, but does not touch upon the theoretical evolution from polemical-theological orientalism to philology and cultural studies.

In the second chapter, which is perhaps the most crucial part of the work, Irwin analyses very thoroughly how polemical orientalism emerged with a discourse and how this discourse developed historically. He also provides a good overview of how this discourse developed into a tradition in later periods and does not completely break away from this subject in the following chapters. As mentioned earlier, Irwin skilfully shows how the anti-Islamic polemical discourse that lies at the origins of Orientalism continues to this day. He emphasises the variability of the precise boundaries of the Persian-Greek dichotomy dilemma claimed by Said and agrees with him on this issue. However, Said's presentation of the dramatists Aeschylus and Euripides and the historian Herodotus as "the first definitive prototypes of the Orientalist accomplices of imperialism" is, according to Irwin, is never correct. This is not to say that racial and anti-oriental stereotypes and images cannot be found in Greek writings; it would be surprising if the Greeks were completely free of such prejudices. In this context, Irwin points out, too, that the Persians were also quite patronising and racist in different ways (Irwin, 2006, pp. 10-18).

Irwin states that with the rise of Islam, "consequently Christendom was faced with not just a military threat, but an ideological one as well". He alleges that as a natural consequence of this, the reaction to Islam from the Christian world was both military and ideological. Thus, the author points to the process of the evolution of the anti-Islamic reaction into textual-polemics over time. In this framework, Irwin provides an overview of the polemical texts against Islam and their contents, which can be traced back to the 8th century, starting with John of Damascus's (St Ionnis) *The Fount of Knowledge*. The contents of the anti-Islamic polemical texts that Irwin includes in the book can generally be listed as follows:

\*The relationship between the iconoclasm movement and Islam; that is, the question of the authenticity of Islam.

\*Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was educated by Bahira, an Arian monk. John of Damascus judged Muhammad to be an Arian "heretic"<sup>1</sup>. This was because Muhammad (pbuh), like the Arians, rejected the eternity of the Son with the Father. John also argued that many of the allegedly prophetic revelations were inferred from the Old and New Testaments.

\*The issue of polygamy in Islam, etc.

According to Irwin, while Islam was attacked with polemical texts, a reckoning was also made with the problems within Christians themselves, such as iconoclasm. The polemical text *Three Orations Against the Calumniators of the Holy Icons* by John of Damascus is one of the best examples of such methods. In the Christian tradition, polemical writing continued with Abd al-Masih ibn Ishaq al-Kindi, Paul Alvarus and later Raimondo Llull. He claims that, over time, the Iberian Peninsula became a centre of anti-Islamic polemics.

In the second chapter, the book states that the anti-Islamic polemical texts, which would later become a tradition, developed under the leadership of Father Pierre, who was elected abbot of the Abbey of Cluny in 1122. The works of figures such as the English priest Robert of Ketton (Rodbertus Ketenensis 1141-1157),<sup>2</sup> who was also a diplomat in Spain, the orientalist André du Ryer, who translated the Qur'an into French in 1647 under the title *L'Alcoran de Mahomet*, and the Italian orientalist cleric Ludovico Marracci (1612-1700), who translated it into Latin in 1698 under the title *Alcorani textus universus* continued this tradition. Although Irwin mentions polemical Qur'anic translations, he overlooks the fact that there are many polemical Qur'anic translators and clergymen, a growing number of whom have been recognised in recent studies. Serdar Aslan's (2022) book *Die deutsche Koranliteratur. Biographie und Bibliographie* (German Qur'an Literature. Biography and Bibliography) is a good example in this field. Irwin could have discussed many polemically motivated works more extensively in the part of his study that deals with translations of the Qur'an. He could have even devoted more space to cosmopolitan non-polemical translations of the Qur'an such as Friedrich Rückert's translation. Of course, this should not be criticised in the book. Because science in general, and orientalism as a discipline in particular, is a research field in which new works are added every day.

Irwin quotes from the *Abominable Heresy or Sect of the Saracens* (Summa totius heresis Saracenorum) written by Father Pierre (Peter the Venerable). "...I approach you not with arms, but with words; not with force, but with reason; not in hatred, but in love." This statement is a summary of polemical orientalism. With similar examples, the author conveys well the motivation behind polemical texts from the outset. In addition to Christian polemicists, the author also includes anti-Christian polemicists such as Ibn Hazm and Ibn Taymiyyah, but he rightly does not go into detail (Irwin, 2006, pp. 27-50).

Irwin devotes much space to the Catalan cleric Raimond Llull, who had a complex and mysterious life and wrote about 250 polemical anti-Islamic works. In this way, he aims to make the book more enjoyable to read by giving detailed information about Llull's interesting life. It can be said that the author is quite successful in this methodology, which he uses frequently in the following chapters. Said claimed that the decision to teach Arabic, Greek, Hebrew, and

---

Syriac at the five Christian universities of Paris, Oxford, Bologna, Avignon and Salamanca on the initiative of Lull at the Church Council of Vienna in 1311 was the official beginning of orientalism (Said, 1978, p. 50). Irwin emphasises that this idea does not reflect the truth by claiming that this decision was never implemented based on Richard William Southern's (1978) book *Western views of Islam in the Middle Ages*. It can be said that such an attempt, nevertheless, occupies an important place in the historical development of orientalism.

Irwin states that Islam did not play an important role in medieval European thought in general. Nevertheless, he asserts that Islam had an influence on Christianity in creating its own image. In this part of the work, he does not provide an etymological or historical explanation for the terms used to represent Muslims in medieval Europe, such as *Saracen*, *Hageran* and *Ismaili*, which are frequently mentioned. The author could also have clarified technical terms such as *apology*, *polemic*, *tractate*, *disputation* and *refutation*.

In the introduction to the third chapter, the author asserts that there was a general renunciation of Arabic knowledge in Europe during the Renaissance. In other words, he points to a certain decline in orientalist studies since the Renaissance was basically a rediscovery of ancient texts and humanist culture. Pico della Morandela, for instance, sought the origins of Greek culture in Egyptian civilisation. The French Orientalist Guillaume Postel, on the other hand, alleged that all languages had their origins in Hebrew. Irwin looks for a link between the views of both orientalists. However, his rapid transition from Postel's works to Bibliander's translation of the Qur'an to Luther's views and polemicism leads to methodological problems that will be discussed later (Irwin, 2006, pp. 58-60).

Irwin draws attention to the Italian orientalist Joseph Justus Scaliger's endeavour to create a world historiography and chronology and emphasises the importance of the role of orientalism in world historiography. The reason for Scaliger's interest in Arabic was to prepare a chronology for world historiography. More specifically, Scaliger's great work on chronology, *Opus de emendatione temporum* (1583), utilised several exotic sources, including Arabic sources. Scaliger and some other scholar attempted to construct a *unified timeline of world history that would confirm the chronology of the Bible*. Some Bible scholars tried to compare the Chinese chronology and the Aztec calendar, as well as texts on Egyptian history. The chronological incorporation of extra-biblical sources into world historiography was not a common phenomenon in this period. A more radical transformation took place in the early 19th century. In this context, the author makes an important point about the importance of oriental studies in world historiography (Irwin, 2006, pp.77-78).

In the fourth chapter, Irwin asserts that orientalism in the 17th century was still under the pressure of theology and points out that polemical concerns underlay the motivation for the study of Semitic languages. The author may be right about his comment, but it should not be overlooked that independent philological work has been done despite the patronage and pressure of theology. This tradition and motivation can be seen in the case of William Bedwell, who also taught Edward Pockocke and Thomas Erpenius. Pockocke was, according to the author, the greatest orientalist of the 17th century (Irwin, 2006, p. 93). This claim can be disputed from many points of view, but it can certainly be said that he was the greatest known orientalist of English orientalism in this century. His best-known translation from Arabic was Ibn Tufayl's *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān*, an Arabic philosophical novel published in 1671 as *Pbilosophus Autodidactus*. The author also provides information about a translation of Pockocke's *The Nature of the Drink kauhi, or Coffe and Berry of which its made*. This is a translation from Arabic of a short, anonymous work on coffee drinking. By mentioning this work about coffee, the author makes his book very attractive and readable, a method he seems to have consciously chosen, as the following quotation shows:

Pockocke is said to have been the first man in England to drink coffee. Those who were suspicious of the new drink claimed that it brought on his palsy. (The Arabauthor, for his part, warned that drinking coffee with milk might bring on leprosy.) For a long time, coffee-drinking was to be regarded with great suspicion in some circles, as it was tainted with Mahometanism (Irwin, 2006, p. 97).

He repeats a similar method where he talks about the British orientalist Edmund Castell “...*Castell considered himself on holiday when he worked less than 16 hours*” (Irwin, 2006, p. 99). In telling the story of Raimond Lull's life between fantasy and reality:

Then he experienced a religious crisis. According to one story, he was pursuing someone else's beautiful young wife. She was virtuous and resisted his suit, but he was persistent. ‘After asking permission of her husband to employ a drastic remedy, she summoned her admirer to attend her in some secluded place – perhaps her own chamber – when, instead of yielding, as no doubt he expected, to his demands, she uncovered her bosom, and displayed a breast that was being slowly consumed by a loathly cancer. “See Ramon,” she cried, “the foulness of this body that has won thy affection! How much better hadst thou done to have set thy love on Jesus Christ, of whom thou mayest have a prize that is eternal (Irwin, 2006, pp. 37-38).

When talking about Postel, the author writes “...*he learnt Arabic so fast in Istanbul that his teacher thought he might be a demon...*” (Irwin, 2006, p. 68) or when writing about Lancelot Andrewes, “...*he did his academic work in the morning and was worried that anyone who visited him before noon would not be a true scholar...*” (Irwin, 2006, p.88). The methodology used by the author makes the text quite fluent. It can be said that he has drawn a specific field of study such as orientalism into a line that can be read with interest. Similar examples can, of course, be increased. In this chapter, Irwin devotes considerable space to English orientalism. The decisive role of Cambridge (1632) and Oxford (1636) universities in the institutionalisation of orientalism in England and its ebb and flow are exemplified in detail through different names.

In the fifth chapter, the book begins by emphasising that in the 17th century there was still no interest in Turcology in Europe. According to the author, the *Bibliothèque Orientale*, written by Barthélemy d’Herbelot but completed by Antoine Galland in 1697, was the first example of his *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, first published in 1913. Irwin argues that Galland and d’Herbelot were the first orientalists to deal with non-theological texts and notes that after Galland’s death there was a significant decline in orientalist studies in France (Irwin, 2006, pp. 113-116). Jones’s discovery of Persian literature, his Sanskrit studies, and his influence on German and French orientalists are important topics covered in this chapter. The author also mentions very generally the appearance of Russian, Danish and Dutch oriental studies in the early 18th century. He believes that the relationship between colonialism and orientalism began with the Russian Tsar Peter I (Peter the Mad). Considering the English and French tradition, this date is too optimistic.

In the sixth chapter, the author positions Silvestre de Sacy as the founder of modern orientalism. As an Arabist, Sacy played an important role in the institutionalisation of orientalism in France. Irwin states that Sacy worked especially intensively on the Druze and mentions his interests in detail. The author states that Sacy founded the *École spéciale des langues orientales vivantes*, taking the *Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* as a model. He, then, draws attention to Sacy’s methodological influence on similar institutionalisation in other European cities. In this chapter, Sacy’s intellectual background and influence are well discussed. While discussing Sacy’s interest in Ibn Khaldun, the author’s detailed mention of his translations in Western languages disrupts the flow of the text. He frequently makes this mistake in different parts of the book, thus dragging the reader from one focus point to another. The book analyses German orientalism from a general approach, highlighting names such as Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer, Gustav Weil, and

Johann Gottfried Eichhorn. These orientalists - except for Hammer-Purgstall - are mostly biblical scholars of the second half of the 19th century. There is a long chapter devoted to Hammer-Purgstall. Here, however, his mystical views are discussed more than his methods and works (Irwin, 2006, pp. 151-158).

Irwin discusses Said's "two bad men", Ernest Renan and Arthur de Gobineau, in detail, and does a good job of conveying the views of both racist orientalists to the reader. However, he does not mention the intellectual opposition underlying Said's attacks on them. At the end of the sixth chapter, he claims a revival of British orientalism and focuses on Richard Burton, a member of the *Royal Geographical Society* and served in India as a captain in the East India Company's army. While analysing the methods of orientalists from the German tradition such as Julius Wellhausen, Alfred von Kremer, and Aloys Spengler, he explains how Wellhausen's historical-critical method in Islamic history was a model for contemporary orientalists. As mentioned earlier, the author's methodology makes it difficult to understand the book entirely. He treats the orientalists in a periodical and encyclopaedic way. A thematic method to examine orientalism would have made this book much more remarkable and effective.

The author describes Goldziher as the greatest orientalist and claims that his ideas of Hebrew mythology were inspired by Max Müller's Indo-European mythology. In this context, he states that Goldziher confronted Renan, who said that the Semites could not build a civilisation. He analyses Goldziher's criticism of the isnād chain in the hadith method and his approach to hadith tradition. While orientalists such as Bernard Lewis, Lawrence Conrad, Snouck Hurgronje, Ignatij Yulianovich Krachkovskiy who support Goldziher's hadith approaches, are widely included in the book, it can be criticized that there is no mention of Goldziher's opponents. Goldziher was also a highly influential scholar within the Jewish community. He was the administrative and educational secretary of the Jewish Community in Hungary and characterised himself as a strict Jew. Under the influence of this biography, he did not recognise the authenticity of Islam as a unique religion. Influenced by the approaches of the German Jewish orientalist Abraham Geiger, Goldziher claimed that Islam was a continuation of Judaism. It is a controversial approach that Irwin regards Goldziher as the greatest *unbiased* scholar without paying attention to these points.

Throughout the book, Irwin enjoys surprising readers by talking about different characteristic aspects of orientalists. For example, according to him, the German orientalist Theodor Nöldeke, author of *Geschichte des Koran*, was an ardent German nationalist, did not know Arabic and did not like Arabs (Irwin, 2006, pp. 197-198). The author's use of such a method makes the book gripping for the readers and continues to amaze them. The book pays special attention to



German orientalism. The fact that the author summarizes the views of Carl Heinrich Becker, who claims that Islam is the continuation of Hellenism, in a few sentences is an indication of how the orientalist discourse has become a tradition of approaches to the authenticity of Islam (Irwin, 2006, pp. 198-199). As mentioned before, Irwin's ability to keep polemical orientalism on the agenda from the early periods until the beginning of the 20th century can be considered an important success of the book. In this context, the book also draws a framework how the orientalist discourse became traditional - from John of Damascus to the Belgian orientalist Henri Lammens.

The author claims that the collapse of the Ottoman Empire led to a considerable development in Oriental studies. Through this idea, he means that the study of oriental archaeology gained momentum in the colonised states that were separated from the Ottoman Empire. French and British archaeologists were freer in smuggling artefacts after the war. Although some measures were taken against this in the late Ottoman period with some regulations, foreign archaeologists were already able to smuggle artefacts.

At the end of the seventh chapter, the book devotes a large space to Louis Massignon, whom Irwin describes as the *Holy Madman* and examines his personal life, ideology and works in detail. By mentioning Massignon's nationalism as well as his anti-colonialist stance, he provides a general perspective on French Orientalism of the period (Irwin, 2006, pp. 220-229).

There is a close relationship between Russian colonialism and orientalism. Irwin describes the process of politicisation of Russian Orientalism through Viktor Rosen Wassili Wladimirowitsch Bartold and Krachkovsky. Diplomat orientalist Basil Nikitin, August Kościeszka-Żaba and Vladimir Fedorovich Minorsky carried out intensive studies on the Kurds and Iranian peoples, who were the fields of Russian colonialism. The book could have devoted more space to Russian orientalism in the context of its relationship with colonialism. However, this would not have been very much in line with Irwin's thoughts in the book. (Irwin, 2006, pp. 229-234). Oriental Studies in Poland, Belgium and Portugal can be considered as untouched areas of this study. Although Ignác Kúnos, Ignaz Goldziher, Arminius Vámbéry were included in the book, the structural features of Hungarian orientalism could be analysed in general. Additionally, a framework could be drawn based on the Portuguese tradition. The Portuguese, who had almost two centuries of colonial experience in Asia before the British expansion into the region, had developed their own orientalism to recognise other cultures they encountered. A similar criticism can be made in the case of Poland, where there is a long-established tradition of Turcology.

The book concludes the seventh chapter with the title *Nazi Orientalism*. The emphasis here is on the stagnation of German orientalism after the restriction of the mobilisation of German orientalists following the First World War. In this period, the book highlights the Arabist Carl Brockelman, author of the massive corpus *Geschichte der christlichen Literaturen des Orients*, and the Iranologist Hans Heinrich Schaeder, known for their ultra-nationalist views. As a Hindologist, Walther Wüst found himself involved in Nazi propaganda. Schaeder, on the other hand, was a continuation of Hammer-Purgstall, Rückert and Goethe, who had a romantic approach to the Orient. Irwin argues that the long-established German tradition came to a de facto end with the flight of orientalists under Nazi rule. orientalists such as Gustav Edmund von Grunebaum, Ernst Herzfeld, Joseph Schacht, Paul Kahle, Richard Rudolf Walzer and Hans Ludwig Gottschalk were just some of those who fled Nazi Germany.

Said is criticized generally for choosing certain texts to that provide his claims. Although the author is among these critics, he also follows a similar path. As emphasized before, Said is criticized almost everywhere his name is mentioned in the book. The author, being a student of Lewis, was a close witness to the debate between Said and Lewis. He claims that Said respected Lewis' knowledge but disliked him for his support of Zionism. Irwin can be criticized here because Said criticizes Lewis not only for supporting Zionism, but also for his perception of the Orient and Islam. In his book *What Went Wrong?*, Lewis (2002) constructed perceptions by considering the Islamic world through certain stereotypes. According to him, the Islamic world is incompatible with democracy and denies the rights of religious minorities and limits women's rights. He also argues that Muslims lack a sense of curiosity and do not try to catch up with the West. Much more can be added to these generalizing views. According to Said, Lewis's work on Islam represents the pinnacle of orientalism. He expresses this accusation in his work titled *Orientalism* as follows:

...without at the same time mentioning-anywhere, in any of his writings that there was such a thing as a Zionist invasion and colonization of Palestine despite and in conflict with the native Arab inhabitants. No Israeli would deny this, but Lewis the orientalist historian simply leaves it out. He will speak of the absence of democracy in the Middle East except for Israel, without ever mentioning the Emergency Defence Regulations used in Israel to rule the Arabs... (Said, 1978, pp. 318-319).

Irwin claims that specialists in Arabic language and culture can find work in Israel because, according to him, the Mossad always needs people from this field. The vast majority of Israeli orientalists are of German origin and have

naturally inherited their philological methods. Leo Ary Mayer, David Ayalon, Gabriel Bayer and, more recently, Martin Kremer, are all with different fields of study. In addition, Paul Kraus, and Samuel Stern, who grew up outside Israel, are mentioned among the orientalist of Jewish origin in the book without mentioning their ideological approaches (Irwin, 2006, pp. 272-273).

Said's book titled *Orientalism* (1978) reignited anti-orientalist views previously advanced by intellectuals such as Abdul Latif Tibawi and Anouar Abdel-Malek. Said skilfully managed to draw these debates to a more theoretical level. He accused orientalism of being an instrument of colonialism and of portraying oriental communities, especially Arabs and Islam, with negative stereotypes. Claiming that orientalists were under the guidance of Western powers, he ensured that this debate continues to the present day and criticised through specific texts and personalities that in the golden age of colonialism, between the 18th and 20th centuries, every academic endeavour on the East was related to political and economic expansionism (Avcı, 2021, p.10).

Irwin begins the ninth chapter by criticism of Said and in a peculiar style question about his being Palestinian, claiming that he is Lebanese. In other words, indirectly arguing that he uses it as a political tool being a Palestinian. What is important here is that Said felt himself to be a Palestinian. This topic could have been left unmentioned. Unlike the previous chapters, this chapter criticises Said's views on orientalism in a more systematic and sequential manner. These can be listed as follows:

- \* Said wrote the book titled *Orientalism* quickly.
- \* Said makes historiographical chronological mistakes. For example, the book gives incorrect information such as the Arabs had conquered Anatolia before North Africa.
- \* Said attributed to Silvestre de Sacy things that he never actually did. For example, introducing him as the chief translator of Napoleon Bonaparte.
- \* Said's claim that Lane's *Manner and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* was addressed to the academy.
- \* His inability to decide when orientalism began and expressing inconsistent views,
- \* Including Homer, Aeschylus, and Dante in his group of "orientalist tramps",
- \* Not seeing a difference between the perception of Islam in Europe in the 12th and 13th centuries and the perception of Islam in the 20th century,

\* Said does not see the Persians as imperialists like the Romans; on the contrary, he sees them as innocent victims of tragic Greek playwrights. Furthermore, the author claims that Said ignores the mistakes of the great Islamic states in history. The criticisms of Said in the book are not limited to these (Irwin, 2006, pp. 278-286).

In this chapter, the author reiterates Said's view, expressed in his orientalism, that the Germans were exceptional, i.e., more scholarly, and not in close contact with colonialism. In fact, Said had already stated that he had not analysed this field in detail. There have been some recent studies on the view that German orientalism was closely related to colonialism, albeit with a delay, compared to the French and British. Since Irwin has done such a comprehensive study, he should of necessity know that German orientalists are not limited to Goldziher, Nöldeke and Wellhausen. In this context, he repeats the mistake he made while criticising Said. It is necessary to look at how many orientalists such as Oskar Mann, Eugen Mittwoch, Bernhard Moritz, Carl Heinrich Becker, Martin Hartmann and many others politicised their relations with colonialism.

The purpose of this text is not to respond to the author's criticisms of Said, to which, had Said lived, he would probably have had an absolute answer. What makes the ninth chapter of the book interesting is that the author makes his criticisms of Said in a very comprehensive and systematic manner. The criticisms of Said by intellectuals of Arab origin writing in English are discussed in this part of the book. The central bibliographical and theoretical role that this book will play in the debate on Said-centred orientalism is very important. Said's theoretical contradictions centred on Foucault and Gramsci do not escape the arrows of criticism. What should not be forgotten here is that being of Arab origin does not prevent one from being a part of the orientalist discourse that Said criticises.

Irwin emphasises that Lewis's view of orientalism as an unadulterated scholarship or objective science may seem absurd to many. He asks how we can discover a political agenda in Pococke's translation of Hay ibn Yakzan into English - he lists many other examples. Of course, Lewis and Irwin can be criticised here, since there are countless works written with a political agenda in the historical development of orientalism. Just as Said followed a text-selective method, Lewis and other Said critics followed the same path when criticising him.

In this part, the book generally criticises Said quite harshly from different points of view, even claiming that his theses should not be taken so seriously. The author argues that some anti-American and anti-Semites position themselves on Said's side. While Irwin discusses the arguments of Said's enemies in detail, he hardly ever mentions Said's supporters, or speaks in very general terms. The author rightly reports that Said's book is 'full of sinister villains'. On closer

examination, one can find many more racist-colonialist ‘evil villains’ that Said does not mention, but this fact does not justify a prejudiced, totalising view of such a huge discipline.

The tenth chapter of this work is devoted to the enemies of orientalism. The biography of the Syrian intellectual historian Muhammad Kurd Ali - he served as Minister of Education in Syria - and his intellectual personality and anti-orientalist stance are analysed here. In addition to Kurd Ali, the author includes a large number of enemies of orientalism from the Islamic world, both Marxist and Islamist. In a general list, Irwin puts Abdul Latif Tibawi and Sayyid Qutb at the top and Fazlur Rahman Malik at the bottom. According to the Irwin, intellectuals such as Seyyed Hossein Nasser, Maryam Jamilah, Hamid Algar, Ahmad Ghorab, Ziauddin Sardar, Muhsin Mahdi, Muhammad Asad, Tibawi, Abdullah Laroi are the figures who are angry with the orientalists. He categorises his orientalist enemies as Muslims, converts to Islam and secular Arab intellectuals from the Islamic world. He devotes a separate chapter to Tibawi, whom he criticises severely. He discusses Muhammad Kurd Ali and Jalal Ali Ahmed as early orientalist enemies among Muslim intellectuals. He gives a very brief account of the views of these intellectuals and rightly does not go into deeper analyses, which would be better suited for another study. The book *Gharbzadegi: Weststruckness* by Jalal Ali Ahmad, who was a follower of ideas such as nativism and national traditionalism in Iran in the 1940s, is a work especially famous for its anti-Westernism. What Irwin particularly wants to emphasise in this chapter is Said’s skilful theoretical grounding of the anti-orientalist and anti-Western discourses of Tibawi, Jalal Ali Ahmed, Abdel-Malek and others. Tibawi’s prejudiced, harsh style and non-theoretical approaches received enough criticism from the author. In the book, Tibawi is severely criticised not only for his theoretical approach and style, but also for his views and characterised as an anti-Christian figure (Irwin, 2006, pp. 310-320). Like Tibawi, the Pakistani intellectual Ziauddin Sardar is subjected to heavy criticism by the author. In this context, while he devotes very little space to some intellectuals who are enemies of orientalism, he gives extensive space to others. One of the most striking aspects of the book is that in every criticism of Lewis, the author intervenes and acts with the reflex of defending him. In the most general sense, there is a serious anti-Said attitude almost throughout the book.

**Bibliography**

- Aslan, S. (2022). *Die deutsche Koranliteratur. Biographie und Bibliographie*, Köln: DITIB Verlag.
- Avcı, R. (2021). *Kurgu ile Gerçeklik Arasında Alman Oryantalizmi*, Ketebe: İstanbul.
- Fück, J. (1955), *Die arabischen Studien in Europa bis in den Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Otto Leipzig: Harrassowitz Verlag.
- Lewis, B. (2002). *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism*, New York: Vintage Books.

---

<sup>1</sup> Arius regarded the equality of nature between God/God the Father and the Son, as asserted at the Council of Nicaea (325), as a heresy, since this belief was in contradiction to monotheism, in which the Son and the Holy Spirit can only be conceived in the belief in one God. Subordinate position and dignity not equal to God. The fact that Islam also does not recognise Jesus Christ as the son of God fed John of Damascus with this polemic.

<sup>2</sup> In 1143, Robert of Ketton prepared the first translation of the Qur'an from Arabic into Latin, entitled *Lex Mahumet pseudoprophete*. He considered this translation as a tool to help Muslims convert to Christianity.