Orienting the Harem: Spatial Images, Popular Architecture, and Visual Culture in Europe and the United States, 1809-1942

by

Sarah Wheat

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Doctoral Committee:

Professor Claire Zimmerman, Co-Chair, University of Toronto
Professor Christiane Gruber, Co-Chair
Professor Matthew Biro
Associate Professor Kristin Dickinson
Professor Kathleen James-Chakraborty, University College Dublin

Sarah Wheat

sewheat@umich.edu

ORCID iD: 0000-0003-0839-9418

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Dedication

To my mom, Patti. You would have loved this.

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Abstract

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, spatial images of the harem appeared throughout Euro-American culture, including in popular architecture. While scholarship on gender and orientalism has focused primarily on women's writing and fine art, this dissertation expands the field of analysis to include architecture and interiors produced, circulated, and/or inhabited by women in Europe and the United States. Spatial images are widely recognizable, imagined and material constructs that circulate across literature, visual culture, architecture, and interior spaces. Through these mediations, the harem could function as an orienting device amid changing ideas about gender, labor, leisure, and domesticity during a period of accelerated industrialization.

Spatial images of the harem are analyzed across four chapters that each examine a different spatial context. The first chapter considers literary representations, specifically in Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *Turkish Embassy Letters* (1763), Sydney Owenson's (also known as Lady Morgan) *Woman; or Ida of Athens* (1809), and Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852). I treat the fictional forms of Islamic architecture and harem spaces constructed in these works as architectural sources and examples of popular architecture. In terms of the latter two examples, both popular novels, I argue that Owenson and Stowe, by embedding spatial images of the harem in Greece, London, and the American South, strategically established gendered and politically charged parallels between the imagined orient and their local contexts. The second chapter analyzes Turkish-style "cozy corners" that appeared in U.S. parlors between the 1880s and 1910s. Drawing on design manuals, popular magazines, photographs, and mail-order catalogues, it argues that orientalist spaces could aid in the creation of heterotopias that enabled upper- and middle-class American women to experiment with new forms of domestic labor, leisure, and self-presentation. The third chapter examines the Yenidze Oriental Tobacco Factory in Dresden, Germany (built 1907-1909), a monumental building often referred to as the *Tabakmoschee* (Tobacco Mosque). While the factory’s exterior references mosque architecture, this chapter brings that image into dialogue with the harem as a spatial imaginary, examining

how orientalist spectacle framed and obscured the realities of women's industrial labor, class struggle, and working conditions inside the factory. The final chapter analyzes the Moka Efti Café in interwar Berlin (1929-1942). By situating the café within longer histories of coffee consumption, orientalist branding and domestic interiors, and Berlin's changing industries and demographics, I argue that the café activated nostalgia and functioned between home and work, offering a technologized and feminized fantasy of belonging under conditions of capitalist modernity

Above all this dissertation develops the concept of "oriental" spatial images to define recognizable visual and spatial ensembles that circulate through media and popular culture and that can become materialized in architecture and interiors. Methodologically, this study advances the concept of the spatial image as a tool for architectural history, enabling analysis across media, degrees of materiality, and everyday practices. In doing so, it demonstrates that orientalism in popular architecture functioned less as a fixed ideology than as a flexible aesthetic and affective framework.

Introduction

Research for this dissertation began with two seemingly unrelated questions. The first was only tangentially related to histories of architecture. While taking a seminar on the historiography of Islamic Art, a cognate course outside of my primary research field, I was introduced to the trend of the Turkish or oriental cozy corner.[1] This trend was popular in western Europe and the United States from roughly 1880-1914. Black and white photographs of cozy corners, upon first glance, seem to suggest that occidental women were creating pseudo-harem spaces within their Victorian homes (Figure 2.3). I wanted to understand why the women in these photographs would be attracted to such a trend and what sorts of connotations could be attached to such a space.

The second question was much broader and related to my research focus in nineteenth- and twentieth-century architecture and design in western Europe and the United States: How did architecture function as a vehicle for commodity capitalism at the turn of the twentieth century? I was also interested in how architecture and interiors were themselves commodified – marketed, sold, and made accessible to mass audiences within consumer culture. The short, yet explosive popularity of Turkish cozy corners around 1900 seemed to be a provocative if unconventional case study through which to begin investigating this larger question.

First, I needed to understand what exactly was being sold to consumers when a middle- or upper-class American woman, for example, came across an image or description of a Turkish cozy corner in a shelter magazine or the Sears Roebuck Catalog (Figure 2.18). What about

[1] Throughout this dissertation, apart from chapter and section titles, I use lowercase orient, oriental, and orientalism and do not place the terms in quotation marks. I do the same with terms such as occidental, western, moorish, etc. This choice reflects an understanding of the orient (and its counterparts) not as a proper place, culture, or historically coherent entity, but as what Edward Said described as "imaginative geography" and "a closed field, a theatrical stage affixed to Europe." The use of lowercase is intended to avoid reifying or granting conceptual authority to a category that is fundamentally imaginary and historically contingent. This terminological decision aligns with feminist and postcolonial scholarship that emphasizes the constructed and power-laden nature of such designations, as well as with broader practice of resisting capitalization as a marker of authority. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (Vintage Books, 1979), chap. 1, “The Scope of Orientalism,” section “Imaginative Geography and Its Representations.”

collecting objects such as a low, wooden, octagonal table (also known as a tabouret table), a sofa, divan or ottoman, Persian or oriental rugs, embroidered and/or fringed pillows, incense burners, metal lamps or hanging lanterns, weaponry (shields, spears, historic guns), beaded curtains, fabric to drape and hang, wallpaper featuring Arabesque patterns, and other small, souvenir-like objects and arranging them within a delineated, tented space in the home would have appealed to these consumers? Was this environment really supposed to call to mind imaginaries of an oriental harem and, if so, to what end? Also, how does this do-it-yourself interior design project fit into a broader history of architecture and design's role in commodity capitalism around 1900?

Taken together, these questions open onto the larger terrain that this dissertation investigates. Across four chapters, I trace how an imaginary space known as “the harem” functioned as a dynamic set of spatial images within Euro-American contexts between approximately 1809-1942. A specifically Ottoman or Turkish version of these images was transformed across different media and built environments, deployed in what I refer to as popular architecture. The case studies considered span a variety of imagined and built environments shaped by circulation, display, and consumer practices. Rather than engaging seriously with notions of authenticity, spatial images of the harem circulated within popular architecture as advertising tools and marketable aesthetics that shaped everyday spaces of leisure and consumer culture. At the same time, their adaptation in Euro-American built environments reveals underlying tensions between commodity culture and countercultural forces, as different groups appropriated and reinterpreted the harem image to serve competing agendas. Through this analysis, I explore how architecture, an active vehicle for the expansion of commodity capitalism in the decades around 1900, mediated between fantasy and commerce while also providing occasions for resistance to dominant norms.

Most examples come from the United States and Germany, two major late-industrializing powers whose economic rivalry and interconnected markets shaped the development of global industrial capitalism at the turn of the twentieth century. The exchange and competition between these two contexts during this period are significant with both groups energetically looking to and formulating images of the other. With the mass immigration of German workers to the United States beginning in the 1830s, the American Civil War (1861-65), and German unification in 1871, there emerged "mutual curiosity in the two countries' parallel constitutional

development."[2] This was followed in the early twentieth century by increased American tourism and business travel to Germany as well as two World Wars which produced very different and more complex encounters between citizens of the two nation-states.[3] German architects and critics, such as Walter Gropius and Adolf Behne, visited and took inspiration from innovation in American high rise and industrial building including Albert Kahn's factories for Henry Ford.[4] Many, like the architect Ernst Neufert, were fascinated by Frederick Taylor's theories on workplace efficiency.[5] Business owners in Germany, such as Hugo Zietz and Giovanni Eftimiades, two figures discussed in chapters three and four, looked to the United States for developments in the burgeoning field of product advertising and marketing psychology. Rudolf Cronau, a well-known German illustrator and travel writer, published the first handbook on advertising in the German language in 1887. In the handbook Cronau draws from the American showman P.T. Barnum's *The Humbugs of the World* (1866), which emphasizes the effectiveness of theater, and especially exotic spectacle in drawing the attention of the consuming masses.[6] These exchanges and influences represent only a few examples within a robust transatlantic exchange between these two geographies in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

A crucial element in the choice of case studies in the following chapters is a consideration of how architectural infrastructures of public space were transformed between 1880 and 1942 in response to shifting patterns of life and work. This, centrally, includes women entering universities, professional roles, social clubs, and urban nightlife. The project thus foregrounds women as central actors in the production, circulation, and reception of spatial images, whether as designers, consumers, workers, spectators, or symbolic figures. More broadly, I argue that any history of popular architecture must center women's participation,

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[2] David E. Barclay and Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt, eds., *Transatlantic Images and Perceptions: Germany and America since 1776* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 2-4, 10-12.
[3] Barclay and Schmidt, *Transatlantic Images*, 10-12.
[4] Claire Zimmerman, *Albert Kahn Inc.: Architecture, Labor, and Industry, 1905–1961* (The MIT Press, 2025), 128.
[5] Nader Vossoughian, "From A4 Paper to the Octametric Brick: Ernst Neufert and the Geo-Politics of Standardisation in Nazi Germany," *The Journal of Architecture* 20, no. 4 (2015): 675–98.
[6] Rudolf Cronau, *Das Buch Der Reklame. Geschichte, Wesen Und Praxis Der Reklame* (Kommissionsverlag der Wohler'schen Buchhandlung, 1887); P. T. Barnum, *The Humbugs of the World* (John Camden Hotten, 1866); David Ciarlo, *Advertising Empire: Race and Visual Culture in Imperial Germany* (Harvard University Press, 2011),117.

given popular architecture's dependence on consumer demand, mass media, and the cultural economies in which women play a decisive role.

This study focuses on examples from Germany and the United States while developing a framework that can be expanded geographically. The first two chapters trace representations and reproductions of the harem as they shaped political and domestic space in western Europe and the United States. The final two chapters then consider how the distortion and refraction of the harem as a spatial idea across geographical contexts produced architectures whose orientalizing markers could be locally specific while remaining structurally generic. Precisely because the harem functions as a flexible conceptual image rather than a fixed historical referent, it can be mobilized across divergent architectural settings and ideological positions, including ambivalent engagements with modernization and capitalism.

The Orient and the Harem: Contested Spaces, Places, and Bodies

The term *harem* is overburdened and contested. Semantically hybrid, harem indicates "both the female members of a household and the dedicated spatial enclosure in which they live." As İrvin Cemil Schick explains, the word is quite unusual in referring simultaneously to a "space and a category of people."[7] In other words, the social category is spatialized by definition. Notions of harem, as a physical set of rooms and the women imagined to occupy them, have long occupied complex positions in occidental imagination. It is a concept that has been rigidly codified in its basic features, even as both its conceptual contours and its representations have remained remarkably mutable. Harem spaces are largely unknowable to a Euro-American audience, yet are also historically rooted. The harem, as space, has been mythologized, commercially repackaged, and decontextualized in its reproductions. While historically describing domestic and highly structured, private spaces, representations in Euro-American art transformed notions of harem into a widely circulating, fluid, visual fantasy, mostly detached

[7] By contrast, terms such as "European" or "office worker" refer primarily to social categories and are not defined by the spaces their members occupy. A European remains European regardless of location, and an office worker is not conceptually bound to a specific architectural enclosure. *Harem*, however, names both a group of women and the private quarters in which they live, linking social identity and spatial enclosure in a single term. This dual reference, in which people and space are mutually defining, distinguishes the harem from most social or spatial categories and contributes to the term's conceptual instability. İrvin Cemil Schick, "The Harem as Gendered Space and the Spatial Reproduction of Gender," in *Harem Histories: Envisioning Places and Living Spaces* (Duke University Press, 2010), 69.

from lived realities.[8] As Amira Jarmakani writes, it is a term, idea, and place that is "both simplistic and beguilingly complex."[9]

John Tolan's study of western representations of the Prophet Muhammad demonstrates how this singular cultural figure has occupied a persistent and ambivalent role in western thought, absorbing fascination, anxiety, admiration, and hostility. The Ottoman harem functions in a similar manner within Euro-American discourse, where it likewise holds a "crucial and ambivalent place in the European imagination."[10] Yet the harem differs in that it is not a singular historical figure, but a spatial and social formation that accommodates the projection of ideas about gender, sexuality, privacy, surveillance, domesticity, and power onto architectural form.

Throughout the dissertation, I exclusively use the term *harem*. This reflects the Turkish spelling as well as the noun and adjective found most often in European and American sources.[11] I refer often to an imaginary space known as *the harem* purposefully to emphasize that the spatial images discussed in this study are referencing a product of translation and mediation through orientalist discourse. This choice reflects that the subject at hand is that of Euro-American constructions of a specific kind of interior that may or may not reflect any actual features of Islamic architecture and interiors or domestic practices themselves. In using the term *harem*, I employ a similar strategy to Tolan who uses the name "Mahomet" to specify that his subject of

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[8] I use the term "Euro-American" throughout the dissertation to refer to an interconnected field of cultural production spanning parts of Europe and the United States, shaped by shared markets, visual cultures, and imperial imaginaries rather than by national boundaries alone. The term is intended to foreground transatlantic circulation and exchange while avoiding the homogenizing implications of "western" and the artificial separation of European and American contexts that were historically entangled in the period under discussion. For irreal representations of harem in Euro-American art see Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem* (University of Minnesota Press, 1986); Joan DelPlato, *Multiple Wives, Multiple Pleasures: Representing the Harem, 1800-1875* (Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 2002); William Greenwood and Lucien De Guise, eds., *Inspired by the East: How the Islamic World Influenced Western Art* (The British Museum Press, 2019).

[9] Amira Jarmakani, "Review: Intimate Outsiders: The Harem in Ottoman and Orientalist Art and Travel Literature," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 20, no. 1 (January 1, 2011): 195–98.

[10] John Tolan, *Faces of Muhammad: Western Perceptions of the Prophet of Islam from the Middle Ages to Today* (Princeton University Press, 2019), 2.

[11] Although a variety of forms of domestic seclusion appear throughout history and in occidental art and literature, including the South Asian zenana and practices of purdah, the inner quarters of traditional Chinese households, geisha and courtesan culture in Japan, and the andaruni of Persian elite households, the examples in the following chapters focus primarily on an Ottoman orient. Alev Lytle Croutier, *Harem: The World Behind the Veil*, 1st ed. (Bloomsbury, 1989), 35; Ruth Bernard Yeazell, *Harems of the Mind: Passages of Western Art and Literature* (Yale University Press, 2000), 3.

study is not the actual historical figure, but rather western ideas and reconstructions.[12] That said, it is necessary to first broadly describe what is being mythologized if only to then leave it largely behind. Although the examples discussed in this dissertation reference largely distorted, ahistorical, and imaginary harem spaces, they are, however distantly, connected.

The word *harem* derives from the Arabic *ḥarīm* (and the related *ḥaram*), but it entered European languages through Ottoman Turkish, where the term *haremlik* referred to the women's quarters of a household. All come from the root *ḥ-r-m* which carries meanings related to forbiddenness, sanctity, and protection.[13] The *Encyclopedia of Islam* defines *ḥarīm* as an adjective meaning "forbidden, particularly the women's apartments and their occupants (harem). — Certain pieces of ground, which are withdrawn from cultivation or building without the owner's consent, are likewise called *ḥarīm*." The related term *ḥaram* carries both religious as well as domestic connotations: "forbidden, sacred; ḥarām is the name of the sacred area of the two cities of Mecca and al-Madīna […] as well as of that of Jerusalem; then it is also used for the female apartments inaccessible to strangers and their occupants (harem), in this sense = ḥarīm."[14] This range of meanings reflects the malleability of the term harem, yet it rests on a common logic of protection, restriction, and separation that spans sacred precincts, private land, domestic quarters, and cultural spatialities of gender and sexuality.

Simon O'Meara has argued that the concept of *ḥaram* originates not in the domestic realm but in the sacred topography of Islam. In his study of the *Kaʿba* as the paradigmatic *ḥaram*, O'Meara shows that enclosure and boundary are central to how sanctity is spatially constituted in Islam. This cosmological understanding of protected space, linked to the *Kaʿba* as the "House of God" and to broader ideas of orientation, purity, and exclusion, O'Meara argues, later informed *ḥarīm* domestic configurations, which translated divine protection into social and

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[12] Tolan, *Faces of Muhammad*, 3.

[13] A note on language: I do not read Arabic or Ottoman Turkish, and my discussion of etymology relies on secondary scholarship in English. I follow widely used transliteration conventions in English-language scholarship and do not reproduce Arabic or Ottoman Turkish script. This reflects both the limits of my linguistic training and the focus of this study on Euro-American representations rather than philological analysis. Schick, "The Harem as Gendered Space," 70.

[14] "Haram" in *Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. Hamilton Alexander Rosskeen Gibb and Johannes Hendrik Kramers (Brill Academic Publishers, 2001), 133-134.

architectural seclusion.[15] That said, scholars including Fatima Mernissi have pushed back against the idea that the segregation of sexes is fundamental to Islam through an analysis of the Prophet's home in Medina as a place where privacy and public life were one and the same.[16] As Leila Ahmed terms it, "the ideal of seclusion," did not originate with Islam, but was a common practice of Ancient Near Eastern royal courts as well as among the elites of ancient Greece.[17] It was with the Abbasid caliphate (750-1258), the third to succeed the Prophet Muhammad, that the practice of segregation and seclusion of women inside a specified area of the home became fully institutionalized.[18] Although men are also present in harem spaces, insofar as these encompassed the private, family chambers of the household, the term *harem* refers specifically to the women who inhabit or inhabited them.[19]

While no description can characterize all harems, even though the commodified spatial image would suggest otherwise, the imperial harem at the Topkapı Palace is frequently treated as the paradigm.[20] As the royal residence of the Ottoman court, the palace itself, with its domes and towers silhouetted against the Bosphorus or framed by the Golden Horn, became an enduring spatial image in its own right.[21] Ottoman imperial harems were highly structured, hierarchical spaces with defined spatial divisions that regulated movement, access, and visibility. The first two courts of *Topkapı* housed various administrative and ceremonial functions (*selamlık*). These spaces were where foreign dignitaries were received in elaborate, choreographed rituals. The Third Court was a private space, divided into male and female sections (*haremlik*).[22] Far more than a private residence, *Topkapı* palace was a self-contained world. It encompassed schools, workshops, armories, hospitals, stables, kitchens, bakeries, baths, audience halls, treasuries,

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[15] Simon O'Meara, *The Kaʿba Orientations: Readings in Islam's Ancient House* (Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 56.
[16] Fatima Mernissi and Mary Jo Lakeland, *The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam* (New York: Basic Books, 1991), 113. Also cited in Schick, "The Harem as Gendered Space," 70.
[17] Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam: Historical Roots of a Modern Debate* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 103.
[18] Eleanor Abdella Doumato, "Seclusion" in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
[19] Croutier, *Harem*, 37.
[20] Gülru Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power: The Topkapı Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (New York and Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), iv.
[21] Seles' Master thesis studies the Golden Horn basically as a spatial image without using those words: Emre Seles, "Representation(s) of Topkapı Palace" (Master of Fine Arts, Bilkent University, 2004).
[22] Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power*, 159-162.

libraries, archives, mosques, dormitories, pavilions, zoological parks, pools, fountains, and gardens. Thousands of inhabitants lived within its walls, organized by rank and service. Inside the harem proper, private chambers were arranged hierarchically, with the most prestigious women, such as the Queen Mother (*Valide Sultan*) and favored consorts, residing in the most privileged quarters.[23]

It is important to note that the spaces in which imperial Ottoman women were mobile permeated beyond the harem. For example, what Schick calls the "subspaces" of imperial women in Ottoman contexts included "harems, public baths, saints' tombs and shrines, recreational areas, cemeteries, and so forth" with movement between them regulated by "the practice of veiling."[24] Veiling, which is also pre-Islamic in origin, thus allows for a sort of mobility of harem space. Mernissi has described how, unlike western conceptions of the feminine as passive, the practice of seclusion and veiling in Islam "is based on an understanding of female sexuality as active and potentially unstoppable."[25] This understanding helps explain how the harem in Ottoman contexts operated not as a singular, immobile interior, but as a flexible spatial system that could travel with women across a range of socially sanctioned sites, in stark contrast to its later occidental fixation as a closed and static space.

What is true about harem spaces and harem women versus what has been perpetuated through myth, legend, and projection has been a subject of scholarly debate for over a century. A significant amount of scholarship has examined the intersections of fact and fiction in representations of the harem, tracing both the lived experiences of women who lived in seclusion as well as the ways harem spaces have been mythologized. For example, Leslie Peirce's *The Imperial Harem* examines the period between the sixteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries known as the "Sultanate of Women," when Ottoman imperial women wielded considerable political power. Her research challenges Eurocentric assumptions that gender segregation necessarily equated to female subordination, instead demonstrating that royal harem women

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[23] The *Enderun* (inner palace school) trained elite male pages for government service, while the harem housed the women of the imperial household and functioned as a separate sphere of influence. Within this court culture, boys and girls were educated separately, often in proximity but under distinct hierarchical systems. Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power*, iv-xiii.
[24] Schick, "The Harem as Gendered Space," 72.
[25] Reina Lewis and Nancy Micklewright, "Introduction," in *Gender, Modernity and Liberty: Middle Eastern and Western Women's Writings* (I. B. Tauris, 2006) 17-19.

were active participants in dynastic politics and social welfare.[26] Gülru Necipoğlu's work, focusing on the architectural and spatial organization of the Topkapı Palace in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, has shown that the imperial harem was not merely a place of seclusion but a highly structured, political space that regulated movement, hierarchy, and visibility within the court.[27] In this spatial organization, power and status were determined by one's closeness to the inner quarters of the imperial household rather than by access to some notion of an external, privileged public space.[28] Lucienne Thys-Şenocak and Muzaffer Özgüleş have also highlighted the significant architectural patronage of Ottoman women, demonstrating how imperial and elite women exercised power, status, and influence through commissions as well as the design of domestic spatial organization.[29]

Additionally, it is important to note that most women living in Ottoman controlled areas would not have dwelled in harems. Strict seclusion would have only been available to wealthy, urban families in which women did not need to earn a living outside of the home. In cities women might veil when they went outside, but this was not always the case and often did not extend to rural areas.[30] Nonetheless, stereotypical representations of the oriental woman as harem woman and veiled woman remain central to Euro-American imaginaries of the orient.

Scholars such as Billie Melman, Mary Roberts, and Reina Lewis have examined how women's visual and literary representations of the harem helped shaped western understandings of gender and space. Their perspectives revise Edward Said's concept of orientalism through the recognition of counter-narratives and resistant images. Melman argues that "The harem was

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[26] Leslie Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).
[27] Leslie Peirce and Gülru Necipoğlu have shown how the imperial Ottoman harem held considerable political power and actively lobbied the sultan to influence Ottoman strategies of conquest. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem*. Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power*.
[28] "As Peirce makes clear, to map on to the harem a European notion of public and private, with public as the domain of politics and power and private as outside the workings of power, is to misrecognise that, within the spatial relations of seclusion, it was proximity to the interior of the imperial household that bespoke power and status, not distance from it in some outside public domain." In "Introduction," Reina Lewis and Sara Mills eds., *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader* (Taylor & Francis Group, 2003), 15.
[29] Lucienne Thys-Şenocak, *Ottoman Women Builders: The Architectural Patronage of Hadice Turhan Sultan* (Ashgate, 2006); Muzaffer Özgüleş, *The Women Who Built the Ottoman World: Female Patronage and the Architectural Legacy of Gülnuş Sultan* (I.B. Tauris, 2017).
[30] Sarah Graham-Brown, "The Seen, The Unseen and the Imagined: Private and Public Lives" in Reina Lewis and Sara Mills, *Feminist Postcolonial Theory: A Reader* (Taylor & Francis Group, 2003), 504.

appealing and, at the same time, threatening because it seemed an alternative to the Western, Pauline-Augustinian model of sexuality."[31] She describes how European women travelers and ethnographers sought to "domesticate" the exotic, normalizing and humanizing the harem to critique gendered hierarchies in the west, effectively feminizing a system traditionally viewed as patriarchal. Lewis expands this analysis by examining how western women's travel narratives, memoirs, and visual culture both reinforced and contested dominant stereotypes, often reflecting contemporary feminist debates. She also highlights how Ottoman women writers strategically used English-language publications to engage in global discussions of modernity, gender, and national identity.[32] Like Lewis, Roberts underscores the harem as both a material and an imagined space, whose representations were shaped by intersecting forces of imperialism, feminism, and consumer culture. She focuses on the work of western travelers, artists, and diarists who navigated the harem as both ethnographic observers and participants in a field of feminine fantasy, selectively appropriating aspects of masculine orientalist desire. Through vivid descriptions of harem interiors, the beauty of its inhabitants, and their own embodied experiences—such as wearing veils or imagining themselves within the scene—these authors demonstrate how Euro-American women transformed the harem into a site of self-insertion, fantasy, and cross-cultural negotiation.[33]

In addition to studies of literary and painted representations in European contexts, scholars such as Nancy Micklewright and Deniz Türker have examined the material and architectural dimensions of wealthy Ottoman harem spaces, expanding our understanding of their spatial, visual, and social significance. Micklewright explores photographic representations of Ottoman women and harem interiors, challenging the assumption that these images merely reflected orientalist fantasies. Instead, she demonstrates how they were shaped by local visual

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[31] Melman, *Women's Orients*, 61.
[32] Reina Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism; Lewis and Mills, "Introduction"; Reina Lewis, Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel, and the Ottoman Harem* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2004); Lewis and Micklewright, *Gender, Modernity and Liberty*.
[33] Mary Roberts, "Contested Terrains: Women Orientalists and the Colonial Harem," in *Orientalism's Interlocutors: Painting, Architecture, Photography* ed. Jill Beaulieu (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 179–203. Importantly the real and imaginary Ottoman harem in Euro-American literature and art has also been written about as what Mary Louise Pratt calls a "contact zone." Contact zones are "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power…" Mary Louise Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone," *Profession*, 1991, 34.

traditions, patronage networks, and the agency of the women who participated in their creation.[34] Türker's work complicates the static image of the imperial harem and the role of the Queen Mothers by examining the Yıldız Palace complex, the last official residence of the Ottoman court before its dissolution in 1926. She traces how, long before Abdülhamid II established Yıldız as the imperial seat in the late nineteenth century, it had been a space largely reserved for royal women, particularly the sultans' mothers. Her research highlights how Ottoman imperial women actively shaped their built environment through commissioning residences, funding philanthropic projects, and managing estates. Moreover, Türker shows how Yıldız's eclectic architectural forms, including prefabricated timber pavilions influenced by Swiss and Norwegian chalets, reflect a broader global circulation of architectural styles rather than a singularly Ottoman or orientalist aesthetic.[35] Collectively, these perspectives underscore the complexity of harem as a lived space, shaped by architectural innovation, female agency, and transnational cultural exchanges as well as the multidimensionality of its Euro-American representations.

Orientalist Fictions of the Harem

In Euro-American discourse the harem is not a stable concept or descriptor. It is often conflated with other interior spaces of Islamic architecture, most commonly *hammams* or public baths and even mosques.[36] Despite this instability, representations of the harem as an archetypal gendered space were, and remain, one of the most salient symbols through which western audiences imagine the orient. A "multifaced mythology" about an imaginary space known as the harem arguably reached its peak in the nineteenth century, where this dissertation begins.[37] In its most openly hostile form, this mythology describes the harem as a space of slavery with "opium-smoking, [and] lightly clad women shut up in a luxurious space," guarded by African eunuchs

[34] Nancy Micklewright, *A Victorian Traveler in the Middle East: The Photography and Travel Writing of Annie Lady Brassey* (Routledge, 2017); Nancy Micklewright, "Late Ottoman Photography: Family, Home, and New Identities," in *Transitions in Domestic Consumption and Family Life in the Modern Middle East: Houses in Motion*, ed. Relli Shechter (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2003), 65–83.
[35] Deniz Türker, *The Accidental Palace: The Making of Yıldız in Nineteenth-Century Istanbul* (Penn State University Press, 2023).
[36] Nebahat Avcıoğlu, "Identity-as-Form: The Mosque in the West," *Cultural Analysis* 6 (2007): 91–112; Malcolm Shifrin, *Victorian Turkish Baths* (Historic England, 2015), 100.
[37] Originating with the various translations, reimaginings, and editions of Antoine Galland's *Les mille et une nuits*, this image circulated widely in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe. Antoine Galland, *Les Mille et Une Nuit: Contes Arabes* (Compagnie des libraires, 1745).

and entirely subordinate to the male head of household. Another recurring narrative of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was that most women who lived there were Christian prisoners forced to convert to Islam. As DelPlato has shown, such representations articulated perceived "radical differences between eastern and western styles of sex and marriage," revealing contemporary anxieties about social norms, gender, servitude, and race. [38]

Alongside these hostile depictions, more romanticized and even politically progressive visions of the harem also circulated. [39] Like the orient itself, the harem was imagined as a place of mystery and sensory excess, marked by luxurious objects, languid bodies, tobacco smoke, and trickling fountains. It functioned as a powerful image of an unchanging, indulgent lifestyle, central to broader stereotypes of the orient as passive, inefficient, and governed by sensuality rather than self-discipline. [40] To some, such an environment was appealing in that it seemed distinctly unmodern, serving as a counterweight to the detrimental processes of industrialization. Others understood the harem as a space built for and governed by women: a dynamic arena of women's power. Across these multifaceted narratives, the harem's racialized and gendered dynamics became a key site through which imperialist critiques, fantasies of domination, and feminist indictments of Western patriarchy were simultaneously articulated. [41]

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[38] In this mythology, the harem typically included "four legal wives, as many concubines as affordable, the master's mother, his unmarried sisters and all of his young children." DelPlato, *Multiple Wives, Multiple Pleasures*, 19-20; Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*, xiv; Saadet Özen, "The Visual Making of the Harem," *Art in Translation* 9, no. 1 (March 31, 2017): 53-54; Alexandra Brandon discusses the mythology of the harem woman as characterized by Sheherazade, the most recognizable character from Arabic literature for Euro-American audiences. "Scheherazade at Ground Zero: Muslim Women's Agency, Identity, and Space in Euro-America from the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition to the Islamic State" (PhD diss., The College of William and Mary, 2021).

[39] Yeazell discusses this dynamic in *Harems of the Mind*, 3. It can be seen in diverse genres, including Richard Burton's travelogues. Burton, an adventurer who famously traveled in disguise, "delighted in shocking his readers, defending slavery under Islam and in the Americas, and polygamy among Muslims and Mormons." Paulo Lemos Horta, *The Annotated Arabian Nights: Tales from 1001 Nights* (Liveright Publishing, 2021), 617. Similar tropes appear in fiction, for example in Penelope Aubin's *The Strange Adventures of the Count de Vinevil and His Family* (Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey, 1996 [orig. 1739]) and Mary Wortley Montagu's *The Turkish Embassy Letters*, ed. Rebecca M. Chung (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2013 [orig. 1763]), 164-167; For more on the multifaceted nature of hostile and progressive orientalisms see Ivan Davidson Kalmar, "Moorish Style: Orientalism, the Jews, and Synagogue Architecture," *Jewish Social Studies* 7, no. 3 (2001): 71.

[40] Linda Nochlin, "The Imaginary Orient," *Art in America* 71, no. 5 (May 1983): 118–31, 187, 189, 191.

[41] Meyda Yeğenoğlu discusses how orientalism is not only a system of racial or cultural domination, but also one structured through gendered power dynamics. She and Afsaneh Najmabadi critique western

Edward Said, providing a foundational critique of western appropriations and distortions of an Islamic orient, discusses the harem as a metonymic space through which occidental discourse constructs the orient as exotic, feminized, static, and inherently other. Like the imaginary harem woman, the orient is figured as passive, sensual, and irrational; like the space of the harem itself, it is imagined as enclosed, mysterious, and inaccessible, yet ultimately possessable. According to Said, the harem is not *just like* the orient, it *stands in* for it.[42] In this sense, the harem operates as a metonym at multiple scales: standing in for those who inhabit it, for gendered social relations within and outside of the household, at the level of the building, and ultimately for the entirety of the orient. The spatial image of the harem discussed throughout the dissertation thus facilitates a process of mediation, through which otherwise diffuse and heterogeneous ideas about the orient are provisionally organized and negotiated through feminized spatial forms deployed at multiple scales.

Within orientalist modes of knowledge production, images function as authoritative and didactic devices. Edward Said illustrates this mechanism through his discussion of the textual image of Muhammad in Barthélemy d'Herbelot's *Bibliothèque orientale* (1697). Here, Said equates "image" with "character," and explains how it functions not as a faithful representation but as a theatrical construction.[43] Linda Nochlin extends this insight into the visual field, demonstrating how nineteenth-century French orientalist painting relied on staged and self-authorizing images that claimed documentary authority while suppressing the conditions of their own production. As Nochlin argues, such images derive their power not from accuracy but from

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feminist narratives that construct the veiled woman as a symbol of oppression. Meyda Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism* (Cambridge University Press, 1998). For more on the complicated nature of orientalist discourse in feminist thought, see Samara Anne Cahill, *Intelligent Souls?: Feminist Orientalism in Eighteenth-Century English Literature* (Lewisburg, Pennsylvania: Bucknell University Press, 2019); William Radler Hunt, "'Suffragettes of the Harem': The Evolution of Sympathy and the Afterlives of Sentimentality in American Feminist Orientalism, 1865–1920" (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 2016). For more on how European women's descriptions of the orient in travelogues reflected shifting notions of space and power see Efterpi Mitsi, "Private Rituals and Public Selves: The Turkish Bath in Women's Travel Writing," in *Inside Out Women Negotiating, Subverting, Appropriating Public and Private Space* ed. Teresa Gómez Reus and Aránzazu Usandizaga (Amsterdam ; New York, NY : Rodopi, 2008), 47-63.

[42] "… when Said discusses the ways in which the Oriental woman is represented in Flaubert's works, he alludes to the uniform association established between the Orient and sex," Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*, 25.

[43] Said, *Orientalism*, chap. 1, "The Scope of Orientalism," section "Imaginative Geography and Its Representations."

their ability to naturalize fantasy through visual detail and coherence.[44] Although Said's and Nochlin's examples are textual and pictorial, the representational logic they describe extends into architecture and space in the images of the harem discussed in this dissertation. I argue that spatial images of the harem operate across media and architectural scales as performative constructs that organize fantasy, desire, and cultural difference through staging, repetition, and display, intensifying the alignment of orientalist imaginaries with the logics of spectacle and consumption within capitalist modernity.

Although, as many subsequent scholars have noted, Said does not foreground gender as an analytic category, his concept of orientalism and brief discussion of the harem remain important to this study, particularly for understanding how spatial images condense ideological meaning and make it legible within Euro-American visual and textual culture.[45] Additionally, for the purposes of this dissertation, although there is no universally agreed upon definition of the orient's geography, it is to be understood as a constructed, Eurocentric concept that imagines the cultural, geographical, and ideological "other" of the "West" to encompass regions stretching from the Mediterranean to East Asia.[46] The examples considered throughout the dissertation are limited to an Ottoman or khedivial orient.[47]

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[44] Nochlin, "Imaginary Orient," 37, 39.

[45] "Why the Orient seems still to suggest not only fecundity but sexual promise (and threat), untiring sensuality, unlimited desire, deep generative energies, is something on which one could speculate; it is not the province of my analysis here, alas, despite its frequently noted appearance." Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Vintage Books, 1979), 115.

[46] "since Edward Said's memorable Orientalism, published in 1978, the identification of the Orient with the Near and Middle East and its Islamic extension into North Africa has been generally accepted. Factually and logically incorrect, the term has prevailed in this restricted sense and incorporates a vast fantasy of an Orient," Oleg Grabar, "Roots and Others," in *Noble Dreams and Wicked Pleasures: Orientalism in America 1870-1930* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 3. The debate surrounding Said's definition of and conception of orientalism is large enough to fill endless volumes. For more on various perspectives as to the term Orient and its deployment in Said's work as well as after see John M. MacKenzie, "The Orientalism Debate," in *Inspired by the East: How the Islamic World Influenced Western Art* (London: The British Museum Press, 2019), 16–27; Holly Edwards, "A Million and One Nights," in *Noble Dreams and Wicked Pleasures: Orientalism in America 1870-1930* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 11-58; Majid Daneshgar, "I Want to Become an Orientalist Not a Colonizer or a 'De-Colonizer,'" *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*, no. 1–13 (2020): 1–13.

[47] For more on the notion of a specifically Ottoman or Islamic orient and its relation to the United States and Germany see Edwards, *Noble Dreams*; Berna Gueneli, "Orientalist Fashion, Photography, and Fantasies: Baron Max von Oppenheim's Arabian Nights in Context," *The German Quarterly* 90, no. 4

This dissertation explores how the harem's spatial image operated not only as a metonym for the orient but also as a site of commercial and cultural production, shaped through commodity capitalism and mass media. While Said's analysis effectively demonstrates how the west defined itself through the exoticization of an imagined orient, as others have noted, his framework largely focuses on textual and elite discourses, especially in England and France.[48] My work extends and complicates these critiques by examining how the harem's spatial image was mobilized in popular architecture and everyday visual culture, primarily in the United States and Germany. In these modes it was not merely a static symbol of alterity but an actively constructed and commodified fantasy that shaped spatial practices well into the twentieth century. As I will demonstrate, within commodity capitalism, the harem becomes a space of absence into which fantasies and desires can be projected, yet this projection is not always straightforward.[49]

I engage with feminist and postcolonial scholars who have critiqued Said for insufficiently attending to the agency of women, both in the production and contestation of these images.[50] I also agree with Ali Behdad's argument, now fifteen years ago, that orientalism cannot be understood as simply a discourse of power. But it is also not simply a "neutral"

(2017): 439–58; Nebahat Avcıoğlu, *Turquerie and the Politics of Representation, 1728-1876* (Farnham ; Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate Pub., 2011), 3-5; Roderick Cavaliero, *Ottomania: The Romantics and the Myth of the Islamic Orient* (London ; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010) ix-xx; Nicole Pohl, "Fatima's House: Oriental Voyage Utopias," in *Women, Space, and Utopia, 1600-1800* (Aldershot, Hants, England and Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005), 129-146.

[48] Said, *Orientalism*, 4; In expanding beyond the contexts of Britain and France and into the realm of commodity culture, the reproduction, and circulation of objects I am inspired by authors including Mercedes Volait and Holly Edwards. Mercedes Volait, *Antique Dealing and Creative Reuse in Cairo and Damascus 1850-1890: Intercultural Engagements with Architecture and Craft in the Age of Travel and Reform* (Brill, 2021); Edwards, "A Million and One Nights," 11-58.

[49] "Earthly paradise, Oriental wisdom, despotism, terror and abundant sexuality are well-documented elements of the imaginary geography that projected political and erotic fantasies onto the East"; "If distant places and peoples have always tempted human beings to fantastic projections of their own wishes and fears, then the blank space of the harem, sealed by definition from the eyes of Western men, only magnified the temptation." Nicole Pohl, *Women, Space, and Utopia, 1600-1800* (Aldershot, Hants, England and Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005), 126; Yeazell, *Harems of the Mind*, 1.

[50] Jill Beaulieu and Mary Roberts, *Orientalism's Interlocutors: Painting, Architecture, Photography, Objects/Histories* (Duke University Press, 2002); Reina Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity and Representation*, Gender, Racism, Ethnicity (Routledge, 1996); Billie Melman, *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918: Sexuality, Religion, and Work* (University of Michigan Press, 1992); Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism* (Psychology Press, 1993).

descriptive term as in "the orientalist interior." Orientalism is best understood as a "network of aesthetic, economic, and political relationships that cross national and historical boundaries."[51] By examining spatial images of the harem as fluid and contested sites of meaning, shaped by economic forces, architectural practice, and visual culture, this dissertation situates orientalism within a broader, dynamic network of commercial and cultural exchange rather than a fixed structure of domination.

I agree with Nebehat Avcıoğlu who argues that "turquerie, like classicism, chinoiserie, and orientalism, has played a pivotal role in shaping European art and architecture," and extend this argument into the twentieth century.[52] I also follow Avcıoğlu in moving away from the question of "What is exoticism/orientalism" to instead ask "How does an image empower identity or subvert it?"[53] This dissertation is based primarily on English and German-language sources produced by Euro-American actors. The agents or identities that are explored are primarily white, European and American women. While the dissertation focuses on the cultural work of orientalism in the west, it does not reconstruct subaltern or Middle Eastern perspectives. This is a limitation shaped by my own linguistic constraints, the nature of my research questions, and the case studies chosen. These absences are not neutral; they are symptomatic of the very structures of power and representation this study seeks to understand. Rather than recovering subaltern voices directly, this project examines how orientalist narratives were constructed through dual processes of translation and silencing. The consistent absence or flattening of Muslim or Middle Eastern subjects in western representations is treated here not as a gap to be filled, but as a feature of orientalism's epistemic structure.

Likewise, rather than debating the authenticity of objects, architectures, and their representations in the following chapters, my focus is on how the harem's complex imaginary, with all of its paradoxical and contrasting connotations, shaped examples of popular architecture in western Europe and the United States. While much scholarship has worked to distinguish between the lived realities of harem spaces and their mythologization, I shift attention to the afterlives of these representations, particularly how they were absorbed into everyday visual and spatial practices outside the Islamic world. I examine how individuals in western Europe and the

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[51] Ali Behdad, "Orientalism Matters," *MFS Modern Fiction Studies* 56, no. 4 (2010): 711.
[52] Avcıoğlu, *Turquerie*, 7.
[53] Avcıoğlu, *Turquerie*, 7.

U.S., most of whom had no direct connection to harem spaces, engaged with and appropriated the harem's spatial image. These secondhand encounters, often fragmented or speculative, shaped popular architecture, revealing how an imagined orient could be found in everyday experiences of the built environment.

Popular Architecture: Space, Image, Spectacle

The Turkish style cozy corner fits into a category of design often called the orientalist interior. Studies of interior design (and the related areas of material culture, decorative arts, or applied arts) of which the orientalist interior would be a niche or sub-category, have long been peripheral to histories of architecture.[54] Interest in historical interiors has grown significantly since the late twentieth century, yet their status within architectural history remains somewhat marginalized, reflecting enduring biases that have traditionally relegated interior design to a secondary role due to its association with the domestic sphere, consumer culture, and forms of labor historically coded as "women's work."[55] This is especially true for designed spaces shaped in response to consumer demand rather than, as is more typical in architectural scholarship, by an architect or designer's innovative vision, a patron's wealth and desires, or an institution's ideological or efficiency related aspirations.[56]

Similarly, studies of orientalism have, as John Potvin notes in *Orientalist Interiors*, neglected the interior. Although there are excellent studies available on the relationship between

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[54] Interior design is a topic that is covered in all three fields of art history, design history, and architectural history and its treatment varies in each. There are many takes as to the role of the interior within each of these fields. In architectural history, an increased interest in the study of space has turned attention more and more to the interior although it is most often discussed as 'space' rather than 'the interior'. Dana Arnold et al., *Rethinking Architectural Historiography* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2006), 171-179.

[55] Much recuperative work has been done since the 1980s to include important figures such as Eileen Gray, Lilly Reich, and Charlotte Perriand, who are now regarded as important to European, avant-garde modernism. Figures such as Anni Albers, Elsie de Wolfe, and Candace Wheeler have also been recognized as essential to the history of interior design. Mark Hinchman, "Interior Design History: Some Reflections," *Journal of Interior Design* 38, no. 1 (March 1, 2013): 9–22.

[56] This is, of course, a generalization. Important exceptions include Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1972), as well as survey texts such as Kathleen James-Chakraborty, *Architecture since 1400* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), which have expanded the range of architectural forms considered foundational within the discipline. Studies that explicitly connect orientalism, architecture, interiors, and mass consumption, however, remain comparatively limited. Notable exceptions include Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-Century World's Fairs* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); see also Volait, *Antique Dealing*.

architecture and orientalism, they rarely cover the interior in a sustained manner.[57] Part of this neglect stems from the difficulty of situating orientalist interiors within established art historical categories. Whereas European art historical traditions have often separated architecture from interior design and decorative arts, Islamic art has long treated decorative objects, surface ornament, and architectural space as inseparable, with furnishings and other objects forming an integral part of buildings rather than a secondary layer.[58] As I began gathering examples of media and environments that seemed to reference something akin to Turkish cozy corners, terms like 'orientalist' and 'interior' proved insufficient to capture the hybrid, mobile, and consumer-oriented nature of the phenomenon. The term *popular architecture*, by contrast, offers a more capacious framework for the case studies examined throughout this dissertation.

The term appears in the work of Dell Upton, including "The Power of Things" (1983) and *Architecture of the United States* (1998), where it is used to describe buildings and interiors that fall outside the domain of what the author calls "art-architecture." He categorizes popular architecture as a subset of vernacular architecture alongside indigenous and folk traditions, while emphasizing its distinctive communicative function within modern visual and spatial cultures.[59] As he writes,

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[57] John Potvin, *Oriental Interiors: Design, Identity, Space* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 7. Studies of orientalist interiors typically focus on elite examples which are better documented, see Emmanuelle Gaillard and Marc Walter, *Exotic Taste: Orientalist Interiors* (Vendome Press, 2011). Another crucial study that bridges the gap between designed objects, interiors, and the exterior is Beaulieu and Roberts, *Orientalism's Interlocutors*. Foundational studies on orientalism and architecture that focus on the exterior include Mark Crinson, *Empire Building: Orientalism and Victorian Architecture* (Routledge, 1996); Mark Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire* (Taylor & Francis Group, 2017); Avcıoğlu, *Turquerie*; Stefan Koppelkamm and Ilze Kļaviņa Mueller, *The Imaginary Orient: Exotic Buildings of the 18th and 19th Centuries in Europe* (Edition Axel Menges, 2015). Mary Roberts is currently working on an important book to fill this gap in literature on orientalist interiors. Her next book, *Four Thresholds: Orientalist Interiors, Islamic Art, the Aesthetics of Global Modernities* is under contract with The University of Chicago Press.

[58] Ayşin Yoltar-Yildirim, *Ottoman Decorative Arts* (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2009), 8-9. A number of examples complicate this generalized division, including Baroque interiors, nineteenth-century theories of the Gesamtkunstwerk, and twentieth-century modernist experiments such as the Eameses' Case Study House. These examples, however, typically frame the integration of architecture, interior, and object as an aesthetic or theoretical intervention rather than as a default condition, and thus do not undo the broader art historical distinction at issue here.

[59] Dell Upton, *Architecture in the United States* (Oxford University Press, 1998), 11, 282.

> These forms [popular architecture] are designed to make a qualitative and existential statement quickly, strikingly, and simply. The strident message is well-suited to the speed and landscape scale of automotive travel.[60]

According to Upton, although popular architecture does not inherently rely on folk and indigenous vernacular forms, it has historically often appropriated them, transforming cultural traditions into stylized commodities for mass consumption. This dynamic is particularly evident in the examples of popular architecture examined in this dissertation.

While operating largely outside of "art-architecture," or elite architectural discourses, as Upton describes, the two are in conversation. Professionally trained architects, especially those working in an avant-garde manner, often look to the successful and idiosyncratic aspects of popular architecture. According to Upton, this also functions in the opposite direction when designers of popular architecture "appropriate visual forms from the high tradition and jettison their theoretical rationales, transforming them into open-ended visual commodities." What avant-garde architects (here Upton refers to postmodernists) consciously borrow is achieved in popular architecture "naturally" and "collectively."[61] While Upton's account centers primarily on built environments encountered at the scale of everyday movement and perception, this dissertation extends the category of popular architecture to include interiors and unbuilt or mediated forms, treating representations of architecture in circulation through text and images as architectural actors in their own right. In this sense, popular architecture is understood not only at the scale of the building, but as something that operates through repetition and dissemination.

A study of popular architecture must therefore draw on methods of social architectural history. I adopt an approach to writing architectural history that is grounded in social analysis and attentive to gender, taking the work of Despina Stratigakos and Kathleen James-Chakraborty as methodological touchstones. Stratigakos, in *Women's Berlin*, has shown that the history of architecture cannot be written solely through architects, styles, or elite monuments, but must account for the social actors and cultural processes that shape how buildings are produced, inhabited, and represented. James-Chakraborty likewise argues that modern architectural experience was structured not only by avant-garde buildings, but by the economic, social, and political processes of modernization that reshaped the built environment for mass audiences,

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[60] Dell Upton, "The Power of Things: Recent Studies in American Vernacular Architecture," *American Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (1983): 277.
[61] Upton, *Architecture in the United States*, 282-283.

often with little reference to architectural modernism as an artistic project.[62] My project builds on these insights by examining women not at the margins of architectural modernity but at its center, as key figures in any analysis of popular architecture.

Popular architecture also intersects with the commercial vernacular, what Upton refers to as "the commercial landscape."[63] Both typically encompass the work of little known, anonymous, or amateur designers. Commercial and popular architecture refer to buildings and environments aimed at large consumer bases that, when successful, shape and reflect popular demand and taste. The category of popular architecture that I elaborate in the dissertation includes building types usually grouped under the heading of commercial vernacular, such as department stores, cafes and restaurants, hotels, theaters, and office buildings.[64] Yet it also encompasses popular trends in domestic interiors, buildings that function as advertisements, tourist attractions, theater design, and fictional architecture. Unlike commercial vernacular, popular architecture depends on modes of spectacle, theatricality, and visual circulation that transform buildings and interiors into image-based experiences rather than purely functional commercial spaces like the strip mall or office park.

What ties the various forms of popular architecture considered in this dissertation together is the specific set of images they spatialize and the way these spatial images reached their viewers and consumers. In many cases this occurred not only through direct encounter with a building or space, but also, or even primarily, through its reproduction as illustration, photograph, film, advertising, or product packaging, just to name a few possibilities. Whereas commercial vernacular encompasses a category tied closely to spaces designed for functional

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[62] Despina Stratigakos, *Women's Berlin: Building the Modern City* (University of Minnesota Press, 2008); Kathleen James-Chakraborty, *German Architecture for a Mass Audience* (Routledge, 2000).
[63] "such topics as the vernacular (including indigenous, folk and popular architecture), ethnic traditions, commercial landscapes, and conservative aesthetic movements [...]" Upton, *Architecture in the United States*, 11; Another important source on commercial vernacular is Gabrielle Esperdy, *Modernizing Main Street: Architecture and Consumer Culture in the New Deal* (University of Chicago Press, 2010).
[64] Some historians focusing on subjects belonging to the commercial vernacular include Emily M. Orr, *Designing the Department Store: Display and Retail at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019); Richard W. Longstreth, *City Center to Regional Mall: Architecture, the Automobile, and Retailing in Los Angeles, 1920-1950* (MIT Press, 1997); Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* (Little, Brown, 1985); M. Jeffrey Hardwick, *Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); Carol Willis, *Form Follows Finance: Skyscrapers and Skylines in New York and Chicago* (Princeton Architectural Press, 1995).

commerce, and vernacular typically calls to mind notions of indigeneity, tradition, and authenticity, popular architecture offers a broader analytic frame that captures a fluidity between built structures, interior staging, imaging media, and popular culture.

In striving to be *popular*, designers of the examples elaborated in the following chapters take their cues primarily from the worlds of advertising and popular culture. In doing so, they transform already commodified, diluted, and circulating representations into spatial and experiential form. Although a study of popular architecture could investigate the deployment of any number of spatial images, that of the harem has proven to be an extremely rich and compelling avenue for analysis. In the decades around 1900 representations of harems in western Europe and the United States were immediately recognizable and highly evocative in advertising and popular media. [65] These images were mobilized to sell products and everyday spaces of leisure and entertainment indicative of a growing experience economy.

Mediation and Spatial Images

Modern architecture's relationship to mass media and an understanding of buildings as three-dimensional images has been thematized for some time. Throughout the dissertation I refer to the concept of *spatial images* which emphasizes that spatial ensembles proliferate as memorable images in media and popular imagination. This is related to Beatriz Colomina's insistence that we view modern architecture and its interiors as media:

> The building should be understood in the same terms as drawings, photographs, writing, films, and advertisements; not only because these are the media in which more often we encounter it, but because the building is a mechanism of representation in its own right.[66]

Colomina argues that modern architecture was never simply inhabited or experienced but was fundamentally mediated and produced through images. In describing Corbusier's Villa Savoye, the author describes the home itself, designed around large picture windows, as made of "walls of moving images" that are unable to be fixed in space, similar to how images are perceived in

[65] Melman, *Women's Orients*, 59-60; Mary Roberts, *Intimate Outsiders: The Harem in Ottoman and Orientalist Art and Travel Literature* (Duke University Press, 2007).Liesbeth Grotenhuis, "Smoking Hot: The Odalisque's Eroticizing Cigarette," *Via* 11, nos. 11–12 (2017): 2.
[66] Beatriz Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media* (MIT Press, 1994), 13.

film. For Colomina, modern architecture operates through images and these images in turn produce spatial relations.[67]

In *Photographic Architecture in the Twentieth Century*, Claire Zimmerman extends Colomina's insight that photographic mediation has spatial and visual effects on architecture. When a photograph of a building is produced, a three-dimensional architectural object is translated into a two-dimensional image. This act of translation does not merely reproduce the building, but alters its spatial and visual logic. In the twentieth century, photographs frequently became authoritative reference points for the public as well as new architectural work:

> Mass printing of photographic images of architecture changed the conditions of architectural commerce just as steel, concrete, and plate glass changed building construction in the same decades. Within modernist praxis, a relationship between photographic image and built object emerged, developed as a result of commercial protocols, and turned back on itself, as imaging strategies began to have explicitly architectural effects.[68]

As architectural photographs circulated independently of the buildings they depicted and addressed broader publics, architectural ideas increasingly traveled through images. These circulating images shaped new forms that responded not only to built precedents but to the spatiality and visual logic of photography.

Building on the insights of Colomina and Zimmerman, this study asks what happens when imaginary architectures, spaces that never fully existed at all, acquire architectural force through circulation as spatial images. Whereas Colomina frames architecture as a form of mass media and Zimmerman demonstrates how photographic mediation restructures architectural practice itself, I show how fantastical spatial images become architectural through repetition, circulation, and popular enactment. Moving beyond modernist architecture, elite discourse, and professional media, the dissertation shifts its focus to popular culture and mass audiences. The architectures and environments examined here are seen, imagined, desired, inhabited, and reenacted by consumers who cannot access an original referent, but rely on an amalgamation of abstracted imagery.

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[67] Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity*, 6-7.
[68] Claire Zimmerman, *Photographic Architecture in the Twentieth Century* (University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 5.

Spectacle and Mass Culture

Timothy Mitchell's concept of the "exhibitionary order" provides a framework for understanding how architecture was part of a broader imperial system of representation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He shows how the world's fairs and universal exhibitions of the era did not simply display foreign cultures but structured the way they were imagined and consumed. Within these ephemeral spaces, architecture functioned as both spectacle and signifier, framing the orient as an awe-inspiring object of display, carefully arranged for Euro-American apprehension and consumption. The *Rue du Caire* at the 1889 Paris Exposition Universelle (Figure 2.31) exemplifies this process: designed to resemble a medieval Cairo street, it featured carefully aged facades and staged marketplace scenes, while its grand mosque, seemingly the architectural centerpiece, was in fact only a hollow set concealing a coffeehouse. Mitchell highlights how this commodification and theatricalization of the orient extended beyond exhibitions into the urban fabric of European cities, where shopping arcades and entertainment districts adopted similar spatial and visual strategies.[69] Like world exhibitions, the forms of popular architecture explored in the following chapters did not merely house objects that could be bought and consumed, they were themselves consumable images, designed to immerse visitors in a curated experience.

Mitchell's reading of Said situates orientalism not just in academic and artistic representations but in a broader system of spatial and visual organization, extending to museums, schools, fashion, tourism, and the commodification of everyday life. This system taught Euro-American audiences how to interact with the world: how to read, consume, and inhabit everyday spaces as though they were organized for display: "The world-as-exhibition was a place where the artificial, the model, and the plan were employed to generate an unprecedented effect of order and certainty."[70] In this sense, just as advertising imagery trained individuals to become modern consumers of goods, popular architecture such as that of the World's Fair trained audiences to be consumers of spectacle.[71] Popular architecture such as the Yenidze factory in

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[69] Timothy Mitchell, "Orientalism and the Exhibitionary Order," in Nicholas Dirks (ed.), *Colonialism and Culture* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 289-318.
[70] Mitchell, "Orientalism and the Exhibitionary Order," 502.
[71] For scholars who have examined this in the German context see Ciarlo, *Advertising Empire*; *Molly* Loberg, "The Streetscape of Economic Crisis: Commerce, Politics, and Urban Space in Interwar Berlin,"

Dresden and the Moka Efti cafe in Berlin, the topics of chapters three and four respectively, demonstrate how the logic of world's fairs were incorporated into everyday urban life in ways that blurred the boundary between display and reality. Yet, unlike the limited duration of the universal exhibitions, these sites were permanent spectacles, accessible to anyone who could afford a cup of coffee (as at the Moka Efti) or simply pass through the city of Dresden on the train (in the case of the Yenidze).

Siegfried Kracauer's writings on mass culture and spectacle also provide a lens for understanding how popular architecture functions within consumer capitalism. As evidenced in the essay "The Mass Ornament," (1927) and elaborated throughout his work, Kracauer argues that modern spectacle, whether in mass entertainment, advertising, or architectural display, was more than mere distraction; it was a structuring force that shaped modern subjectivity and social relations. Kracauer saw spectacle as a defining feature of the mass ornament, a phenomenon where surface-level attractions obscure the deeper economic and social realities that produce them.[72] This was particularly evident in the entertainment spaces of Weimar Berlin, which Kracauer examined as sites where modern consumers were trained in new forms of visual and spatial consumption.[73] Yet his insights extend far beyond Weimar; his critiques of surface culture, the commodification of experience, and the role of architecture in shaping social desire remain deeply relevant to understanding popular architecture's role today.

Kracauer's architectural training makes his analysis particularly relevant to a study of popular architecture. Before turning to film and mass culture, he studied under Theodor Fischer and Richard Bormann, completing a dissertation on architectural metalwork in 19th-century Berlin. His early focus on surface ornamentation informed his later critique of Weimar's built environment, where he saw a continuity between historicist ornament, modernist abstraction, and

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The Journal of Modern History 85, no. 2 (June 2013): 365; Peter Borscheid and Clemens Wischermann, *Bilderwelt des Alltags: Werbung in der Konsumgesellschaft des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart, 1995); For the American context see Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920–1940* (Berkeley, 1985); On how the architecture of department stores instructed women how to shop as a hobby see Erika Diane Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End* (Princeton, NJ, 2000).

[72] Siegfried Kracauer "The Mass Ornament" and "Cult of Distraction: On Berlin's Picture Palaces" in Siegfried Kracauer and Thomas Y. Levin, *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995); Siegfried Kracauer, *Theory of Film: The Redemption of Physical Reality* (London ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1979).

[73] Siegfried Kracauer, *Die Angestellten: Aus dem Neuesten Deutschland* (Frankfurt am Main: Frankfurter Societäts Druckerei G.M.B.H., 1930).

the spectacle of mass entertainment.[74] In his essay "Cult of Distraction," Kracauer describes "Berlin's pseudo-Baroque movie palaces" as designed to overwhelm the senses rather than communicate meaning, a critique that extends to the broader architectural landscape of consumer capitalism.[75] For him, modern entertainment spaces were "de-architectured" environments, where surface, lighting, and movement created a hypnotic experience that granted access to a "mass subjectivity - a shared experience."[76]

Kracauer's analysis, like Mitchell's, suggests that spaces of spectacle are not merely passive reflections of society but active participants in shaping modern subjectivities. Spectacle, Kracuer argues, teaches society how to consume, shaping desires, aspirations, and anxieties in the process.[77] Kracauer uses the term "spatial images" and describes them as akin to "hieroglyphs,"

> Spatial images are the dreams of society. Wherever the hieroglyphics of any spatial image are deciphered, there the basis of social reality represents itself.[78]

Kracauer sees his role as that of the decoder who aims to understand, for example, the social strata of those occupying a venue through an analysis of the spatial image constructed.[79] By thinking about popular architecture as the deployment of spatial images and spectacle, such spaces were not just designed to be functional or looked at, but to structure experiences, affective responses, and patterns of social belonging. While Mitchell explores how world exhibitions trained visitors to perceive the non-west as an object of display, Kracauer looks to entertainment spaces, where spectacle and surface aesthetics similarly shaped mass experience. Importantly, for Kracauer, the spatial images he analyzes are tied to specific spaces and how they function, filled with people during daily use. My use of the term *spatial image* resonates with Kracauer's insight that they can reveal something in that they materialize collective fantasies in decipherable form.

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[74] Claire Zimmerman, "Siegfried Kracauer's Architectures," in *Culture in the Anteroom: The Legacies of Siegfried Kracauer* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2012), 145.
[75] Zimmerman, "Kracauer's Architectures," 147.
[76] Zimmerman, "Kracauer's Architectures," 147.
[77] Siegfried Kracauer, *The Salaried Masses: Duty and Distraction in Weimar Germany* (London ; New York: Verso, 1998), 91-93.
[78] Kracauer "On Employment Agencies: The Construction of a Space" reprinted in Neil Leach, ed., *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory* (Routledge, 1997), 60.
[79] Kracauer "On Employment Agencies," 59-60.

Yet in contrast to Kracauer's emphasis on "dream images" appearing almost involuntarily, as a sort of social unconscious, I emphasize the historically specific production, circulation, and gendered dimensions of these images within consumer cultures. Additionally, I consider spatial images as portable and reproducible.

In his *Arcades Project*, Walter Benjamin approaches world exhibitions from yet another useful perspective. As "places of pilgrimage to the commodity fetish," these were spaces where modern subjects encountered consumer culture as a form of spectacle.[80] Like Mitchell and Kracauer, Benjamin's framework highlights how architecture and display shaped public perception, but Benjamin foregrounds the phantasmagoric nature of commodity culture itself. Drawing from Marx's notion of commodity fetishism, Benjamin expands this idea to encompass the aesthetic and sensory experiences associated with commodities. He argues that the enchanting spectacle of commodity culture served to mask the inherent contradictions and inequalities of the capitalist system. For Benjamin, the Parisian arcade was emblematic of European modernity's spatial logic, a "liminal space for gazing and consuming" that blurred the boundaries between interior and exterior, public and private. In Benjamin's work, the arcade functioned as both an architectural form and a metaphor for the new modes of perception engendered by commodity capitalism. Similarly, spatial images of the harem in Euro-American popular architecture and interiors can be understood as a kind of phantasmagoria: an assemblage of commodities that collapses time and space into a consumable fantasy. Just as the arcade condensed modernity into a single environment, spatial images of the harem distill an entire vision of the orient into a commodified, materialized form.

Benjamin's notion of the "phantasmagoria of the interior" further develops this idea, describing the domestic interior of the nineteenth century as "a fantasy construct, a site for the public display of private dreams."[81] Benjamin describes how bourgeois interiors absorbed objects from distant cultures as a way of domesticating the exterior world. This process operated in two directions: while the interior could absorb and reframe foreign artifacts, public spaces could also be structured as domestic interiors, bringing the aesthetics and spatial relations of

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[80] Walter Benjamin and Rolf Tiedemann, *The Arcades Project* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 17-18.
[81] Walter Benjamin, "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century," as discussed in Diana Fuss, *The Sense of an Interior: Four Writers and the Rooms That Shaped Them* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 4-5.

domesticity into public life. This process, what is sometimes referred to as the domestication of public space, is reflected across the dissertation in that I consider both domestic and public spaces as forms of popular architecture.[82] As Richter explains in regards to developments in nineteenth century America, the boundary between public and private was moveable,

> On the one hand, market concerns, consumer goods, and paid employment found their way into the most private reaches of respectable homes. On the other hand, the values and spatial conventions of the single-family home crossed the threshold into public life, giving rise to public parlors, domesticated department stores, homes for female workers, settlement houses, and even public baths.[83]

Benjamin's concept of phantasmagoria suggests that spectacle is not just about visual grandeur, it is a process of dream- and mystification, where architecture, images, and commodities work together to produce dazzling surfaces that distract from the realities of production and labor.

Gendered Spectacle and the Spatial Image of the Harem

Women were central to the history of modern architecture, entertainment spaces, and world exhibitions, yet their presence has often been overlooked in critical discussions of spectacle and mass culture.[84] By 1900, world's fairs increasingly positioned women as crucial fairgoers, whether as organizers, architects, political representatives, or visitors/consumers whose presence shaped the fairgrounds.[85] Kracauer's writing reflects anxieties about this shifting public role, describing the German *Neue Frau* as a product of Americanism: modern, commodified, and dangerously superficial. His critique of what he calls *Girlkultur* (girl culture) and mass ornamentation often parallels the language of orientalism, positioning women as

[82] Hans Ostwald discusses this in early twentieth century Berlin in *Das galante Berlin* (H. Klemm, Berlin: 1928). On public parlors see Katherine Grier, *Culture and Comfort: Parlor Making and Middle-Class Identity, 1850-1930* (Smithsonian Institution, 2013); Krishan Kumar and Ekaterina Makarova, "The Portable Home: The Domestication of Public Space," *Sociological Theory* 26, no. 4 (2008): 324–43.
[83] Amy G. Richter, *At Home in Nineteenth-Century America: A Documentary History* (NYU Press, 2015), 2.
[84] Huyssen, Andreas. "Mass Culture as Woman: Modernism's Other." In *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Edinburgh University Press, 2009).
[85] Tracey Jean Boisseau and Abigail M. Markwyn, *Gendering the Fair: Histories of Women and Gender at World's Fairs* (University of Illinois Press, 2010).

embodiments of distraction and surface aesthetics in much the same way that the orient was framed as passive, decorative, and irrational.[86]

This dynamic reveals how modern architectural and social criticism, from reviews of world exhibitions to the industrial factories, relied on gendered visual economies to describe mass experiences and consumption. Drawing from scholars such as Anne McClintock, who argues that gender and empire are deeply entangled in consumer culture, we can understand spectacle as a process not just of commodification but also of social control, where the construction of femininity and exoticism served to stabilize dominant power structures.[87] However, this same entanglement also suggests that gender offers an alternative vantage point for understanding popular architecture's relationship to spectacle. A consideration of gender and gendered space reveals how popular architecture could be manipulated and reinterpreted in ways that subverted or reimagined its intended meanings.

Feminist scholars have further interrogated how space is gendered and have argued for studies of space as an important tool for broadening histories of architecture to include a diversity of actors. Doreen Massey builds on postwar scholarship to argue for the importance of focusing not only on space, but on spatial relationships. Only then can we understand how space is shaped by power, mobility, and social hierarchies.[88] Elizabeth Grosz argues that spatial relations are not passive settings for social life but active forces that shape embodied subjectivity, power, and perception, with bodies and spaces mutually constituting one another rather than existing as separate domains.[89] Sara Ahmed extends these critiques into questions of orientalism, showing how imagined spatialities are projected onto already racialized and gendered subjects.[90] In engaging these theorists, my work examines how popular architecture capitalized on the gendered spatiality of the harem. In particular, how popular architectures

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[86] Michael Ermarth, "Girls Gone Wild in Weimar Germany: Siegfried Kracauer on Girlkultur and the Un-Kultur of Americanism," *Modernism/Modernity* 19, no. 1 (2012):8.
[87] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (Routledge, 1995). McClintock writes about her concept of the "industrial archive of the spectacle" that encompasses spaces like museums and world's fair exhibition halls. In her wide ranging book she explores how advertising and consumer imagery circulate meaning and shape subjectivities, and how domestic and public spaces are racialized and gendered through cultural production.
[88] Doreen B. Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (Polity Press, 1994).
[89] Elizabeth Grosz, *Space, Time and Perversion* (Routledge, 1995).
[90] Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 109-156.

deployed this image through exploiting sensorial and atmospheric qualities associated with it, mapping onto changing power and gender relations in ambivalent ways. By centering spatial images of the harem, I argue that studying space in architectural history requires engagement with imagined, commodified, and gendered environments.

Following Sara Ahmed's discussion of "orientation," "reorientation," and "disorientation," this dissertation examines how the harem's spatial image functioned as an orienting device within Euro-American visual and built environments. Ahmed argues that orientations shape not only how bodies inhabit space but also how space itself takes form through bodily and social investments.[91] The harem, an imaginary yet spatially coded construct, functioned as a site of fantasy and projection that could extend European perceptions femininity, domestic seclusion, labor, leisure, and cultural differenc einto tangible architectural and commercial forms. As Ahmed suggests, "turning" or "orienting" oneself towards an object also produces the subject's relation to the world;[92] in the case of the harem, its repeated mediation through art, literature, and architecture oriented western viewers toward an imagined orient while reinforcing the spatial and epistemological dominance of the west. Yet, as my case studies suggest, these spatial images could also be reoriented, or made disorienting, destabilizing normative relations between bodies, space, and power. By tracing how spatial images of the harem circulated across multiple media and built environments, the dissertation explores how the harem could be made unfamiliar in ways that opened up alternative approaches to conceptualizing gendered space and its entanglements with consumer culture.

Chapter Summaries

Across the long nineteenth century and into the early twentieth, representations of an imaginary space known as the harem circulated widely across Euro-American culture, appearing in literature, visual art, popular entertainment, advertising, and the built environment. From early modern travel writing and translation projects through the emergence of print culture, world's fairs, photography, and mass consumption, the harem emerged as one of the most persistent spatial imaginaries through which Euro-American audiences negotiated their sense of gendered and racial difference locally and in a global context. While the historical Ottoman imperial

[91] Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 3.
[92] Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 6.

harem was a specific and highly regulated social institution, Euro-American engagement with the harem was rarely concerned with historical accuracy. Instead, it functioned as a flexible spatial image, one that condensed anxieties and desires surrounding femininity, labor, leisure, sexuality, and power that could be endlessly reworked. The circulation of these spatial imaginaries coincided with a period of profound political instability, as the Ottoman Empire entered a prolonged phase of crisis, territorial contraction, and eventual dissolution marked by mass violence, displacement, and the collapse of imperial structures. This instability formed the backdrop against which harem imagery gained renewed traction in Euro-American culture, with Germany and the United States occupying distinct political and economic positions within these transformations rather than acting as neutral observers.

This dissertation traces the circulation of spatial images of the harem across a series of geographically and materially distinct contexts, focusing primarily on Germany and the United States between the eighteenth century and the interwar period. These sites are not treated as stable centers opposed to an imagined orient, but as interconnected nodes within transnational networks of exchange shaped by domestic and international politics, war, migration, developing media technologies, and global commodity flows. The case studies examined here move between fictional interiors, domestic environments, exhibition architecture, industrial workplaces, and entertainment spaces, revealing how spatial images of the harem were repeatedly mobilized in Euro-American contexts. Greece, the American South, and formations such as Cairo-in-Berlin or Thrace-in-Dresden appear as recomposed and unstable geographies, where spatial references were displaced, layered, and reassembled in ways that unsettle distinctions between east and west, center and periphery. In these settings, the harem operated less as a reference to a distant place than as a comparative device through which Euro-American societies negotiated the terms of everyday life under conditions of industrialization, globalization, and mass consumption.

Running through these examples is a consistent set of thematic concerns that structure the dissertation as a whole. First, the project foregrounds women as central actors in the production, circulation, and reception of spatial images, whether as designers, consumers, workers, spectators, or symbolic figures. Second, it argues that orientalism, rather than functioning solely as a top-down imperial discourse, was sustained through everyday practices of repetition, appropriation, and mediation within popular culture and capitalist markets, and was actively shaped by transimperial actors whose positions complicate simple center–periphery models.

Finally, the dissertation advances the concept of the spatial image as a methodological tool for architectural history, one that makes it possible to analyze how architecture operates across media, scales, and degrees of materiality. By tracing the harem as a spatial image, the chapters that follow show how popular architecture functioned as a site of continual adjustment, in which the harem's spatial image was repeatedly reformulated through its movement across media, scales, and spatial contexts, while also remaining a site of persistent ambivalence.

Chapter 1: Political Uses of Fictional Harems by Nineteenth-Century European and American Women Writers

This chapter examines how nineteenth-century women writers strategically incorporated spatial images of the harem into their novels to articulate political critique. Through close readings of Sydney Owenson's *Woman; Or Ida of Athens* (1804) and Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), I analyze descriptions of Islamic architecture and interiors as forms of popular architecture. Drawing on Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's influential portrayal of harem spaces, I show how both authors transformed this spatial image to engage contemporary debates on women's rights, nationalism, slavery, and imperial power. Their sensory-rich depictions of structure, ornament, and atmosphere cultivated a gendered architectural expertise that positioned their literary constructions as persuasive tools of commentary and reform.

By treating these fictional harems as architectural interventions, the chapter demonstrates how literary texts shaped popular understandings of enclosure, interiority, and the spatial organization of power. The analyses highlight how Owenson mobilized spatial images of the harem to negotiate questions of identity and autonomy, while Stowe adapted the same repertoire to expose the violence of American slavery. Together, their novels reveal how fictional representations of a mythical and politically loaded spatial image contributed to orientalist discourse while also destabilizing it in important ways. Their works also illuminate the entanglement of fictional and material spaces that are subsequently explored in the following chapters as well as establish the visual, sensory, and conceptual repertoire of spatial images of the harem in European and American contexts that are explored throughout the dissertation. This chapter therefore provides the conceptual foundation for the dissertation's subsequent analyses, demonstrating how spatial images migrate across geographies, time, media, and the built environment.

Chapter 2: The Turkish Style Cozy Corner: Appropriations of Islamic Spaces and Interiors in the American Parlor

This chapter examines the cozy corner, a do-it-yourself interior design trend that peaked in the 1890s, bridging the transition from ornate Victorian interiors to more modern aesthetics. Often styled with Turkish, Ottoman, or Arabesque motifs, these spaces were typically placed in the parlor, making them highly visible and socially significant within the home. Unlike more private smoking rooms, which were explicitly gendered as masculine spaces, cozy corners asserted feminine visibility in the domestic sphere and reflected shifting ideas about women's roles in interior design. The trend emerged at a time when women were increasingly entering the professional field of interior decoration, publishing advice in homemaking periodicals, and influencing broader aesthetic sensibilities.

While cozy corners were often celebrated as sites of leisure, self-expression, and cultural engagement, they were also a source of anxiety for some commentators. Critics feared that their indulgent atmosphere contributed to "women's nervous prostration," reinforcing contemporary medicalized discourses about women's fragility. Others linked these cluttered, exoticized interiors to a broader moral crisis, critiquing their supposed frivolity and detachment from rational domestic order. As historian Kristin Hoganson has observed, cozy corners helped make orientalist interiors specifically feminine, shaping how women navigated identity through the appropriation of an imagined "other." I argue that Turkish style cozy corners exemplify how spatial images of the harem circulated within popular architecture and visual culture through fine art, print media, photographs, illustrations, and commercial and entertainment spaces, reaching a mass audience that could then materialize these images within their own homes. The cozy corner was not simply a static domestic feature but a highly reproducible and commodified space, shaped by marketing and consumer culture, where women actively engaged in designing, performing, and negotiating aesthetic and cultural hybridity within their personal interiors.

Chapter 3: Negotiating Representation and Spaces of Production at the Yenidze Oriental Tobacco Factory in Dresden

By the late nineteenth century, Dresden had become the center of Germany's Oriental Tobacco industry, processing vast quantities of tobacco imported from the eastern Mediterranean. Initially, much of this labor—sorting, processing, and rolling tobacco—was performed by women and children in their homes. However, following the 1905 *Zigarettenarbeiterinnen* (female cigarette workers) strike and new labor regulations in 1906, cigarette production was increasingly centralized in factories. The Yenidze Oriental Tobacco Factory, built in 1908 and often referred to as the Tabakmoschee (Tobacco Mosque), remains one of Dresden's most iconic buildings. Its spectacular domed façade functioned as a form of architectural branding, selling not only cigarettes but also a version of the orient. Inside, however, the factory was a thoroughly modern industrial space, housing cutting-edge machinery and employing around 4,000 workers, the majority of whom were women and immigrants. While the factory's exterior references mosque architecture, this chapter brings that image into dialogue with the harem as a spatial imaginary, examining how orientalist spectacle framed and obscured the realities of women's industrial labor, class struggle, and working conditions inside the factory.

While the factory's architecture has often been analyzed as an example of industrial advertising and exotic spectacle, its social history and working conditions have remained largely overlooked in architectural discourse. I argue that the factory's *Wohlfahrtseinrichtungen* (welfare spaces), particularly those installed within the building's glass dome, reflect the influence of women's labor power in shaping industrial architecture. Far from passive recipients of paternalistic welfare initiatives, tobacco workers in Dresden played a significant role in demanding and negotiating better wages, conditions, and rights. The Yenidze factory thus stands at the intersection of architectural spectacle and industrial modernity, revealing how gender, class, and imperial economic networks were embedded in the built environment.

Chapter 4: The Moka Efti's Orientalist Environment

Opened on Friedrichstraße in 1929, the Moka Efti Café combined orientalist décor with escalators, electric lighting, music, and print advertising to produce an immersive, branded environment that translated the harem's spatial image into an experiential form of popular architecture. Rather than reconstructing the café's interiors as a fixed architectural object, the

chapter analyzes how the Moka Efti's spatial image circulated across photographs, postcards, posters, and brochures, and how these representations invited patrons to participate in the fantasy they advertised. Central to this experience was the escalator, which functioned both as a practical device and as a symbolic threshold, staging the café as a form of urban travel that promised mobility, comfort, and escape.

The chapter further shows how the cafe interior and its mobilizing of the harem's spatial image were deeply entangled with gender, labor, and commercial spectacle. Promotional materials explicitly link the *Neue Frau*, the harem woman, and the Turkish New Woman, positioning the café as a space where shifting norms of gendered visibility, sexuality, labor, and consumption could be explored and rehearsed. By situating the Moka Efti within longer histories of coffee consumption, orientalist domestic interiors, and Berlin's changing demographics, the chapter argues that the café functioned between home and work, offering a technologized and feminized fantasy of belonging under conditions of capitalist modernity. Through spatial sequencing, the Moka Efti rendered the harem not as a distant or enclosed interior, but as an everyday environment of leisure accessible to a heterogeneous urban public.

Conclusion

The dissertation begins by turning to the harem's spatial image as it took shape in eighteenth and nineteenth-century literature, before and alongside its early commodification within print culture. Chapter 1 examines how women writers such as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Lady Morgan, and Harriet Beecher Stowe did not simply represent the harem, but actively *wrote architecture*, assembling the harem as a spatial image through narrative description. Moving from Montagu's accounts, in which the harem functioned primarily as comparative domestic space rather than marketable exoticism, to later novels that increasingly instrumentalized harem imagery within competitive literary markets, the chapter traces early forms of commodification. In doing so, it identifies the recurring objects, furnishings, architectural motifs, and bodies through which spatial images of the harem first cohered, establishing a visual and material vocabulary that will be taken up, transformed, referenced, and abstracted in later chapters.

The chapters that follow are organized to trace how spatial images of the harem moved between intimately consumed media, outward, across scales and degrees of communal

experience. Chapter 2 shifts from the literary interior to the parlor. Though this is a domestic space, it is also the most performative room in a household, that can function as an interior façade, representative of the family. Chapter 3 examines how orientalist spectacle is communicated to consumers purely through exteriority at the Yenidze Tobacco Factory. The chapter then examines how this insistent exteriority obscured the realities of transformations in industrial labor and how the few spaces in which the orientalist spectacle intrudes on the interior are the factory's most intimate and gendered spaces. Chapter 4 continues this trajectory into the metropolitan public sphere, analyzing how the Moka Efti Café domesticated public space by offering a substitute for the home via a technologized version of the harem image. Together, the chapters chart a movement from interiority to exteriority and back again, revealing how spatial images of the harem were continually mediated, reworked, and reorganized in conjunction with shifting relations between privacy and public life.

Chapter 1 Political Uses of Fictional Harems by Nineteenth-Century European and American Women Writers

The rise of widespread interest in harem spaces in western Europe was ignited by the publishing of Antoine Galland's *Les mille et une nuits* (*One Thousand and One Nights*) in 1704.[93] Accordingly, initial spatial images of the Ottoman harem that followed were articulated in literature. Followed by painting and other visual and performative media, these imagined spaces were, from the beginning, hybrid images of encounter and translation rather than unidirectional appropriation.[94] Following its international success, publishers and authors were quick to exploit the commercial and political potential of the harem. From a publisher's perspective, stories that dealt with forbidden spaces in the imagined orient in any capacity sold

[93] Horta describes "oriental tales" as a hybrid combination of the French fairy tale and the One Thousand and One Nights. Galland himself was surprised at the success of his translation. Having had a long career as a classicist and Orientalist scholar, he published the *Nights* during the last decade of his life and suddenly became a household name throughout Europe and the United States. In Galland's version of the tales, while not providing precise descriptions of architectural elements, the author repetitively adds certain objects and furniture to create scenery that include the sofa, indian linens, silk, porcelain, and more which reflected the taste of French nobility in the early eighteenth century. Galland, *Les mille et une nuits*; Horta, *The Annotated Arabian Nights*, 601-602. Paulo Lemos Horta, *Marvellous Thieves: Secret Authors of the Arabian Nights* (Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Press, 2017); Sylvette Larzul, "Further Considerations on Galland's 'Mille et Une Nuits': A Study of the Tales Told by Hanna," *Marvels & Tales* 18, no. 2 (2004): 258–71.

[94] On the development of harem representation in tandem with technological developments in image making and other art forms see Beaulieu and Roberts, *Orientalism's Interlocutors* and Özen, "The Visual Making of the Harem." The real and imaginary Ottoman harem in Euro-American literature and art has been written about as what Mary Louise Pratt calls a "contact zone." Contact zones are "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power…" Mary Louise Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone," *Profession*, 1991, 34. Translations of the harem have also been referred to as a third space as described by Homi Bhabha. For example see Penny Sparke, "Paradise in the Parlor: Cozy Corners and Potted Palms in Western Interiors, 1880-1900," in *Oriental Interiors: Design, Identity, Space*, ed. John Potvin (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 216; Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 2nd ed., Routledge Classics (Routledge, 2004).

well.[95] For the politically inclined author, mention of a harem not only sold books, but had the potential to bring controversial ideas and provocations to a large audience.[96] This chapter explores how two nineteenth-century authors, Sydney Owenson and Harriet Beecher Stowe, used architectural description to craft spatial images of the harem that carried not only emotional force but also commercial and political stakes.

The Persian Letters (*Lettres persanes*, 1721), Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de la Brède et de Montesquieu's first novel, is a well-known example of this phenomenon. The book's narrative of despotic rule within a dystopian harem is a tragic tale in which voices of dissent are silenced as enslaved harem women are killed or commit suicide due to their insubordination. Readers are meant to understand the story as a metaphor for unfettered French absolutism and Catholicism.[97] Not only was this debut novel immensely successful upon publication, it also cemented Montesquieu's reputation as a prominent writer of political commentary. The author's projection of French political strife onto the site of an imaginary orient, and specifically the space of the harem, is one of countless instances of literary orientalism which Said describes as a system of images that ultimately serve to inform Western self-representation.[98] De Groot calls Montesquieu's strategy in *The Persian Letters* "reverse ethnography," which worked to "relativise French and Persian" practices, especially customs surrounding gendered space, for the

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[95] As Lewis has observed, "Whether you wrote about living in one, visiting one, or escaping from one, any book that had anything to do with the harem sold." Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism*, 12.

[96] "figurative deployments of the harem Orientalize and thereby estrange the otherwise paradigmatic social structures of a biblical patriarchy and its modern patrician analogues." Hunt, "'Suffragettes of the Harem," 4.

[97] Taking on the guise of translator Montesquieu claims in the preface that the two Persian men at the center of the story were lodgers in his home, which is how he came to intercept their letters, copy, and translate them for a French audience. Taking more cues from Galland, he also admits to appropriating the text of the letters in order to "adapt the work to our taste and manners." *The Persian Letters* is now considered one of the first, if not the most influential early example of the epistolary novel or a novel in which the plot plays out through fictional letters sent between characters. Charles de Secondat Montesquieu and John Davidson, *The Persian Letters* (Philadelphia: G. Barrie, 1896); Madeleine Dobie, "Embodying Oriental Women: Representation and Voyeurism in Montesquieu, Montagu and Ingres," *Cincinnati Romance Review* 13 (1994): 52-54; Joanna De Groot, "Oriental Feminotopias? Montagu's and Montesquieu's 'Seraglios' Revisited," *Gender & History* 18, no. 1 (April 2006): 66–86, 71; Mary McAlpin, "Between Men for All Eternity: Feminocentrism in Montesquieu's Lettres Persanes," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 24, no. 1 (2000): 45–61.

[98] Said, *Orientalism*, 71.

purposes of political critique.[99] Montesquieu could thus write sharp denouncements of French monarchical rule and the presence or absence of women's sovereignty through slightly veiled metaphors, presented under the guise of an imaginary orient.[100] Montesquieu's harem is a literary apparatus constructed through images of stigmatized eroticism (polygamy), confinement, surveillance, emotional volatility, and a fantasy of absolute male authority.

A tactic adopted by countless other authors throughout history, Montesquieu's settings in *The Persian Letters* are vaguely described, empty containers for the unfolding plot; the harem serves primarily to attract curious readers and as a framework onto which metaphors of French power relations are projected. In contrast, detailed descriptions of architecture and interiors play a central role in Lady Mary Montagu's *The Turkish Embassy Letters* (1763). It is in Montagu's work that the spatial image of the harem that is primarily investigated throughout this dissertation is articulated:

> Large room, or rather pavilion, built round with gilded sashes, which were most of 'em thrown up, and the trees planted near them gave an agreeable shade, which hindered the sun from being troublesome – the jessamines and honeysuckles that twisted round their trunks shedding a soft perfume, increased by a white marble fountain playing sweet water in the lower part of the room, which fell into three or four basins, with a pleasing sound. The roof was painted with all sort of flowers falling out of gilded baskets, that seemed tumbling down. On a sofa, raised three steps and covered with fine Persian carpets, sat the kayha's lady, leaning on cushions of white satin embroidered, and at her feet sat two young girls…[101]

In this passage, written sometime during Montagu's travels from 1716-1718, the author is describing the private quarters of a home in Edirne in a letter addressed to a European friend. It is debated whether Montagu's *Letters* are an authentic description of what the author saw firsthand or a romantic fiction of the lives of Ottoman women, or both.[102] Regardless, her

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[99] As Montesquieu tells us in the preface, these critiques come not from him, but from the voices of "Persian" travelers. That said, it is important to note that these critiques of absolute power also come partly from women. This might be in part reflecting on women's condition within French society, or potentially projecting anxiety about women's influence in French politics. De Groot, "Oriental Feminotopias?," 71.

[100] Nochlin, "The Imaginary Orient."

[101] Montagu, *The Turkish Embassy Letters*, 171-172.

[102] De Groot, for example describes Montagu's Letters as the "crafting and reconstitution of journal material and actual or imagined correspondence" and "a hybrid of philosophy, reportage and imagination." in De Groot, "Oriental Feminotopias?," 68. For more on the contested readings of

attention to detail in describing the environments in which women lived set her apart from authors like Montesquieu. Even though Montagu's *Letters* is not an academic work or an architectural treatise, her descriptions of architecture and interiors have been discussed widely by scholars, artists, and, at the time of publishing, a more general, upper-class public.[103]

The *Turkish Embassy Letters* was the first popular publication featuring an English woman's account of women's only spaces in the Levant.[104] Like Galland, Montagu probably did not imagine that her *Letters* would be so widely read when released and that they would remain relevant for centuries after their publication. In the last thirty years, the book has been interpreted as a useful comparative analysis of how space is related to gender difference and hierarchy across time and cultures.[105] And it is Montagu's perspective — as a wealthy, educated woman with access to harem spaces — on the details of that space, that continues to attract scholars to her work today. The *Turkish Embassy Letters* not only describes the travels of one English woman, but provides insight into how elite Ottoman women lived in the eighteenth century, including their agency, influence, and relationship to power.[106]

The centrality of the harem (often conflated with the segregated bath or *hammam*) as a potent gendered space that can be activated or imaged in the minds of European and American

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Montagu's *Turkish Embassy Letters*, see Chung, "Introduction," in *The Turkish Embassy Letters*, ed. Rebecca M. Chung (Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2013 [orig. 1763]), xiii-lvi and Isobel Grundy, *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 138-140; Pohl, *Women, Space, and Utopia*, 140-142.

[103] For the usefulness of Montagu's letters to research in architectural history see Avcıoğlu, *Turquerie*, 196; Shifrin, *Victorian Turkish Baths,* 14; Anne Hultzsch, "WoWA and its ‹Feminist bricks›: Building Histories," *kritische berichte - Zeitschrift für Kunst- und Kulturwissenschaften* 52, no. 1 (2024): 73–81.

[104] Chung, "Introduction," vii.

[105] "Montagu set the terms of an alternative, gender-specific discourse on the Middle East, one which evolved alongside the dominant discussion, which nowadays is described as Orientalism." Melman, Women's Orients, 4. Also see DelPlato and Pohl for a discussion of Montagu's contradictory notions of harem as alternative gendered space in comparison to other European travel writers. DelPlato, Multiple Wives, Multiple Pleasures, 21; Pohl, *Women, Space, and Utopia,* 140-142.

[106] Examples of recent publications influenced by Montagu's arguments include Cahill, *Intelligent Souls?*; Amelia Precup, "Mapping Femininity as Self-Reflection Strategy in Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's Travel Letters," *Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory* 3, no. 1 (2017): 93–108; Denys Van Renen, "Montagu's Letters from the Levant: Contesting the Borders of European Selfhood," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 11, no. 2 (2011): 1–34. Recent scholarship has also discussed the extent of Montagu's responsibility for introducing the smallpox inoculation to Europe. See Helen Esfandiary, "'A Thankless Enterprise': Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's Campaign to Establish Medical Unorthodoxy amongst Her Female Network," *Notes and Records: The Royal Society Journal of the History of Science* 77, no. 2 (February 16, 2022): 235–50.

readers to great emotional effect, as in Montesquieu and Montagu's *Letters*, set an important precedent. Subsequent imaging of the harem as *the* archetypal gendered space and conceptual framework for shaping Euro-American women's conversations about gender and racial hierarchies is demonstrated in writings as various as Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1816), the German author Ida Hahn-Hahn's romantic harem epic, *Grafin Faustina* (1845), Margaret Fuller's *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1850), and Lydia Maria Child's *A Romance of the Republic* (1867). [107] The latter being a novel that explores the ways in which racialized spaces were transforming the United States in the years after the Civil War. This chapter looks at two very different works of fiction that belong to this expansive model: Sydney Owenson's *Woman; Or Ida of Athens* (1809) and Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852).[108] Although the two works differ in significant ways, both use architectural writing to construct spatial images of the harem and use these spatial images in unconventional modes to great emotional effect that led to not only considerable commercial success, but also to political change.

Examples of nineteenth-century authors strategically manipulating fictional tales of the orient can be drawn from a seemingly endless variety of examples.[109] The two novels in question, from Lady Morgan (Owenson's title; life dates, ca. 1781 - 1859) and Stowe (1811-1896), exemplify this phenomenon while centering descriptions of architecture in their texts, and reflect vastly different, situated political values. Additionally, spatial images of the harem in both

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[107] Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, ed. Fred Botting (St. Martin's Press, 1995); Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (London: Walter Scott, 1891); Lydia Maria Francis Child, *A Romance Of the Republic* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1867); Margaret Fuller, *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (London: G. Slater, 1850); Ida Hahn-Hahn, *The Countess Faustina* (H.G. Clarke and Company, 1844).

[108] *Ida* was published under her maiden name Sydney Owenson, but she is known generally by her married name, Lady Morgan. Lady (Sydney) Morgan, *Woman, or, Ida of Athens* (London: Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1809); Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Auckland: The Floating Press, 2009).

[109] Melman's *Women's Orients* covers the expansive genre of harem romance in great depth; See also Cahill's *Intelligent Souls?;* Hunt, "Suffragettes of the Harem"; Bernadette Andrea, *Women and Islam in Early Modern English Literature*, 2008, 78–104; Marianna D'Ezio, "Oriental Interiors in Eighteenth-Century British Women Writers' Novels," in *Oriental Interiors: Design, Identity, Space*, ed. John Potvin (Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 97–110; Ulrike Brisson, "Discovering Scheherazade: Representations of Oriental Women in the Travel Writing of Nineteenth-Century German Women," *Women in German Yearbook* 29 (2013): 97–117; Traci S. O'Brien, "A 'Daughter of the Occident' Travels to the 'Orient': Ida von Hahn-Hahn's The Countess Faustina and Letters From the Orient" *Women in German Yearbook* 24, no. 1 (2008): 26–48; Lewis and Micklewright, *Gender, Modernity and Liberty*.

novels inform the case studies analyzed in subsequent chapters. Morgan and Stowe use architectural and spatial description to construct fictional landscapes, buildings, and interiors, pulling from academic studies and popular sources alike. Although Islamic architecture features in a general sense in both works, the harem in its complexity as a political, gendered, and racialized space is crucial for both narratives, yet to vastly different and locally situated political ends. For Owenson, it is not only the international dynamics of imperialism, but the hypocrisy of women's financial and spatial confinement in England and Ireland that is brought into relief through the details of harem spaces whereas for Stowe it is the brutal injustices of slavery in the American South.

I neither analyze nor critique the arguments of either author, but rather explore their representation of harem space from a distinct perspective. Both Owenson and Stowe recognized the popularity of textual descriptions of harem spaces and exploited their commercial appeal to strategic, political ends related to their own contexts. Of course when interpreted from a twenty-first century perspective, these works, while promoting progressive political movements in their period, largely reiterate imperial racist discourse. I am more interested in their attention to detail in describing the built environment. An analysis of these descriptions provides otherwise overlooked insights into European and American women's perspectives on gendered, racialized, and imperialist connotations embedded in popular architecture that took on Islamic motifs.

Writing Popular Architecture

Owenson and Stowe's novels offer a layered understanding of the imaginary harem's ability to attract and repel audiences as well as the space's powerful malleability.[110] Owenson's *Woman; Or Ida of Athens* was widely read in the first decades of the nineteenth century, yet has fallen into relative obscurity today.[111] Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, although not necessarily remembered by general audiences for its political impact and historical context, remains a widely

[110] Students of orientalism "have noted the longevity of the topos of the harem and its endurance in the face of political and cultural changes…The harem was appealing and, at the same time, threatening because it seemed an alternative to the Western, Pauline-Augustinian model of sexuality…mixed attitude of attraction and repulsion" Melman, *Women's Orients*, 59-60, 61.
[111] Evgenia Sifaki, "A Gendered Vision of Greekness: Lady Morgan's *Woman: Or Ida of Athens*" in *Women Writing Greece Essays on Hellenism, Orientalism and Travel* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008), 55-56.

recognizable title due to pervasive references within popular culture.[112] While *Uncle Tom's Cabin* has been widely studied in literary criticism, cultural studies, and historical contexts, analysis of the book in architectural history or spatial theory is surprisingly far less common. Neither Stowe or Owenson is typically associated with notions of feminist orientalism or histories of Islamic applied art.[113] Rather, their wide-reaching significance at the time of publication, the presence or absence of progressive politics and/or imperialist rhetoric, and the authors' biographies are typically the focus of academic studies.[114] Yet both works place the built environment at the center of the novel's narrative. They ask: What changes at the individual and societal level when archetypal gendered spaces move across borders and cultures? What does the encounter with foreign architectural styles signal? What about when those foreign styles are encountered at home? How can the same familiar spatial images sometimes signal safety and at other times danger? Although both titles ask these similar questions, they come to very different conclusions.

I consider the written architecture discussed in this chapter "popular" due to both novels' mass appeal as well as their significance to popular culture at large. Owenson's *Ida* and Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* operate at two very different levels in this regard. One facet of this has to do with developments in printing technology. *Ida*, published in 1909 in London, would have been printed using hand-operated presses. A time-intensive process necessitating skilled labor, the

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[112] Bruce McConachie, "Out of the Kitchen and Into the Marketplace: Normalizing 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' For the Antebellum Stage," *The Journal of American Drama and Theatre* 3, no. 1 (Winter 1991): 5–28; John W. Frick, *Uncle Tom's Cabin on the American Stage and Screen* (New York, N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); Jo-Ann Morgan, *Uncle Tom's Cabin as Visual Culture* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2007).

[113] Exceptions to this include the following although their scope is much broader and therefore the remarks on these topics are more surface level than what I explore in this chapter. Diane Roberts, *The Myth of Aunt Jemima: Representations of Race and Region* (London ; New York: Routledge, 1994); Carol Ann Hart, "Domains of Difference: Gender, Class and Ethnicity in the Novels of Sydney Owenson, Lady Morgan, c. 1802-1811" (PhD diss., Canada, University of Alberta, Canada, 1996); Sifaki "A Gendered Version of Greekness"; Suzanne M. Zweizig, "Domestic Space and Republican Virtue: Harriet Beecher Stowe's Architecture of America" (PhD diss., The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1995),170-179.

[114] John Wilson Foster, *The Cambridge Companion to the Irish Novel* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 8; Dale Spender, *Mothers of the Novel: 100 Good Women Writers before Jane Austen* (London ; New York: Pandora, 1986), 301-310; Kenneth DiMaggio, "Uncle Tom's Cabin: Global Best Seller, Anti-Slave Narrative, Imperialist Agenda," *Global Studies Journal* 7, no. 1 (May 2014): 15–23; Eric J. Sundquist, *New Essays on Uncle Tom's Cabin, American Novel* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

four volumes of Morgan's novel were produced at a slow rate of ca. 250 sheets per hour. It probably took about two weeks to produce 300 copies if press operators worked a consistent twelve-hour day as was typical. The collated book would have also been an expensive product.[115] That said, Morgan's novel had a considerable audience for its time. This is proven by the work's success in garnering widespread general interest in the Greek independence movement.[116]

Uncle Tom's Cabin first appeared as a serial in *The National Era*, a weekly abolitionist newspaper based in Washington D.C., before being published as a book in 1852 following massive demand. Newspapers were among the first to utilize steam-powered printing which could produce thousands of copies per day. By the time the book was published with a Boston publisher, mid-century, steam-powered printing had been widely adopted by the book publishing industry. The novel's runaway success as an instant bestseller, coupled with developments in printing technology, resulted in a cultural phenomenon that reached global audiences in unprecedented ways.[117] *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is reported to have sold 10,000 copies in its first week, and "a million and half in the first year" in Britain alone.[118] Considering the two novels together demonstrates rapid developments over the course of the nineteenth century as to the new possibility of reaching mass audiences with cultural products. These developments were fueled by an explosive expansion in industrialization, mass production, and commodity exchange.

Looking to written architecture, even fictional architecture, provides a means for stretching the history of women's professional engagement with the built environment further back in time. Additionally, as will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 2, the origin story of the field, or academic study, of Islamic art and architecture in Europe and the United States is a history dominated by "great men." Looking to women who wrote architecture and interiors, this

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[115] John Feather, "Technology and the Book in the Nineteenth Century," *Critical Survey* 2, no. 1 (1990): 5-7.
[116] Apparently William Gell, "an archaeologist who knew Greece extremely well," initially gave Owenson/Morgan the idea of writing about the Greek liberation movement. Hart, "Domains of Difference," 154, n. 3 (194-95).
[117] This description of the transformation of printing technologies in the nineteenth century is brief and does not include integral aspects such as the innovation of producing paper from trees rather than linen rags. There are also interesting details regarding labor time needed for hand presses versus steam-powered. For detailed information see Feather, "Technology and the Book," 5-13. For more on the cultural phenomenon of Uncle Tom's Cabin see Morgan, *Uncle Tom's Cabin as Visual Culture* and Frick, *Uncle Tom's Cabin on the American Stage*.
[118] DiMaggio, "Uncle Tom's Cabin: Global Best Seller," 16.

analysis aspires to the inclusion of women's voices during a time in which they did not have easy access to participating in architectural history, criticism, or other forms of scholarly writing about the built environment. In Owenson and Stowe's writing it is clear that both authors are participating in what we would today call the concerns of architectural history such as the relevance of architectural style, appropriateness of certain building types, details of ornament, and the characteristics of gendered space.

As Billie Melman, Mary Roberts, Joan DelPlato and others have shown, women's relationship with orientalism was, more often than not, different than that of men.[119] This must also be the case in terms of women's relationship to orientalist environments (landscapes, architecture, and interiors that take up motifs related to Islamic art and architecture in ways unrelated to their religious or cultural significance). Turning to sources beyond conventional architectural and design histories makes it possible to see how spatial images of the imaginary harem manifested, and continue to manifest, in the popular architecture of western Europe and the United States. A similar impulse underlies the notion of "Women Writing Architecture," developed by Anne Hultzsch's research group at the ETH Zurich, which highlights how women's textual accounts and literary works can constitute a form of architectural knowledge.[120]

Like many histories of women travel writers and orientalists, the framework for the Zurich project began with Montagu's *Turkish Embassy Letters*.[121] Montagu's descriptions of architecture, interiors, and spatial relationships have served as an important reference point for women writing architecture in a general sense as well as for subsequent orientalist representations of the harem and hammam.[122] Owenson and Stowe's textual constructions draw from a range of sources, but, in many ways, Montagu provides the blueprint for their imaging of Islamic architecture. This could be in a direct sense, in that Owenson and Stowe read Montagu,

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[119] Here I am building off of these authors' studies of largely British and French harem images. DelPlato argues that British and French women used these images to construct their own political and psychosexual self-images and they provide access to thinking on race, class and gender in the nineteenth century. DelPlato, *Multiple Wives, Multiple Pleasures*, 24; Melman, *Women's Orients*; Mary Roberts, "Contested Terrains."

[120] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (Routledge, 1992); "Women Writing Architecture 1700-1900," (European Research Council project hosted at the ETH Zürich) accessed January 23, 2025, https://wowa.arch.ethz.ch.

[121] Anne Hultzsch, "WoWA and its ‹Feminist bricks›."

[122] The most famous example of this would be Ingres' *Turkish Bath* (1852-1859). Dobie, "Embodying Oriental Women," 55-58.

but more likely it is through the diffusion of Montagu's spatial imagery in the work of later authors, artists, and scholars who took up the topic of harem and women's spaces in the imaginary orient.[123] Take, for instance, the wealth of information that can be gleaned from Montagu's description of a Turkish house in one of her *Letters*:

> Every house great and small is divided into two distinct parts, which only join together by a narrow passage. The first house has a large court before it, and open galleries all around it, which is to me, a thing very agreeable; this gallery leads to all the chambers which are commonly large, and with two rows of windows, the first being painted glass. They seldom build above two stories, each of which has such galleries. The stairs are broad and not often above thirty steps. This is the house belonging to the lord, and the adjoining one is called the harem, that is, the lady's apartment, for the name of seraglio is peculiar to the grand signior's. It has also a gallery running around it towards the garden to which all the windows are turned, and the same number of chambers as the other, but more gay and splendid both in painting and furniture. The second row of windows are very low, with grates like those of convents.[124]

Here Montagu is describing the traditional division of what was likely a *konak* or palatial Ottoman Turkish house found in urban areas such as Edirne and Istanbul (Figure 1.1). Although European authors often referred to a *konak* as a "Turkish house," they can be found throughout the former Ottoman Empire. They often consist of two stories of which the ground floor acts as a basement while the living quarters are located on the second floor. What Montagu refers to as the "first house," the section of the home sometimes called the "men's area" and open to guests of both sexes, is the *selamlik*.[125] "Adjoined" to this is "the harem, that is, the lady's apartment."[126] Montagu translates the traditional gendered division of a *konak*, something that would have been different and curious to her English audience, in clear and straightforward language. She also makes sure to clear up misconceptions. *Seraglio* is a term invented by European travelers to describe the imperial harem of the Ottoman sultan, but often used interchangeably with harem in

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[123] It is difficult to determine if Owenson or Stowe read Montagu, but they likely drew on sources that did.
[124] Montagu, *The Turkish Embassy Letters*, 164-165.
[125] Andrew Petersen, *Dictionary of Islamic Architecture* (Routledge, 1996), 215. For more on how the *konak* house type came to be understood as representative of Turkish national architecture see Serena Acciai, "The Ottoman-Turkish House According to Architect Sedad Hakkı Eldem," *ABE Journal* 11 (October 2017).
[126] Montagu, *The Turkish Embassy Letters*, 165.

Euro-American texts.[127] Montagu makes a point to explain the distinction between harem as separate quarters in domestic settings for the seclusion of women and the royal *seraglio*.[128] Montagu thus redirects her reader's attention away from sexualized fantasies surrounding harem spaces and toward their actual architectural and social role within an elite Ottoman household.[129]

In this passage, Montagu pays particular attention to windows, their treatments, and how they direct the gazes of those within the home. When she writes about "two rows of windows, the first being painted glass," she is likely referring to *revzen* or gypsum windows. These are windows consisting of small panes of colored or stained glass set into wooden frames or held together by plaster. These are typically positioned high in the wall with the decorative elements turned inward, providing filtered light and decorative colored effects to the interior space (Figure 1.2).[130] She notes that the second row of windows are quite low and covered by "grates like those of convents." Here she is referring to *mashrabiya* in Arabic contexts or *kafes* in Turkish, intricate wooden or metal lattice screens that are attached to the exterior of windows. These are devices used since antiquity to provide privacy while still allowing for ventilation (Figure 1.3).[131] Montagu notes that the harem's windows open directly onto the garden, a space shielded from the street. Her description foregrounds how the architecture directs the occupant's gaze and mediates the visual relationship between interior and exterior. Her description is also

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[127] Yeazell explains that Europeans confused the Turco-Persian word for palace, *saray*, with the Italian word *serrare* which means "to lock up or enclose" and from that etymology emerged the word *seraglio* and the French term *sérail*. Yeazell, *Harems of the Mind*, 2.

[128] Euro-American authors "exploited" the confusion between these words. "Harems as seraglios were associated with slavery and imprisonment, but also with luxury and magnificence." Yeazell, *Harems of the Mind*, 2-3.

[129] The English writer Samuel Johnson, for example described the seraglio as a "house of women kept for debauchery." Pohl, *Women, Space, and Utopia*, 127. According to Howard "seraglio" also because an early euphemism for "whore house" in the seventeenth century. Carol Lea Howard, "From the Harem to the Plantation: Freedom, Virtue, and Slavery in Restoration and Eighteenth-Century British Women's Literature" (Ph.D., Columbia University, 1999), accessed September 7, 2022, 42.

[130] Drahşan Uğuryol and Mehmet Uğuryol, "Manufacturing Techniques, Deterioration, and Restoration Problems of Traditional Gypsum Windows," *Megaron/ Yıldız Technical University, Faculty of Architecture E-Journal* 16, no. 2 (2021): 350.

[131] Drinking water would be placed into the window sill so that when air came in from the outside it would be cooled. "The Mashrabiya Project," *Museum for Art in Wood*, April 11, 2022, https://museumforartinwood.org/the-mashrabiya-project/; Gül Asatekin, "Understanding Traditional Residential Architecture in Anatolia," *The Journal of Architecture* 10, no. 4 (2005): 406.

accompanied by her own personal judgments: she makes sure to emphasize that the women's quarters are of equal size to the men's, yet more beautiful and luxurious.

She continues,

> The rooms are all spread with Persian carpets, and raised at one end of 'em (my chamber is raised at both ends) about two foot. This is the sofa, which is laid with a richer sort of carpet, and all round it a sort of couch raised half a foot, covered with rich silk according to the fancy or magnificence of the owner. Mine is of scarlet cloth with a gold fringe. Round this are placed standing against the wall two rows of cushions, the first very large and the next little ones, and here the Turks display the greatest magnificence. They are generally brocade, or embroidery of gold wire upon satin. Nothing can look more gay and splendid. These seats are so convenient and easy I shall never endure chairs as long as I live.[132]

Although *sofa* would come to refer in the nineteenth century to a freestanding piece of furniture in European usage, the Ottoman term had multiple meanings. In architectural terminology, the *sofa* denotes a central hall or circulation space used for gatherings, receiving guests, and everyday domestic life.[133] Montagu, however, uses the term in a broader sense to describe the raised, carpeted seating platforms within her chamber (Figure 1.4). These platforms (*tahtseki*), furnished with cushions and lined with a *sedir*, were integral features of Ottoman interiors and central to how Europeans imagined the sensuality and comfort of the harem.[134] Montagu lingers on the layered carpets, brocaded cushions, and embroidered textiles that furnished her chamber. Although she lacks Ottoman terms such as *minder* (large floor cushions), *yasdık* (pillow or cushion, especially the long firm ones placed along seating areas), *kemha* (brocaded silk), or *divan örtüsü* (decorative textile covering the *sedir*), her account accurately captures their material richness and tactile appeal (Figures 1.5-1.8). By describing the sheen of silk, the gold-thread embroidery, and the nested arrangement of cushions along the walls, she fulfills her reader's expectations of harem luxury. Yet she also subtly redirects the fantasy. Rather than

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[132] Montagu, *The Turkish Embassy Letters*, 165.
[133] The etymology and development of the Euro-American piece of furniture known as "sofa" will be discussed further in Chapter 2. Gülen Çevik, "American Style or Turkish Chair: The Triumph of Bodily Comfort," *Journal of Design History* 23, no. 4 (2010): 369. For more on the centrality of the sofa in Turkish domestic architecture as well as an overview of scholarship on the sofa's centrality to this typology see Asatekin, "Understanding Traditional Residential Architecture," 391-392.
[134] Jonathan M. Bloom and Sheila S. Blair, "Vernacular Architecture," in *The Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic Art and Architecture* (Oxford University Press, 2009); Asatekin, "Understanding Traditional Residential Architecture," 404.

offering an erotic tableau, she presents the interior itself as the object of desire. Her pleasure is architectural and sensory, rooted in her own bodily experience of comfort. In doing so, Montagu reframes the harem stereotype as seen in texts such as Montesquieu's: not as a site of sexual availability but as a richly furnished domestic environment whose textiles and seating arrangements produce an alternative spatial image.

Montagu's description of a "Turkish house" is exceptionally thorough. She notes low rooms with "inlaid or painted and gilded" ceilings, probably referring to a variety of techniques including *kalem işi*, polychrome, painted and gilded wooden ceilings, found in elite Ottoman homes (Figure 1.9).[135] Some ceilings of this period were also constructed using *geçme* techniques, interlocking wooden elements that could produce geometric patterns.[136] The walls of the house feature *lambriz* paneling, painted floral decoration, and a range of built-in elements, including cupboards (*yüklük*) and wall niches (*niş*) (Figure 1.10-1.12). Domestic interiors often also contained small enclosed cubicles for washing (*gusülhane*).[137] She treats the garden, and embedded kiosk, as integral to the women's quarters of the house: "The women's apartments are all built backward, removed from sight, and have no other prospect than the gardens, which are enclosed with very high walls." The garden includes a köşk (Montagu spells it "chiosk"), a raised garden pavilion (Figure 1.13). For Montagu, this space is central to the life of the household and the place where the women "spend most of their hours."[138]

Montagu catalogues these interior features with precision, but always through the lens of her own bodily experience in space. What "pleases her best" as she writes, are the "marble fountains in the lower part of the room," whose spouting water provides, "an agreeable coolness,

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[135] Netice Yıldız, "Ottoman Decorative Arts in Cyprus," *Electronic Journal of Oriental Studies*, Proceedings of the 11th International Congress of Turkish Art, Utrecht, The Netherlands, August 23-28, 1999, no. 59 (2002): 5.

[136] *Geçme* also describes a "tongue and groove" interlocking joint system in building carpentry. Dr. Fatma Sezin Doğruer, "Architectural History and Conservation Considerations of the Wooden Minbar in the Kundekari Technique in the Taşkın Pasha Mosque," *Online Journal of Art and Design* 10, no. 2 (2022): 77.

[137] "Closets (*yüklük*), a niche for gas lamps (*lambalık*), a niche for a mirror (*aynalık, alafranga*), a niche for flowerpots (*çiçeklik*),a niche for beverage containers (*şerbetlik*), several other niches and shelves (*raf, terek, sergen*) are other features of rooms. Asatekin, "Understanding Traditional Residential Architecture," 407.

[138] Montagu, *The Turkish Embassy Letters*, 166-167.

and a pleasant dashing sound falling from one basin to another" (Figure 1.14-1.15).[139] Her vocabulary, "agreeable coolness," "pleasant dashing sound," "agreeable shade" (in reference to the garden), emphasizes the multisensory environment created by water, temperature, movement, and light. References to jasmine and honeysuckle twining around the köşk hint at the olfactory dimension as well, suggesting an interior world shaped as much by scent and sound as by visual ornament.

In such descriptions, Montagu details not only interior decoration, ornament, and layout of homes, gardens, and baths, she also focuses on sensory perception in order to draw readers inside of the spatial image she constructs. Montagu understands that the eye, in the case of her readers, the mind's eye, is not the only or even dominant sense of spatial perception. Diana Fuss explains how information about sensory intake —sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell — act as the most critical bridge between architecture and the psychological interior. She writes, "Indeed, without the senses we would have no true idea of space."[140] It is Montagu's elaboration of a distinct spatiality, and a particularly gendered one at that, that separated her writing on the harem from her contemporaries, who largely use the "empty" space of the harem solely as a metaphor for means of projection. In Montagu's work architecture and interiors are constructions with the capacity of narrative, holding readers' attention in and of themselves.

Montagu's architectural descriptions can be understood in this way as ekphrastic, the rhetorical technique through which speakers and writers produce vivid visual images in the minds of readers. As Ruth Webb explains, ekphrasis "does not seek to represent, but to have an effect in the audience's mind that mimics the act of seeing." What an individual "sees" is therefore necessarily culturally dependent. Heidrun Führer argues that ekphrastic passages engage readers visually by activating their imaginative capacities and by generating emotional

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[139] Although public fountains, those found integrated into mosque complexes, and those in the gardens of wealthy homes have been well documented, it is rarer to find visual evidence of fountains within the interior of homes as Montagu describes here. An Ottoman example can be found in Cairo built in 1648 is the *Bayt al-Suhaymi* with later additions in 1796. Abdelbaki Mohamed Ibrahim, "Renovation of Bayt al-Suhaymi," *Alam al-Bina* (Cairo: Center for Planning and Architectural Studies, 1998), 38–42; Shirine Hamadeh, "Splash and Spectacle: The Obsession with Fountains in Eighteenth-Century Istanbul," *Muqarnas* 19 (2002): 123–48. Some sources mention "house fountains" (*konut çeşmesi*), but none that are still in existence; Another example is found in the Nufr al-Din Room at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Annie-Christine Daskalakis Mathews, "A Room of 'Splendor and Generosity' from Ottoman Damascus," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 32 (1997): 115-116.

[140] Fuss, *The Sense of an Interior*, 7.

responses shaped by culturally specific mental images.[141] Montagu's letters are exemplary in this regard: she constructs an interior world that her readers could visualize with remarkable clarity. This ekphrastic mode is central to how her descriptions circulated as "spatial images" of the harem. Her descriptions transformed the multisensory environment of one specific place that she experienced firsthand into a portable spatial image that Euro-American writers, artists, scholars, architects, and interior designers could adapt, cite, or transform. In this sense, ekphrasis becomes a method of architectural transmission: a way in which interiors, furnishings, and gendered spatial practices circulate as mental images. Of course, in the act of transmission the image is altered by the individual's culturally specific eye. Owenson and Stowe rely on precisely this mode of writing to generate their own harems, demonstrating how ekphrasis functioned as a foundational technique in the integration of the harem's spatial image to Euro-American popular architecture.

Within the context of architectural criticism, Jane Rendell describes "architecture-writing" or "site-writing" as "a place of imagination." She asks "What does it mean to write a site that one has not visited, that can only be imagined, to know a place not with your feet, but with your eyes tracing lines on a map"?[142] This chapter follows similar lines of inquiry. Neither Owenson or Stowe travelled to regions where they could observe Islamic architecture and design up close or to areas where maintaining a harem space within the home was accepted. They instead write fictional architecture and interiors that I treat here in the same vein as architectural imaginaries, nonbuilt works, or paper architecture which have always been important within histories of architecture.[143]

Detailed descriptions of architecture and interiors in fiction written by women, like unbuilt works, serve as valuable sources for architectural history by revealing imaginative spatial concepts, cultural values, and societal critiques that might otherwise remain undocumented or

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[141] Ruth Webb, *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice* (Ashgate, 2009), 38; Miriam Vieira, "Architectural Ekphraseis: Unveiling a Brazilian Wall-Less House in Contemporary Fiction," in *Transmediations* (Routledge, 2019), 119-120.
[142] Jane Rendell, "Architecture-Writing," *The Journal of Architecture* 10, no. 3 (June 2005): 261.
[143] See for example Andres Kurg, "Paper Architecture and Politics in the Late-Soviet Period," in *The Routledge Handbook of Architecture, Urban Space and Politics, Volume II* (Routledge, 2024); Anthony Vidler, "The Explosion of Space: Architecture and the Filmic Imaginary," *Assemblage*, no. 21 (1993): 45–59; Iain Boyd Whyte, ed., *The Crystal Chain Letters: Architectural Fantasies by Bruno Taut and His Circle*, trans. Iain Boyd Whyte (MIT Press, 1985).

unarticulated. The importance of studying historical fiction for understanding women's perspectives in areas such as geopolitics, for example, has proven essential.[144] Without firsthand experience abroad, Morgan and Stowe relied instead on the sources available to them for their literary constructions. Yet their choices of which details, which decorative motifs, pieces of furniture, smells, noises, or layouts of rooms, provide insight into what aspects of a space were immediately recognizable to general audiences. Which details were the most effective in replicating the space of the imaginary harem in the minds of readers? As will be seen in the chapters to follow, this ensemble of objects and decorative details, could be successfully referenced in built architecture and interior spaces to similar effect. The various meanings or connotations attached to this spatial image in fictional constructions were also reproduced in the built case studies to follow, although these meanings often became more distant or abstracted.

Reframing the Harem in Ottoman Athens

Sydney Owenson, also known by her honorary title Lady Morgan, was well known for arguing that women writers should instrumentalize fiction for social and political commentary and criticism.[145] In *Woman: Or, Ida of Athens*, Morgan articulates her political positioning in large part through her characters' experiences and descriptions of the built environment. A central example of this comes from the first pages of the novel's first volume. Readers initially encounter Ida, the heroine of the story, through the eyes of an English traveler to Athens named Lord B.[146] Disappointed by what he perceives as extensive damage that Ottoman rule has done to the once splendid and impressive islands of Greece, and to escape the loud and overwhelming Bayram celebrations in the city center, he wanders to the periphery of the city. While wandering through the countryside surrounding Athens, Lord B. stumbles upon a peculiar building, the style of which he describes as uniting "without blending [...] a corinthian portico, the modern grecian vestibule and the spiral Turkish kiosk."[147] This eclectic structure brings together forms or building types representative of ancient Greece (the Corinthian columns), with contemporary

[144] Lewis and Micklewright, *Gender, Modernity, and Liberty,* 6;
[145] Dale Spender, *Mothers of the Novel*, 310-311.
[146] This character is modelled on Lord Byron. Sifaki, "A Gendered Version of Greekness," 57.
[147] Morgan, *Woman; Or Ida of Athens*, Volume 1, 21-23.

Greece around 1800 (the modern vestibule), and the architectural presence of the occupying Ottoman forces (the spiral kiosk).

Intrigued by this uncommon mixture of styles, Lord B. approaches the home and comes across Ida who lays asleep in her boudoir. His description is one of male fantasy with a peculiarly attentive eye for interior decor:

> The portico only formed the entrance to an apartment, which on one side was screened by a gilt lattice-work, thickly interlaced with Arabian jasmine; that at once diffused a mysterious obscurity and a delicious odour. The traveller gently drew aside the flowery shade, and the interior of the apartment lay exposed to his view. It was divided in the centre by a drapery, partly drawn aside; the remote division was a bath; its bason, or parian marble was supplied by a fountain, which poured its waters in a murmuring sound over the aquatic plants which crept round it; it was sombre and cool, and formed a relief to the exterior room, which was simple, though luxurious; the floor was covered with Egyptian mats; a few antique urns [...] filled with fresh flowers, and a small tripod and sopha, were the only articles of furniture [...] The sopha, raised to a little height by a platform covered with Persian carpet, was placed beneath a canopy, whose drapers of muslin softened, without excluding, the reflection of the sun; and shaded from its ardors, the recumbent form of a sleeping girl. She resembled, as she lay, the beautiful personification of Bashfulness by Corradini; for an air of vestal innocence, that modesty which is of soul, seemed to diffuse itself over a form whose exquisite symmetry was at once betrayed and concealed by the apparent tissue of woven air, which fell like a vapour round her.[148]

Wondering to himself whether he had come across the home of a Greek archon or the harem of a Turkish officer, he surreptitiously lifts the curtain of "Arabian jasmine" to observe an intimate, private space featuring a marble fountain and bath, Egyptian mats, antique urns, Persian carpets, and "the recumbent form of a sleeping girl" laying on a "sopha" that stands on a raised platform. Although the scene itself is a literary fantasy, the interior is composed of elements that would have been legible to Morgan's readership through a combination of travel accounts, engravings, exhibitionary displays, and elite collecting culture. As Montagu's *Turkish Embassy Letters* suggest, Ottoman domestic interiors circulated in European texts not as architecturally fixed spaces but as assemblages of objects, surfaces, and sensory effects.

In line with Morgan's penchant for weaving literary fiction with scholarly undertones, Lord B., in his imaginings of the recumbent girl, imagines the sculpture *Bashfulness* (also called

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[148] Morgan, *Woman; Or Ida of Athens*, Volume 1, 21-23.

Modesty, *Chastity*, or *Veiled Truth*, italian: *La Pudicizia*) by Antonio Corradini (Figure 1.17). Located in the Cappella Sansevero in Naples, the sculpture features a woman's form covered in an impossibly thin veil. Like the sculpture, which is incredibly sensual in relation to the title's designation of modesty, Ida's form is somehow both "betrayed and concealed" by a veil that Lord B describes as a "tissue of woven air." Simultaneously veiled and not veiled, Ida appears both inviting and yet also innocent and pure.

Ida's recumbent form can be read as an odalisque. Perpetuated most extensively in orientalist painting, the term odalisque designates an idealized and highly sexualized harem woman despite having no clear basis in Ottoman social reality. The term is derived from the Turkish words *oda* (room or chamber) and *odalık* (chambermaid), referring to a domestic servant rather than a concubine or favored wife. By the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, French writers began using odalisque as a transliteration and adaptation of *odalık* and, in this process, the term shifted semantically from a word rooted in domestic labor to a figure of leisure, luxury, and sensuality. In Euro-American literature and visual culture, the figure of the odalisque was transformed into a generalized emblem of harem life, detached from the complex hierarchies that structured Ottoman imperial households and stripped of historical specificity. The odalisque is imagined as inseparable from her surroundings, rendered legible through the sopha, cushions, screens, textiles, pipes, and other interior accoutrements that fuse body and space. The odalisque does not merely inhabit the harem's spatial image but actively constitutes it.[149]

Also, as in orientalist paintings, the decoration of Ida's boudoir is immersive and appeals to the senses. From the windows hang gilded sashes, drapery can be 'thrown up' to create plays of light and shadow as well as regulate air flow. In the center of the room is a murmuring fountain that provides a calming, aural element. There are many types of foliage including Arabian jessamines and honeysuckles as well as painted flowers on the walls and ceilings, some with the illusion of hanging down. These play with the senses of smell and sight through the integration of live plants and their representation. Important for this imagery, the focal point of the interior is a piece of furniture for lounging, the sofa, where a young woman reclines, completing the scene.

[149] DelPlato, *Multiple Wives*, 9, 28; Özen, "The Visual Making of the Harem," 53-54.

Spatial images, whether painted or written, importantly emphasize atmosphere, an experiential facet of space that is crucially ambiguous and vague. Havik describes the potential of literary descriptions of atmosphere in particular for shaping our understanding of humans' relationships to the built environment. Atmosphere, for Havik, is "an architectural quality" that acts "as a mediating force," in-between the perceiving subject and the object of perception. "Though everyone can perceive atmospheres, different people will have different responses, depending on their relation to the place, their own background, their memories, their moods."[150] It is thus important that the first harem depicted in *Ida* is perceived and described by Lord B. in a stereotypical manner reminiscent of scenes in the orientalist tradition of painting. Perhaps atmosphere can be described as the mediating force between the "space" and the "image" in the notion of the spatial image.

Shortly after this first scene, Lord B. also voyeuristically observes Ida's father and brothers sitting in another room of the house decorated "according to the Turkish taste":

> The archon was lying on an ottoman, enjoying the pleasures of the hookah; its amber tube was placed in a crystalline vessel filled with rose water, which murmured to the rising smoke, while its fragrance mingled with the odour of the sweet gums and aloes…His picturesque dress contributed to the interest his truly grecian form and features excited…Two boys, beautiful as the winged genii of poetic fiction, with no other covering than simple tunics of white muslin, lay on a carpet at their father's feet[151]

Like Ida, her father and brothers are also lounging, her father on an ottoman and the young boys on the floor at his feet. Emphasis is again on sensory details, here the smell emanating from the hookah filled with rose water, mixing with that of the plants in the room. In addition to drawing from orientalist imagery of the lounging odalisque, Morgan seems to be referencing the apartments in Edirne described in Montagu's *Letters*. In an intriguing gender switch the central lounging figure is not "the kahya's lady," but Ida's father and the two young girls have been replaced by two "beautiful" boys.

The Persian carpets, sofa, jessamines, exterior coverings of sashes (in Montagu, they are already thrown open to the night air, while in *Woman*, Lord B. lifts the covering to view Ida), the

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[150] Klaske Havik, "Writing Atmospheres: Literary Methods to Investigate the Thresholds of Architectural Experience," in *The Routledge Companion on Architecture, Literature and The City*, ed. Jonathan Charley, 2018: 270 - 273.
[151] Morgan, *Woman; Or Ida of Athens*, Volume 1, 47-49.

fountain in the middle of the room, the trompe l'oeil of flowers painted on the ceiling—even the scene with Ida's father, where two young children lie at the feet of their parental guardian—seems to be drawn directly from Montagu's description. Montagu also invokes sculpture when describing Fatima's singular beauty writing, "For me, I am not ashamed to own, I took more pleasure in looking on the beauteous Fatima, than the finest piece of sculpture could have given me."[152] In invoking Montagu's description of Fatima's apartments, Morgan establishes Ida's home as a refuge, completely separate from the outside world (until Lord B. penetrates it), that preserves something authentic for which the English traveler has been searching.[153]

The beginning of *Ida* largely conforms to the tropes of harem romance as well as an increase in detailed descriptions of domestic environments in literature by women. In the nineteenth century, as an increasing number of female authors began to publish, "literature, long silent about decor, suddenly began to describe interiors in minute detail, reflecting a change in the way people looked at places and things."[154] Houses, in particular, became subjects of intense investigation "as writers discovered the creative potential of the changing face of architecture and design."[155] Likewise, whereas Montagu's travel experience from 1716-18 was quite rare, a century later, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a number of European and American women of means were able to travel to regions in Northern Africa, the Mediterranean, Turkey, and beyond. Attesting to their interest in harem spaces, which only women were allowed to enter, by the end of the century visiting a harem became obligatory on any woman's travel itinerary when in Istanbul. An increasing number of women who managed to personally visit a harem published their account for European and American audiences, making sure to describe in

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[152] Montagu, *Turkish Embassy Letters*, 173.
[153] "I [...] could not help fancying I had been some time in Mohammed's paradise, so much I was charmed by what I had seen." Montagu, *Turkish Embassy Letters*, 175.
[154] Philippe Ariès and Georges Duby, *A History of Private Life* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987), 356. Cited in Fuss, *The Sense of an Interior,* 92 n. 16.
[155] Fuss, *The Sense of an Interior*, 4; Marilyn Chandler McEntyre, *Dwelling in the Text: Houses in American Fiction* (University of California Press, 1991), 17-20.

detail the variety of luxury objects and decor observable.[156] One's familiarity with the harem system and Muslim customs could be boasted as a sign of cosmopolitanism and sophistication.[157]

That said, this subset of wealthy women who had interest in and were able to travel remained relatively small in comparison to a growing female reading public. This demographic was hungry for reportage, but also fictional tales of the harem and harem women. The development of the romance genre in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was therefore intimately connected with tales of the orient. A distinct genre known as the "harem romance" came to be extremely popular. Author Clara Reeve, reflecting in 1930 on the development of the romance genre in 1785, points specifically to the English translation of *The Arabian Nights Entertainments* as a "work of Originality and Authenticity, and let me add of amusement" which gave rise to "a swarm of imitations…*Persian Tales – Turkish Tales – Tartarian Tales – Chinese Tales – Peruvian Tales – Mogul Tales – &c.*" These imitations, especially harem romances, were for Reeve worthy of discussion due to their ability to insight both passion and a trance-like state upon their reading audiences. She explains that,

> They do more than catch the attention, for they retain it. – There is a kind of fascination in them, – when once we begin a volume, we cannot lay it aside, but drive through to the end of it, and yet upon reflexion we despise and reject them.[158]

Recalling early criticisms of Galland's *Nights*, Reeve describes the potentially dangerous attraction of such stories. Although irresistible, she explains, the passions they excite must be negated by reason. She does not dismiss the genre altogether and comes to the conclusion that the popularity of harem romance in Europe, their exotic settings, luxurious interiors, alluring heroines and dangerous antagonists, successfully blurred the boundaries of orient and occident to

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[156] With the Tanzimat came organized tourism. Annie Jane Harvey wrote in 1871 that it was hard to get into the 'best harems' because the demand was so huge. Lewis and Micklewright, *Gender, Modernity, and Liberty*, 9. Julia Pardoe, for example, describes the gold embroidered and "coloured silks," the sofa and its "piles of cushions," gives a detailed description of a "tandour" table which she is impressed by, and a "mangal, a large copper vessel" in a description of a harem she visited in Istanbul. Julia Pardoe, *The City of the Sultan: And Domestic Manners of the Turks, in 1836*, vol. 1 (Carey, Lea & Blanchard, 1837), 22-23. Emmeline Lott describes "wide satin damask curtains, looped up with heavy silk cords and tassels...silver chandeliers...marble-topped console table, supported by gilded legs" Emmeline Lott, *The English Governess in Egypt : Harem Life in Egypt and Constantinople* (T. B. Peterson, 1867), 61.
[157] DelPlato, *Multiple Wives, Multiple Pleasures*, 22.
[158] Clara Reeve, *The Progress of Romance and The History of Charoba, Queen of Aegypt*. (New York: The Facsimile Text Society, 1930), 58-59.

a degree that the worlds constructed in them are to be found "in all the Countries beyond the Levant."[159]

In harem romance readers typically meet the heroine in her home before she is kidnapped or decides of her own volition to enter the harem of a despotic sultan, pasha, sheikh, emir, or caliph. The protagonist's home, or "zero point," is their sanctuary and reflective of their outlook on the world as well as their moral character. Sara Ahmed, building on Edmund Husserl's *Ideas*, describes the zero point of orientation as the point from which the world unfolds.[160] After we are introduced to the heroine's initial orientation, her arrival in the harem is a central point in the narrative upon which she becomes disoriented.

> If orientation is about making the strange familiar through the extension of bodies into space, then disorientation occurs when that extension fails. Or we could say that some spaces extend certain bodies and simply do not leave room for others.[161]

Emphasis is given to the romantic yet dangerous nature of the harem space. Generally, over the course of a harem romance narrative the ruler of the harem will most likely be reformed by the feminine and unwavering morals of the captured woman who refuses to be sexually violated or converted to Islam.[162] In these stories there is almost always a happy ending with the heroine succeeding in either returning home with a changed outlook or changing the norms of her new home to suit her nature.

While all harem romances benefit from reference to the harem, most authors within the genre do not place architecture and interiors, or written architecture, at the center of the narrative. Morgan and Stowe, following Montagu, do this, combining the powerful popularity of the imaginary harem with written architecture. That said, neither book can be considered a straightforward harem romance. Both authors strategically manipulate the tropes of the genre to achieve considerable emotional impact while their unconventional use of the harem's spatial image works to disorient both the main protagonist of the story as well as readers.

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[159] Reeve, *The Progress of Romance*, 23-34.
[160] Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 8.
[161] Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, 11.
[162] Pohl, *Women, Space, and Utopia*, 129.

Literary Geographies and the Politics of Place

Despite the similarities to Montagu's descriptions of Turkish interiors, Ida's home is not located in Edirne or Constantinople, where Montagu traveled, but in Ottoman Athens. Like Morgan, Montagu was never able to travel to Athens, which she lamented in a letter to Alexander Pope from Tunis dated July 31, 1718.[163] Yet, it is important for Morgan's goals to place readers within a location that offers a change in position from a more typical imaginary visit to the orient. As Rendell remarks "it is possible for a change in position to advance a change in relation."[164] What is gained when the spatial image of the Ottoman harem is encountered in Greece rather than Constantinople?

The first female traveler to document her impressions of women's spaces in Greece was Lady Elizabeth Craven in *A Journey Through the Crimea to Constantinople* (1786).[165] This epistolary travelogue was intended by Craven to directly compete with Montagu's earlier text. One of the ways she aimed to achieve this was through travel to places that Montagu had missed. She also made a point to cover the places that Montagu did travel in order to refute her characterizations. Craven insists that Montagu "did not write even a line" of her letters and she aimed to expose Montagu's book as the telling of "lies and fantasies."[166] In fact, argues Craven, *The Turkish Embassy Letters* must have been written by a man because the descriptions, especially those of women and their private spaces, could only be the product of male fantasy.[167]

Despite her intention to disprove a particular facet of masculine fantasy about the orient, Craven's descriptions of Greek women's private spaces are straightforwardly racist and imperialist. The only way she can find to describe the women in a Turkish hammam in Athens, for example, is as obese and the bath itself as disgusting. Such a scene, rather than reminding one of mythological figures or giving one aesthetic pleasure, as described by Montagu, for Craven

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[163]Montagu, *Turkish Embassy Letters*, 267.
[164] Rendell, "Architecture-Writing," 257.
[165] Baroness Elizabeth Craven, *A Journey Through the Crimea to Constantinople: In a Series of Letters from the Right Honorable Elizabeth Lady Craven, to His Serene Highness the Margrave of Brandebourg, Anspach, and Bareith* (G.G.J. and J. Robinson, 1789).
[166] Efterpi Mitsi, "Lady Elizabeth Craven's Letters from Athens and the Female Picturesque," in Vassiliki Kolocotroni and Efterpi Mitsi, *Women Writing Greece: Essays on Hellenism, Orientalism and Travel* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008), 22.
[167] "but must observe, that whoever wrote L. M-----'s Letters (for she never wrote a line of them) misrepresents things most terrible" Craven, *A Journey Through the Crimea*, 105.

signaled a civilization in decline and in need of European intervention.[168] Perhaps Morgan, aware of Craven's accusation of male fantasy permeating Montagu's descriptions, appropriates Montagu's version of the Turkish harem for volume one of *Ida*, which is told from the perspective of the Englishman Lord B.

Morgan does not reference Montagu directly, yet she does provide copious endnotes throughout *Ida* citing other authoritative travel writers, architectural surveys, and art history books on ancient Greece. These references serve to support the reality effect of the setting for the narrative.[169] In the notes corresponding to the beginning of the novel where we encounter Ida's home, Morgan cites quotations from De Guy's *Literary Voyage to Greece*, John Gillies' *The History of Ancient Greece*, and James Stuart's architectural survey *The Antiquities of Athens*, among others (Figures 1.18-1.19). In the notes referencing De Guy, she underscores his remarks concerning the difficulty in discerning a wealthy Greek home from a Turkish one due to the need of the Greeks to "indulge their passion for a sumptuous palace, as the highest method of gratification."[170] Likewise, she refers to the memoirs of the Baron de Tott to emphasize the ways in which Greek domestic interiors imitate that of the Turks in terms of their program, as being suitable for hosting excessive lounging sessions in the afternoon.[171] Although Morgan herself never traveled to Greece, as Evgenia Sifaki writes in her article about *Ida of Athens*, the book is "marked by an obsessive insistence to present both the setting and the national characteristics of the Greek characters as 'real', to offer, that is, a reliable account of Ottoman Greece."[172] To do so Morgan uses the sources available to her, beginning the novel with a specifically masculine and English orientation towards Ottoman lands.

Despite the overt orientalist interiors in these early scenes, Morgan works to undermine the dichotomy of occidental 'home' versus oriental 'harem' through the eyes of Lord B, who, upon a first glance, is unable to tell the difference. Unlike Montagu's descriptions of Fatima's

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[168] Mitsi, "Lady Elizabeth Craven's Letters from Athens," 22.
[169] Roland Barthes, "The Reality Effect," in *The Rustle of Language* (University of California Press, 1989). Nochlin has discussed Barthes' concept of the "reality effect" in relation to orientalist painting and architecture see Nochlin, "The Imaginary Orient," 38.
[170] M. Guys, *A Sentimental Journey through Greece* (Dublin: printed for J. Milliken, 1773); John Gillies, *The History of Ancient Greece, Its Colonies, and Conquests* (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1820); James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, *The Antiquities of Athens* (T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1820).
[171] François Tott, *Mémoires Du Baron de Tott Sur Les Turcs et Les Tartares* (Amsterdam, 1785).
[172]Sifaki, "A Gendered Vision of Greekness," 60.

harem, in which the only male figures are the black eunuchs standing guard outside, Ida's father and two brothers relax and lounge in the same space as Ida, portraying this private space as a sanctuary for a content and tightly knit nuclear family. Ida's father also has no wives, but is instead the sole, benevolent guardian for his three children (perhaps a nod to Morgan's own upbringing). Lord B's description of the facade of the home furthers the blurring of strict boundaries between Europe and orient. He describes the exterior as a sort of architectural history lesson which unites "without blending" a "corinthian portico, the modern grecian vestibule, and the spiral turkish kiosk."[173] Uniting ancient Greece, modern Greece, and Ottoman architectural types, it is clear that the home, as well as its location in Greece, is a liminal space between past and present, East and west. The in-between-ness of the setting allows Morgan to draw intriguing parallels throughout the rest of the novel, blurring and defamiliarizing seemingly dichotomous constructs: harem/home, Greece/Ireland, Ottoman Empire/British Empire, periphery/center.

Although parts of Greece were under Ottoman control until 1912, the region is almost entirely absent from scholarly literature on women writing the orient. Perhaps this is due to the difficulty of upholding the dichotomies of west/east, Europe/orient, etc. when discussing an area that, in 1800, was understood by European intellectuals to be both the site of the ancient civilization that mythically served as the prototype for Europe and also part of the Ottoman Empire. As Frank Turner explains, "Until the late eighteenth century most educated Europeans regarded their culture as Roman and Christian in origin." In the second half of the eighteenth century, these "values, ideas, and institutions" became problematic in the wake of the Enlightenment and revolutions in France and the United States. These events engendered disruptive political, social, and intellectual production that led writers, scholars, and others to search for earlier precedents and cultural roots which would provide solutions and signposts for the current age.[174]

Morgan, well read in the historical writing of Greek history that proliferated in late eighteenth-century England, also looked to Greece as an example to foster further change, but also as perhaps the site for the origin of the ideal of woman. By choosing to set the narrative in Greece, Ida could live in a home resembling a Turkish harem while also representing,

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[173] Morgan, *Woman: Or Ida of Athens*, 18-19.
[174] Frank M. Turner, *The Greek Heritage in Victorian Britain* (Yale University Press, 1984) 1-4.

metaphorically, the essence of "Woman" who is, in turn, symbolic of "the nation." In her preface to *Woman*, Morgan prepares readers to see such symbolism. She explains that she has a two-pronged agenda in writing the novel, one goal more philosophical and the other geopolitical. She writes that these goals are "to delineate the character of woman in the perfection of its natural state and to advance the cause of the Greek national revolution against the Ottoman Empire."[175] This is a surprisingly radical agenda for what could, upon a shallow reading, be characterized as a straightforward harem romance.

Pushing the Boundaries of Space, Place, and Genre: "Mahometan bondage" in London

Born in Ireland, Morgan was a prolific yet controversial novelist. Her most famous work, *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806) is today considered one of the founding texts of the discourse of Irish nationalism. Published six years after the Acts of Union that united the Parliament of Great Britain with the Parliament of Ireland, the novel follows an English lord who adventures to the coast of Connaught where he falls in love with a Gaelic woman named Glorvina. A wrench is thrown into their budding relationship when the Englishman discovers that his own ancestors were responsible for the financial ruin of his beloved's family. In the course of the novel he finds a deep appreciation for the history, culture, and language of the Irish and, in the end, decides not to return to England.[176] Despite being a romance, a genre that was (and to a large extent still is) considered to be frivolous and not to be taken seriously as literature,[177] the book was so controversial upon publication that Lady Morgan was put under surveillance by Dublin castle. Many of her works ended up on the Catholic church's Index of forbidden books, not least of which included her explicitly feminist, two volume manifesto *Woman and Her Master* (1840).[178]

While working long hours as a governess Morgan was driven to become a prolific writer and is rightly seen as playing a major role in the development of the national tale as a literary genre. Developed by Irish and Scottish authors, the national tale places central importance on the cultural specificity of setting. As in *The Wild Irish Girl*, the narrative typically follows an English male protagonist who becomes enlightened through his encounter with a British colony.

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[175] Morgan, *Woman: Or, Ida of Athens*, ix-xxvii.
[176] Sydney Owenson, *The Wild Irish Girl* (H. Colburn, 1850 [1806]).
[177] Pamela Regis, *A Natural History of the Romance Novel* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), xi-xii.
[178] Spender, *Mothers of the Novel*, 301.

This encounter results in the protagonist rethinking his previously held prejudices. The structure is innovative in that it combines a fictional travel narrative with a basic romance plot.[179]

Morgan's contributions to this genre combine entertaining stories of characters navigating romantic relationships and familial strife with serious scholarly text. Her research into the places and cultural contexts of her novels' settings is extensive. Each novel is accompanied by substantial footnotes that allow for an uncomplicated overview of the many and varied sources referenced. Morgan's knowledge of authoritative academic scholarship, well known travel literature, and primary sources serve to locate the fictional narratives in 'authentic' and 'real' places. In much the same way that scholars found Galland's *Nights* useful for learning about foreign traditions, cultures, and places, Morgan's aim was to relate a captivating story while also synthesizing the available sources. Her writing strives to provide accurate information regarding the landscape, architecture, dress, art, customs, and more in various specific locales.

In *Ida* Morgan pushes the boundaries of the national tale through incorporating the tropes and settings of harem romance. Where typically a narrative in the genre would depict an Englishman traveling to a British colony, the novel begins with an Englishman traveling to Greece, a region under the control of the Ottoman Empire. Although the narrative of the first volume is told from a male perspective, the legitimacy of this male gaze onto the orient is undercut throughout the remaining three volumes that are told from Ida's perspective. Ida's gaze, turned back on the center (London), complicates dominant images of Greece, England, the Ottoman orient, oriental women, center, and periphery. In the end, the Englishman does not get the girl and the main character, Ida, survives through exploiting western obsessions with harem women.

The remainder of the first volume of *Woman* chronicles a tour of Athens from Lord B. 's perspective while Ida acts as tour guide. This first installment of the story follows the typical arc of the national tale in that Ida presents the same aspects of the city to Lord B. that he had earlier dismissed as in the process of decay. Ida adds context to panoramic views of the city, elaborating on the history, traditions, and culture of the Greeks, until Lord B comes to see Athens through Ida's eyes and describes every monument, ruin, sculpture, and landscape on the tour with

[179] Sifaki, "A Gendered Vision of Greekness," 56.

wonder.[180] Volumes two through four are then told from Ida's perspective as she undergoes a series of trials including separation from her perfect match Osmyn (a recently emancipated Turkish slave), imprisonment in the harem of the Ottoman Aga governing Athens, and her escape to London where she and her family are destitute until she begins performing her oriental character for an elite English audience.

In the fourth and final installment of the novel, the structure of the first volume is flipped in that, instead of an Englishman experiencing Greece for the first time, Ida provides an experience of London through the eyes of a harem woman. The comparisons Ida draws between London and Athens, England and Greece serve to criticize English society and western culture more generally from a side-stepped position. Morgan's positioning as an Irish author also allows for a double parallel to emerge between the British and Ottoman Empires and the occupied areas of Ireland and Greece.

Although in this last part of the story Ida has physically moved from Greece to London, her critical voice continues to come from a harem that has simply been transplanted into an English context. After escaping from her situation in Athens, along with her father and two brothers, Ida is initially destitute in London. She provides disorienting criticisms of what she sees as a cruel and corrupt society that degrades women in much the same way that the cruel Ottoman rulership encouraged in Greece. After her father dies, she is 'saved' by Lord B who reappears in her life and takes on financial responsibility for Ida and her brothers. Ida is placed in her own villa in the suburbs and her brothers in an elite private school. Her life is luxurious and

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[180] Through synthesizing information from contemporaneous travel publications, scholarship on ancient Greek culture, and art history books, Morgan was likely attempting to duplicate the success of the French writer Madame de Staël's *Corinne, or Italy* published two years earlier (1807). *Corinne*, a fictional story set largely in Rome, sold well as a guidebook. English tourists to Rome carried the novel from site to site, following in the footsteps of the protagonists and reading the appropriate passage aloud to generate a particular emotional response to the scene in front of them. The passages and the emotions/pleasure they engendered while standing in a predetermined location, mimicked Lord B's search for the picturesque. Although he is at first disappointed upon arrival in Athens because he does not find any scenes corresponding to his expectations (until he comes across the harem scene), when guided by Ida, he is suddenly exposed to the wonder and unique nature of ancient Greece that he had read about and seen in publications, paintings, poetry, and more. Sifaki, "A Gendered Vision of Greekness,"65-66; Madame de (Anne-Louise Germaine) Staël, *Corinne; or, Italy* (Derby & Jackson, 1857).

undemanding, even respectable, but she recognizes this situation as an English version of the harem.

Ida is then again 'saved' by her uncle, the richest merchant in Constantinople who has emigrated to England. She inherits his wealth when he suddenly passes away. With his funding she replicates her childhood home in London, focusing especially on the exact reproduction of her boudoir in Athens, "blended in their appearance…in the ancient and modern greek and turkish furniture."[181] Finally stable on her own, yet in an unfamiliar place, Ida chooses to recreate the interiors of the home where we started the narrative, but this version is one that belongs to her completely, is described through her perspective, and is a refuge from the horrors of public life in England rather than Ottoman occupied Greece. At the end of the book, Ida's home becomes well known amongst the London elite for its 'oriental' decoration and she maintains her status as "harem woman" through throwing parties where she performs 'oriental' dances for her guests.

The fourth volume of Morgan's novel, telling the story of how Ida comes to London to find herself in an eerily similar form of imprisonment to that of the dystopic Ottoman harem, this time controlled by Lord B, centralizes, dramatizes, and presents quite literally Wollstonecraft's claim in *A Vindication* that British women exist in a situation worse than "Egyptian bondage."[182] Additionally, Ida, like the character of Maria from Wollstonecraft's uncompleted novel *Maria; or, The Wrongs of Woman* is intended to represent "Woman" as an ideal or as representative of her gender. Both women are depicted as characters whose morals and status are constantly jeopardized by their forced dependence on men.[183] Morgan's version of "woman," at the same time deviates from Wollstonecraft's ideal in important ways. Although Ida is, like Wollstonecraft's ideal, representative of woman as "strong, virtuous, and, above all, [a] well educated 'rational woman,'" Morgan does not dispense with Ida's characteristics as a passionate, romantic, and sexual woman. She parallels this feminist line of argumentation with a critique of imperialism, making a veiled argument or analogy about Britain's intervention in Dublin through

[181] Morgan, *Woman; Or, Ida of Athens*, 149-150.
[182] Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication*, 162
[183] Hart, "Domains of Difference" 188-192.

imagining the Ottoman's control in Athens at a moment when it would have been extremely dangerous to publish such an opinion given recent Irish insurrections.[184]

Gendering Spatial Politics: Feminist and Feminine Orientalisms in Fictional Harem Constructions

Soon after Edward Said published *Orientalism* (1978), criticism emerged arguing that his perspective was inherently masculine and disregarded a large swath of women's perspectives. Subsequently notions of differently gendered forms of orientalism became numerous in scholarly studies. "Feminist orientalist discourse," a phrase coined by Joyce Zonana in 1993, pushes back against such dichotomies, with examples of writing by women that also displays the imperialist thinking integral to Said's theory. Zonana first used the phrase in an article analyzing Brontë's use of a "sultan/slave" simile in *Jane Eyre* (1847). The author defines this discourse as the displacing of "patriarchal oppression onto an "Oriental," "Mahometan" society that enabled British readers to contemplate local problems without questioning their own self-definition as Westerners and Christians."[185] In other words, through comparing the despotism of an imagined harem to domestic relations "at home," orientalism could be strategically used in the service of white, European feminism.

Zonana outlines a strain of "emerging liberal feminist discourse," beginning with Mary Wollstonecraft and extending to Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Margaret Fuller, and Florence Nightingale that took on an essentially imperialist and masculinist subject position in an effort to argue for women's rights.

> If the lives of women in England or France or the United States can be compared to the lives of women in "Arabia," then the Western feminist's desire to change the status quo can be represented not as a radical attempt to restructure the West but as a conservative effort to make the West more like itself.[186]

Feminist orientalism can therefore be considered a subcategory of Said's orientalism. According to Said, in orientalist discourses oriental women were useful for reflecting imaginaries of power and access. They "express unlimited sensuality, they are more or less stupid, and above all they

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[184] Stephen Gwynn, *The History of Ireland* (Macmillan and Co., 1924), 414.
[185] Joyce Zonana, "The Sultan and the Slave: Feminist Orientalism and the Structure of 'Jane Eyre,'" *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 18, no. 3 (1993): 593.
[186] Zonana, "The Sultan and the Slave," 594.

are willing."[187] Feminist orientalists, while upholding this perceived superiority, aim their project closer to home in striving to remove images of the orient from everyday life in the west.

Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), considered one of the founding texts of feminist philosophy, has been discussed at length by scholars as exemplary of a particularly feminist strain of orientalism.[188] In *A Vindication*, the harem appears as a point of comparison for an interior familiar to Europeans — the bourgeois home. Notably Wollstonecraft refers to the "seraglio" rather than harem. Wollstonecraft does not describe the environment of this gendered space in detail; instead, she focuses on what activities take place within it. These activities, mainly art making and learning to appear delicate, according to Wollstonecraft, are undertaken solely for the purpose of achieving the affections of a husband. Importantly, no suitable education happens here. She writes,

> The education of women has, of late, been more attended to than formerly; yet they are still reckoned a frivolous sex, and ridiculed or pitied by the writers who endeavour by satire or instruction to improve them. It is acknowledged that they spend many of the first years of their lives in acquiring a smattering of accomplishments; meanwhile strength of body and mind are sacrificed to libertine notions of beauty, to the desire of establishing themselves, the only way women can rise in the world, by marriage. And this desire making mere animals of them, when they marry they act as such children may be expected to act: they dress, they paint, and nickname God's creatures. Surely these weak beings are only fit for a seraglio! - Can they be expected to govern a family with judgment, or take care of the poor babes whom they bring to the world?[189]

Throughout *A Vindication*, the author adds veracity to her argument by, for example, describing the English husband as someone who "lords it in his little harem" and "thinks only of his pleasure or his convenience."[190] Precise, physical details of architecture or interior spaces are not provided. Instead the author focuses on the gendered hierarchies inherent to domestic spaces.

This characterization of Ottoman women is, of course, ahistorical. The flattening of all harem spaces to the image of a deviantly erotic "seraglio" is important in Wollstonecraft's text.

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[187] Said, *Orientalism*, 235.
[188] Bernadette Andrea, *Women and Islam,* 75.
[189] Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication*, 10-11, 107-108.
[190] There are many more examples which can be described here. Wollstonecraft also doesn't concentrate exclusively on the Ottoman orient. she goes beyond the Middle East, alluding to a larger realm of the orient including East Asia. She writes that,"to preserve personal beauty" English women use clothing to tighten their limbs and bodies in ways "worse than Chinese bands" used on the feet. Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication*, 48, 95.

As Gülrü Necipoğlu explains, the Ottoman imperial harem was in large part a school for "young slave girls" which complemented the palace school for pages or young boys.[191] Imperial Ottoman women were also involved in constructing their own homes, commissioning mosques, fountains, farming estates, schools and more.[192] Wielding a considerable amount of power, imperial Ottoman women's various activities were far from catering solely to an all powerful Sultan.

Mobilizing a trope formulated at least a century before, Wollstonecraft describes Muslim women as oppressed by Muslim men who keep them from developing their intelligence. [193] She invokes this trope to shock readers by implying that the condition of English women is not so different from living in a harem. Her comparisons take on a spatial dimension in that she describes English women as not fit for a "home," but as "weak" and belonging in a "seraglio." Art making, learning to appear delicate, and earning the affections of a patriarchal figure are activities suitable for a seraglio while governing, judgment, and taking care of children are suitable for a "home." Wollstonecraft perpetuates an already existing home/harem dichotomy in the service of arguing for English women's right to education. As Antoinette Burton has observed, with Wollstonecraft, "Disdain for the harem became an essential part of feminist emancipationist argument."[194] And, the conflated harem/seraglio appear surprisingly often in Euro-American political texts concerned with women's rights following Wollstonecraft characterized as an evil needing to be exorcised from the western body.

In *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1843), published more than a half century after Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication*, Margaret Fuller evokes the harem in a similar mode, but expands the domain of concern. The harem/home dichotomy expands to become an issue no longer relegated to family life and private spaces. She describes the orient, and the harem in particular, as child's play in relation to the dark side of the United States. She writes, "It is idle to speak with contempt of the nations where polygamy is an institution, or seraglios a custom, while practices far more debasing haunt, well-nigh fill, every city and every town."[195] Many

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[191] Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial and Power*, xv.
[192] Türker, *The Accidental Palace*, 81-83.
[193] Cahill, *Intelligent Souls?,* 1-2.
[194] Antoinette M. Burton, *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865-1915* (University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 66.
[195] Fuller, *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, 70-71.

nineteenth-century reformist writers overlaid U.S. geography, especially the southern South, but also areas such as Utah where the practice of having multiple wives within Mormonism was at issue, with a version of the orient. These writers did this in an effort to eradicate certain social norms easily characterized as 'oriental' and therefore not 'American.'

The explicitly political works of Morgan and Stowe participate more or less in this lineage of feminist orientalism as described by Zonana. Yet, the close observation of Islamic architectural motifs and the aesthetics of imagined harem spaces in their fictional works also sometimes allow for a more nuanced reflection that, in many ways, proved more effective for reaching the general public than political philosophy could. Zonana's characterization of feminist orientalism has itself been criticized for presenting the relationship between feminism and orientalism as monolithic as well as her assumption that feminism officially began with Wollstonecraft. Billie Melman points out one other strain of feminist orientalism, or at least an alternative view of the orient by western women that she sees as originating with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Melman argues that Montagu recorded her travels in the Ottoman Empire, not as a means to make the "West more like itself," but to deliberately counteract dominant, negative stereotypes. To do so, as Andrea explains, Montagu created a new "paradigm of similarity in difference."[196] According to Melman, Montagu's "gender-specific" discourse "evolved alongside the dominant discussion" described in the previous section.[197]

Charlotte Weber, in turn, distinguishes between an "explicitly feminist" orientalism and a "feminine version."[198] The author contends that western feminist attitudes were more complex than Zonana's concept allows and describes feminine orientalism as ways in which English women writers "domesticated" the harem by bringing it positively into conceptions of the "idealized bourgeois home, [as] a kind of female sanctuary."[199] This interpretation can definitely be brought to bear on Ida's home encountered originally in Athens and later reproduced in London. Harriet Beecher Stowe's use of Islamic architecture and the spatial image of the harem in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* can be more easily categorized as feminist orientalism per Zonana's

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[196] Zonana, "The Sultan and the Slave," 594; Andrea, "The Female Wits," 78-79. Melman, *Women's Orients*, 2.
[197] Melman, *Women's Orients*, 2.
[198] Charlotte Weber, "Unveiling Scheherazade: Feminist Orientalism in the International Alliance of Women, 1911-1950," *Feminist Studies* 27, no. 1 (2001): 126.
[199] Weber, "Unveiling Scheherazade," 126.

definition. Her tactic of orientalizing the American South and its system of slavery is intended to horrify readers to such an extent that it will be eradicated.

Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852): Orientalizing the American South

In June 1851 serial installments of "Uncle Tom's Cabin: Or the Man That Was a Thing" began to appear in the abolitionist journal *The National Era*. According to Stowe, she began to write the serial due to a disturbing vision she had while in church. In her vision the title character, Uncle Tom, was being violently killed. Unable to get this image out of her head, Stowe put pen to paper writing what would become the most widely sold novel of the nineteenth century. In 1852 over 300,000 copies of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* were sold in the United States alone. The book also had considerable success abroad and can be considered one of the earliest examples of literature's development into a global enterprise.[200] Stowe described her vision of Tom's death as a picture which slowly unrolled before her. In a published conversation with the editor Gamaliel Bailey in March 1851 she described how she saw her role as a writer as one whose responsibility it was to craft realist images:

> My vocation is simply that of a painter, and my object will be to hold up in the most graphic and lifelike manner possible slavery, its reverses, changes, and the negro character, which I have had ample opportunities for studying. There is also no arguing with *pictures*, and everybody is impressed with them, whether they mean to be or not.[201]

That Stowe succeeded in crafting vivid images for her readers is evident in the way that they "transferred seamlessly to the stage," film, and various commodities.[202]

Tom's Cabin makes only a short appearance in the beginning of the story. A nostalgic place, Tom's home, a log cabin, symbolizes an idealized version of the United States. Although readers spend little time there, the house is meant to convey something about Tom's character, core values, and, in turn, American values. Tom's "small log building," also sometimes referred to by Stowe as a small "cottage," is located in Kentucky. It has been built adjacent to the "Big

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[200] In the UK sales would be even better with 1,500,000 copies sold in the first year. Britannica Editors. "Uncle Tom's Cabin." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, December 8, 2025. https://www-britannica-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/topic/Uncle-Toms-Cabin; Kenneth DiMaggio, "Uncle Tom's Cabin: Global Best Seller," 15. Joan D. Hedrick, *Harriet Beecher Stowe: A Life* (Oxford Academic, 1995), 223.
[201] Sundquist, *New Essays on Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 8.
[202] Frick, *Uncle Tom's Cabin on the American Stage*, 8.

House," where his owners, the Shelby's live. The well maintained front garden is described in detail. Flowers native to Kentucky such as marigolds, petunias, and four o'clocks are grown in a neat organization.[203] The interior of the cabin is simple. One corner houses the "marriage bed" and the few decorations have been chosen with great care: "The wall over the fireplace was adorned with some very brilliant scriptural prints, and a portrait of General Washington."[204] These details regarding the cabin highlight Tom's core characteristics as monogamous, Christian, and patriotic.

Just a decade before the publishing of Stowe's novel, the imagery of the log cabin had been utilized to great success in William Henry Harrison's presidential campaign (Figure 1.20). The log cabin worked to portray Harrison as humble and relatable in contrast to his wealthy opponent Martin Van Buren.[205] Alluding to the myth of the frontier, the log cabin represents both the starting point of Tom's journey as well as the starting point of America's narrative of success. The use of the log cabin works to conflate domestic space with national space and Stowe's interchangeable use of the terms "cabin" and "cottage" conveys a setting relatable to middle-class, white Americans. In locating Tom's first home in a log cabin/cottage Stowe not only creates a parallel between the residences of enslaved persons and the American middle-class. She also questions the viability of the American myth of humble beginnings and hard work leading to a, if not wealthy, comfortable lifestyle.

Tom's Cabin will remain an important point of contrast throughout the narrative as Tom is bought and moved into various homes. In contrast to the American dream that begins in a cabin and moves ever upwards, as depicted in William Makepeace Thayer's biography series, for example *From Pioneer Home to White House* about Abraham Lincoln, Tom's trajectory throughout the novel spirals ever further downwards and his living conditions become worse and worse in contrast to the wealth of his owners.[206] The second home Tom is taken to after a traumatic separation from his family is described as a "Moorish villa" belonging to the St. Clare family. Although never referred to directly, as the slaver's carriage pulls up to the plantation estate, a spatial image of a harem is established through Tom's perspective,

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[203] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 45.
[204] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 48.
[205] Robert Gray Gunderson, *The Log-Cabin Campaign* (University of Kentucky Press, 1957), 4- 5.
[206] William Thayer, *From Pioneer Home to White House: Life of Lincoln* (Hurst and Company, 1882).

> The carriage stopped in front of an ancient mansion…It was built in the Moorish fashion– a square building enclosing a courtyard, into which the carriage drove through an arched gate way…Wide galleries ran all around the four sides, whose Moorish arches, slender pillars, and arabesque ornaments, carried the mind back, as in a dream, to the reign of oriental romance…In the middle of the court a fountain threw high its silvery water, falling in a never-ceasing spray into a marble basin, fringed with a deep border of fragrant violets…The galleries that surrounded the court were festooned with a curtain of some kind of Moorish stuff, and could be drawn down at pleasure, to exclude the beams of the sun…a little boudoir opened likewise on the verandah…A tall, dark-eyed, sallow woman, half rose from a couch on which she was reclining.[207]

Strikingly similar to Montagu's description of Fatima's apartments and Ida's home in Athens, the marble fountain is filled with "gold and silver fishes, twinkling and darting through it like so many jewels." The garden is planted with pomegranate trees, Arabian jessamines, geraniums, roses verbenum, and "mystic old ale."

Both foreign and aristocratic, the architecture of the St. Clare home with its "wide galleries, verandahs, and curtains blowing in the wind," blur the boundaries between inside and outside. The layout of the house is fluid, amorphous, and loosely designed. Its decor is orientalist in style yet vague in its designation of some materials simply as "Moorish stuff."[208] Central to this image is the sickly woman that lounges within. Tom, amazed and very afraid, wonders at the 'otherness' of his new prison. Tom's residence, on the other hand, has shrunk from a single family home (the cabin), to a sparsely furnished room above the stables. These two spaces, the luxurious main house and Tom's hidden room above where the animals are kept, serves to highlight the luxury enjoyed by the St. Clare family at the expense of enslaved labor.

While Tom's cabin is located in Kentucky, the St. Clare mansion is located in New Orleans, Louisiana. The city of New Orleans, in particular, is a ripe setting for such foreign imagery and is key to Stowe's writing of an oriental South. Playing off the Spanish and French colonial influences, Stowe transforms the city's existing, exotic architecture into wealthy oriental palaces. As abolitionists probably intended in their strategic orientalizing of the American South, Stowe's allusions to the imaginary harem as a place of depravity and sexual slavery was meant to point to the very real and financially lucrative "fancy trade" active in New Orleans. The fancy trade, as it was known at the time, can be defined as "the buying and selling of mixed-race

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[207] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 341.
[208] Zweizig, "Domestic Space and Republican Virtue," 170-179.

enslaved women for the primary purpose of prostitution and concubinage."[209] It is in the final home Tom arrives at that American readers are confronted with this reality.

The "Dark Place" where Tom arrives at the end of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is Simon Legree's plantation. Whereas the St. Clare mansion is described as romantic and luxurious in its ornamentation and overall atmosphere, Legree's plantation is described as formerly opulent and tasteful, but it had been allowed to fall into disrepair. The only feature of the estate which remained impressive was a "noble avenue of China trees, whose graceful forms and ever springing foliage seemed to be the only things that neglect could not daunt or alter, – like noble spirits, so deeply rooted in goodness, as to flourish and grow stronger amid discouragement and decay." In stark contrast to Tom's cabin, the slave quarters at this plantation were located far away from the main house and described not as cabins, but as "rude shanties," which had a "forlorn, brutal, forsaken air." [210]

In Simon Legree's house, what had been a metaphor of the harem throughout the narrative until this point transforms into a straightforward and explicit depiction of sexual slavery. One character, an enslaved woman named Cassy becomes a central focus. She is vulnerable and beautiful which results in her being continuously, physically violated. The home itself takes on some characteristics of her body's commodified status. The walls are "stripped naked" and there is "mildewed jessamine" in the garden. Stowe's description of the Legree plantation recalls arguments made by Nochlin regarding the portrayal of Islamic architecture in nineteenth-century orientalist painting and world's fair displays as "neglected, ill-repaired architecture."[211] At the Legree plantation, the representation of Islamic architecture as once luxurious, yet now degraded, likewise acts as a topos for the corruption, violence, and loss of morals due to decadence of the society depicted. The depiction of the plantation's architecture is also explicitly connected to state and treatment of Cassy's body.

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[209] For more on the fancy trade see Gordon, Tiye A. "The Fancy Trade and the Commodification of Rape in the Sexual Economy of 19th Century U.S. Slavery." University of South Carolina, 2015; Alexandra Finley, "'Cash to Corinna': Domestic Labor and Sexual Economy in the 'Fancy Trade,'" *Journal of American History* 104, no. 2 (2017): 410–30; Edward E. Baptist, "'Cuffy,' 'Fancy Maids,' and 'One-Eyed Men': Rape, Commodification, and the Domestic Slave Trade in the United States," *The American Historical* Review 106, no. 5 (2001): 1619–50.
[210] Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 729-730, 734.
[211] Nochlin, "The Imaginary Orient," 38.

As Reina Lewis points out, "Slavery…was very different in the Ottoman Muslim system to the plantation slave systems of the Christian West."[212] When European and American authors thought about slavery in the Ottoman Empire they tended to focus on what they perceived as a system that abused women and girls. Only a very small percentage of Euro-American writing on the topic considers the figure of the eunuch. These figures are often depicted in orientalist painting as Black slave figures that cater to the lounging women of the harem.[213] Both the harem woman and the figure of the eunuch were deeply misunderstood and mischaracterized by western audiences. "The concubine classification was quite outside the Western concept of slavery: western observers, many of whom were preoccupied with ending the Ottoman slave trade, were at a loss to know how to deal with the 'unfree' status of these socially elevated, educated women who did not fit their narrow definition of slavery."[214] Similarly, the standing of enslaved eunuchs in the imperial harem was contradictory. On the one hand they were very literally African slaves who had been castrated against their will, permanently separated from any family, and made incapable of forming new family ties. At the same time, the Chief Eunuch of the imperial harem held incredible power. A position that existed in the sultan's harem for more than three hundred years, the Chief Eunuch was responsible for tasks such as announcing the birth of the sultan's children, overseeing the education of heirs to the throne, and informing the sultan of his mother's death. This position's intimate relation to the Ottoman sultan's family, had very real political consequences outside of the palace.[215]

Despite the many important differences between the Ottoman and American systems of slavery, abolitionists strategically drew comparisons between the two. In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the harem is a menacing subtext throughout most of the novel rather than an explicit gendered space as in *Ida of Athens*. In the portions of the story that follow Tom's journey south, after he is sold to a slave trader and taken to New Orleans, Stowe depicts an orientalized version of the American South. Stowe was far from the only author to orientalize American slavery. Diane Roberts describes the characterization of the American South in terms of the imaginary orient as

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[212] Lewis and Micklewright, *Gender, Modernity, and Liberty*, 15.
[213] DelPlato, *Multiple Wives, Multiple Pleasures*, 21; Adrienne L. Childs and Susan Houghton Libby, *The Black Figure in the European Imaginary* (Cornell Fine Arts Museum, Rollins College, 2017).
[214]Lewis and Micklewright, *Gender, Modernity, and Liberty*, 15.
[215] Jane Hathaway, *The Chief Eunuch of the Ottoman Harem : From African Slave to Power*-Broker (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 25-26.

a "powerful abolitionist tactic."[216] That said, Stowe's novel is by far the most wide reaching example as evidenced by the resulting cultural phenomenon.[217] In *Uncle Tom's Cabin* the oriental South is glimpsed through the appearance, atmosphere, and social relations of plantation villas. In invoking the recognizable imagery of Islamic architecture and the harem, Stowe endeavors to make the imagined orient not only real, but close to home, in a way that both creates desire, but more than that, disturbs American audiences.

Recognizable motifs of Islamic architecture play a central role in this story as Stowe uses orientalist connotations related to pointed arches, moorish textiles, etc., to represent both intense wealth as well as moral depravity. Stowe also uses architecture to portray two disparate versions of the orient through the architecture of two plantation environments. The first is a utopian and romantic version of the orient associated, for Stowe, with an exotic fantasy Americans hold about both the orient and the American South. The second is a dark and dangerous one that, according to Stowe, comes closer to the truth.

Not only utilizing popular connotations associated with Islamic architecture and decor, Stowe also takes liberties in appropriating the structure, plot, and settings of harem romance in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (at least for Tom's portion of the story). The heroine of the typical harem romance has, in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, been replaced by the male character, Tom. Similarly to the heroine of a harem romance, the character of Tom is nonviolent, trustworthy, and, above-all, a devout Christian. As is also typical, Tom is first introduced at home before being sold and held captive within a luxurious yet foreign place. Tom's time at the St. Clare plantation follows this narrative structure with Tom taking on the role of the heroine in harem fiction. In the 1990s scholars such as Cynthia Griffin Wolff and Gillian Brown observed that, "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*

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[216] Diane Roberts, *The Myth of Aunt Jemima*, 24.

[217] Uncle Tom's Cabin remains a familiar touchstone in popular culture today although often in ways that reflect the after-life of the character rather than Stowe's novel in any specific sense. That said, since 2000 there has been a resurgence of scholarship about the book accompanying the 100th anniversary of Stowe's birth. Susan Belasco, "Uncle Tom's Cabin in Our Time," *Legacy* 29, no. 2 (2012): 318–28; In 2011, when Barack and Michell Obama visited Queen Victoria, they were photographed viewing a first edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Stephen Bates, "Obama's Stay at the Palace: Lunch, Then a Tour of the Priceless Art Collection," US News, *The Guardian*, May 24, 2011, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/may/24/obama-palace-lunch-art-collection.

represented a serious effort to reorganize culture from a female perspective."[218] In drawing on similarities between women's situation and that of enslaved Africans on the plantation, Wolff argues that Stowe strategically created a feminized masculinity embodied by the character of Tom.[219] Importantly, Stowe deviates from the typical harem romance plot that typically ends in the heroine winning over the sultan to be monogamous or to move back home with her. Instead, Tom is killed violently, which works to shock readers. Like a Christ figure he is continually subject to ever worse circumstances until he is eventually a true martyr and murdered by an evil plantation owner.

Today it is impossible to read *Uncle Tom's Cabin* without taking the book's negative reception and valid criticisms into consideration. While in the decades after publication Stowe's work was often referenced as playing a part in mobilizing Northern Americans to ignite the Civil War, today her portrayal of Blackness is seen as very problematic. This depiction of Tom, taken up in minstrel shows and a wide variety of consumer products, elevated the figure of Tom to a cultural phenomenon (Figures 1.21-1.22). This legacy is what defines the work today. That said, perhaps the mythologization of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* has succeeded in concealing its original subversive potential. Stowe's appropriation of the harem image, and the structure of the harem romance, and the overlaying of these onto the southern plantation and the city of New Orleans manifests the imaginary harem as a very real political and spatial institution within the borders of the United States. This version is located right next door and it is this nearness that originally moved the hundreds of thousands of readers upon publication, including the sitting American president.

Conclusion

The architectures elaborated on in *Woman, or Ida of Athens* and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* exemplify how spatial images of the harem could be strategically employed for political

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[218] Frick, *Uncle Tom's Cabin on the American Stage*, 8.
[219] Frick, *Uncle Tom's Cabin on the American Stage*, 8. Insert original citation quoted in Frick, 8-9; Cynthia Griffin Wolff, "'Masculinity' in Uncle Tom's Cabin," *American Quarterly* 47 (1995): 598-600, 611; Gillian Brown, *Domestic Individualism: Imagining Self in Nineteenth-Century America* (University of California Press, 1992), 15-16.

advocacy. Both Sydney Owenson and Harriet Beecher Stowe recognized the harem's powerful connotations for Euro-American audiences as a highly gendered, racialized, and imperialist space. They harnessed these associations to serve their respective agendas, yet, in doing so, also unsettled readers' perceptions of the harem. Owenson, critiquing British imperialism through the lens of Irish nationalism, used spatial images of the harem to disorient readers' ideas about a variety of topics, but importantly for this chapter, the financial and spatial limitations of English women's lives. Stowe, similarly, drew on spatial imagery of the harem to orientalize the American South in order to expose the moral corruption and violence of slavery. By embedding spatial images of the harem within their narratives, both authors created politically charged parallels between the imagined orient and the material spaces of their local contexts. While both novels demonstrate the capacity of popular literature to shape public opinion, they also reflect the limitations of their time. Neither Morgan nor Stowe fully escaped the imperial and racial hierarchies their narratives sought to critique. Their engagement with the imaginary harem relied on and perpetuated orientalist and white supremacist ideologies, reinforcing stereotypes even as they sought to dismantle others.

Importantly, the spatial images constructed in these texts extend beyond the written word and are evidence of the entanglement between fictional and material spaces. By focusing on the architecture and interiors of imagined harem spaces, Morgan and Stowe highlight how spatial imaginaries function as popular culture, cultural critique, and propaganda. Their detailed architectural descriptions—whether of Ida's hybrid Greek-Turkish home or the Moorish villas of Stowe's plantation South—gesture towards modes in which architectural motifs can migrate across media, borders, and disciplines, and, in this case, become tools for political storytelling. This chapter has demonstrated how politically active women writers mobilized architectural description, particularly that related to an imaginary harem, to engage with the built environment in ways that complicate conventional histories of architecture and design. In doing so, they reframe architectural storytelling as a tool of feminist and political intervention.

This architecture, interiors, objects, and human figures populating spatial images of the harem in this chapter sets the stage for chapters that follow. Chapter 2 explores how the not yet commodified spatial images of the harem described by Montagu, and recontextualized by Owenson and Stowe, translated to turn-of-the-twentieth-century interior design trends in the United States. Through a close reading of the Turkish-style cozy corner, I will demonstrate how

the fictional harems images discussed in this chapter materialized in the American home as a highly reproducible and commodified space while at the same time retaining the potential for political subversiveness as seen in Owenson and Stowe's works of fiction.

Figures





Figure 1.1 Çakırağa Konağı (also known as the Birgi Çakıroğlu Mansion), built 1762, Birgi, Ödemiş, İzmir Province, Turkey. Eighteenth century Ottoman konak.

(a) Exterior view with garden and courtyard. Photograph by Jane Laroche, 1964, Institut Français d'Études Anatoliennes collection, SALT Research.

(b) Exterior view with mashrabiya. Photograph from the Ali Saim Ülgen Archive, SALT Research.



Figure 1.2 Interior view of the Aynalıkavak Pavilion, Istanbul, late eighteenth century.

The tall revzen (stained-glass window panels) visible here resemble the colored-glass windows Lady Mary Wortley Montagu described in her letters, which she noted for their ability to soften and diffuse light within Ottoman domestic interiors.

Photograph by Phyrexian, May 4, 2024. Licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0.



Figure 1.3 Examples of Mashrabiya

(a) Berthold Werner, view of mashrabiya from the garden courtyard of Bayt al-Kritiliyya (Gayer-Anderson Museum), Cairo, Egypt, built 1540 and 1631. Photograph, November 4, 2010. Licensed under CC BY 3.0.

(b) Detail of mashrabiya screen illustrating the lattice's role in filtering light and vision within domestic space. Photograph by Jennifer-Navva Milliken, 2022. Museum for Art in Wood, Philadelphia.

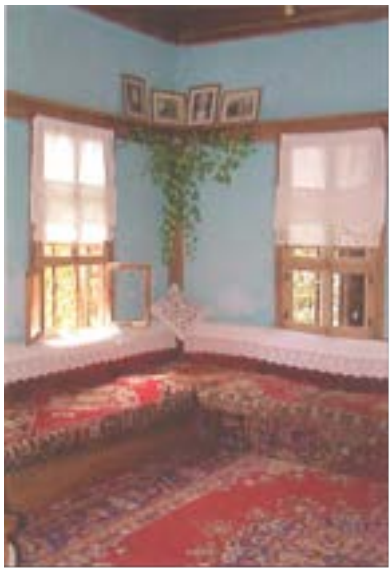

Figure 1.4 Traditional Ottoman interior, Asmazlar Konağı, Safranbolu, Turkey.

Photograph by Gülen Çevik. Reproduced from Gülen Çevik, "American Style or Turkish Chair: The Triumph of Bodily Comfort," Journal of Design History 23, no. 4 (2010): 369.



Figure 1.5 Silk fabric (*kemha*), Ottoman Empire, second half of the sixteenth century. Sadberk Hanım Museum, Istanbul, SHM 17625.



Figure 1.6 Velvet cushion cover (*çatma*), Ottoman Empire, first half of seventeenth century. Sadberk Hanım Museum, Istanbul, SHM 9375.



Figure 1.7 Velvet cushion cover (*çatma*), Ottoman Empire, first half of seventeenth century. Sadberk Hanım Museum, Istanbul, SHM 10384.



Figure 1.8 Pillow Cover, Turkish, ca. 1800. Linen and silk, plain weave with embroidery (atma stitch, double running stitch, satin stitch). RISD Museum, Providence. Bequest of Miss Lucy T. Aldrich, 55.558.



Figure 1.9 Çakırağa Konağı (also known as the Birgi Çakıroğlu Mansion), interior view of the painted wooden ceiling. Built 1762. Birgi, Ödemiş, İzmir Province, Turkey.



Figure 1.10 Traditional room, Sipahioğlu Konağı, Yörük Köyü, Turkey.

Photograph by Furkan Al. Reproduced from Gülen Çevik, “The Ottoman Women’s Transformative Agency: From Traditional to Modern Interiors,” Home Cultures 20, no. 2 (2023): 93–118.



Figure 1.11 Topkapı Palace, privy chambers (*harem*), detail of painted wall panels with niches and floral still life motifs. Istanbul, Turkey. Photograph by Anadolu Agency, May 22, 2025.



Figure 1.12 Topkapı Palace, privy chambers (harem), painted wall panels and niches, alternate view. Istanbul, Turkey. Photograph by Anadolu Agency, May 22, 2025.



Figure 1.13 Bağdat Köşkü (Baghdad Kiosk), Topkapı Palace, built 1639. Istanbul, Turkey. Postcard photograph. SALT Research, Sultanahmet Collection, AHISTSULT235.



Figure 1.14 Fountain, Cairo, Egypt. Sixteenth century and later. Marble and sandstone mosaic. Aga Khan Museum, Toronto. Acc. no. AKM960.



Figure 1.15 Bayt al-Suhaymi (House of al-Suhaymi), residential courtyard house. Built 1648, with additions in 1796. Cairo, Egypt.



Figure 1.16 Joseph Chinard, Tripod Table Stand (Athénienne), probably ca. 1793. Terracotta on wooden base. 31 5/8 × 14 × 15 1/4 in. (80.3 × 35.6 × 38.7 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Purchase, Louis V. Bell Fund and Wrightsman Fellows Gifts, 2025, acc. no. 2025.345.



Figure 1.17 Antonio Corradini, Modesty (Pudicizia), 1752. Marble. Cappella Sansevero, Naples.

Photograph by David Sivyer, November 1, 2015. Licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0.



Figure 1.18 “Le Bains” in Pierre-Augustin Guys, *Voyage littéraire de la Grèce, ou Lettres sur les* Grecs (Paris: Chez la Veuve Duchesne, 1783), 224.



Figure 1.19 Title Page and City Scene in James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, *The Antiquities of Athens and Other Monuments of Greece* (London: John Haberkorn, 1762), 46.



Figure 1.20 "Old Tip's 'Cabin at the Bend': Real and Fancied." Collection of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, Cincinnati.

Reproduced in Robert Gray Gunderson, The Log-Cabin Campaign (University of Kentucky Press, 1957), 5.

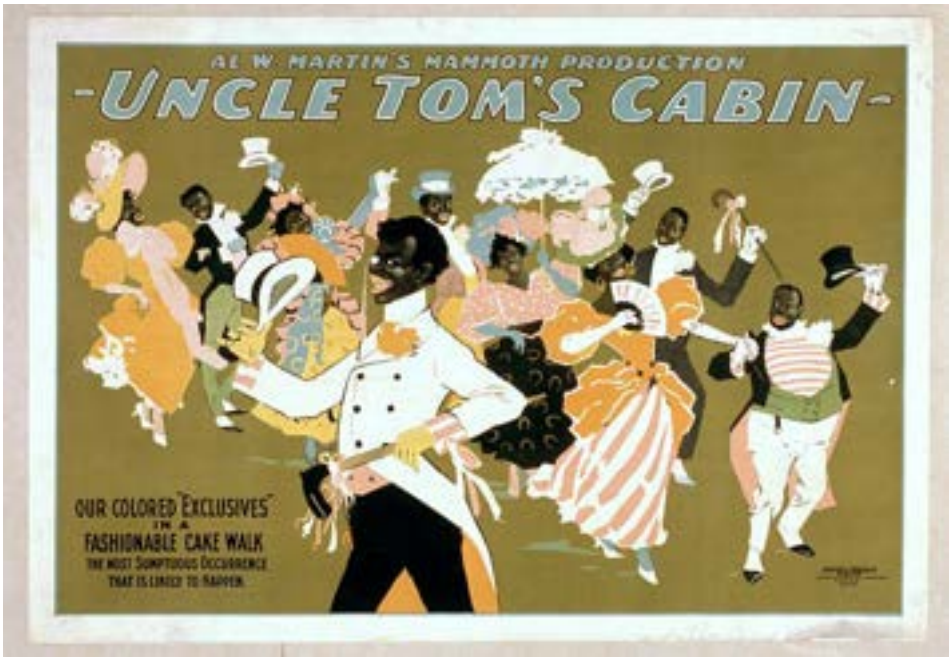

Figure 1.21 *Al. W. Martin's Mammoth Production, Uncle Tom's Cabin*, c. 1898. Chromolithograph theatrical poster. U.S. Printing Co., Cincinnati. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.



Figure 1.22 Plate with *Uncle Tom's Cabin* Illustration, after 1852. Maker unknown. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift from the Liljenquist Family Collection, 2011.51.2.

Chapter 2 The Turkish Style Cozy Corner in the American Parlor, 1880-1910

The Cosey Corner

A little cosey corner in a little cosey flat,
With scimitars and Turkish pipes and every kind of hat;
With pictures, guns of various sorts, and bric-a-brac galore
And a multi-colored carpet upon a polished floor;
Electric lights, rose-colored lamps, and everything in trim
To please her spouse's oft expressed and comfortable whim.
He wore a quiet smile of joy, as peacefully he sat
In the little cosey corner in the little cosey flat.
'Of course you know, you musn't smoke for it would be too bad
To spoil the lovely curtains, which were brought from Hyderabad
No drinking either; you won't mind, for you are sure to spill
Your B. and S. upon the floor. You won't? Oh yes, you will!
And off the sofa you'll take care, I hope, to keep your shoes.
Now darling these are little things I'm sure you can't refuse.'
He wore a sickly smile of joy, but you'll be sure at that
He 'blessed' the cosey corner in the little cosey flat.[220]

Published in the July 1901 edition of *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, this satirical poem pokes fun at a popular interior design trend, known as the cozy corner, that was prevalent at the

[220] La Touche Hancock, "Walnuts and Wine: The Cosey Corner," *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, 68, no. 403 (July 1901): A25. Published with permission of ProQuest. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission.

turn of the twentieth century.[221] Overflowing with "bric-a-brac," items such as Turkish pipes, curtains from Hyderabad, scimitars, and exotic hats, the cozy corner described in the poem becomes the stage for a domestic negotiation between husband and wife.[222] Following a description of the corner's contents, the poem describes how the husband is initially pleased with the atmospheric setting ("He wore a quiet smile of joy, as peacefully he sat"). The fictional corner was constructed presumably by the wife to appeal to his "oft expressed and comfortable whim," yet he is quickly subjected to a series of rules: no drinking, no smoking, no shoes on the sofa. The space, while described as arranged for the husband's pleasure, is tightly managed by the wife. In the final line, with a wink to readers, the poem alludes to a moment of intimacy: the husband "blessed" the cozy corner, a euphemism that hints at sexual encounter, turning the exotic retreat into a space where gendered control and desire remain uneasily entangled.[223]

Between roughly 1880 and 1910, cozy corners were a popular decorative feature found in a notable number of American middle- and upper-class homes. These were semi-enclosed, often tented seating areas filled with pillows, textiles, and various designed objects, and frequently arranged to evoke "oriental" styles. Typically located in the parlor, corners could be arranged at a variety of price points. They could be put together by professional designers who sourced pieces from international dealers, or as do-it-yourself projects assembled using affordable materials found around the home as well as mass produced objects ordered from department store catalogs. Often, they were a mixture of these approaches. Cozy corners could draw on a range of historical motifs, but Turkish-style, "arabesque," "moorish," or simply "oriental"

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[221] Most primary sources use the nineteenth-century spelling "cosey." This spelling is used in all direct quotations while the accepted U.S. spelling 'cozy' is used for my own words. "cosy | cozy, adj. and n.," OED Online, March 2022, accessed June 23, 2025, https://www.oed.com/dictionary/cosy_adj?tab=meaning_and_use#8028616.

[222] While the poem references curtains "from Hyderabad," this was likely chosen for rhyme rather than historical accuracy; Hyderabad was not a significant textile export center in the 19th century, unlike Bengal, Gujarat, or the southeastern coast. See Badri Narayanan Gopalakrishnan, "History of Indian Textile Industry," in *Economic and Environmental Policy Issues in Indian Textile and Apparel Industries* (Heidelberg: Springer Nature Link, 2018), 1–11.

223 A version of this chapter was published as "The Turkish Style Cozy Corner: Everyday Appropriations of Islamicate Objects and Spaces in the American Parlor, 1885-1910," in *Islamic and Islamicate Architecture in the Americas: Transregional Dialogues and Manifestations,* ed. Caroline 'Olivia' M. Wolf (Intellect Ltd, 2025), 87-108. This version substantially expands that material through new primary sources and a discussion of cozy corners in relation to popular architecture and spatial imagery of an imaginary harem.

designs that incorporated predominantly Islamic and Islamicate objects dominated. This made the mention of a cozy corner in the years between 1880-1910 nearly synonymous with the Turkish cozy or Turkish nook (Figures 2.1-2.2).[224]

The Turkish-style cozy corner reflects an important moment in the broader commercialization of Islamic applied art in Europe and the United States.[225] Their popularity relied on increasingly commodified and diluted imagery of the imaginary harem. This imagery emerged from a combination of nineteenth century sources including English translations of the *One Thousand and One Nights*, orientalist art (especially painting), World's Fair displays, travel guides and memoirs, as well as popular and serialized fiction, discussed in the previous chapter.[226] Additionally, forms of developing mass media at the turn of the century, including newspapers, magazines, postcards, photography, advertising, posters, and even early cinema, helped to circulate and popularize orientalist visual motifs across a broad, middle-class audience.

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[224] I will use the term "Turkish" to refer to cozy corners that take on a generalized "Oriental" aesthetic. I use the term *Islamicate* rather than *Islamic* to describe visual and material culture associated with Islamic traditions, forms, and geographies that are not strictly religious in nature. Coined by Marshall Hodgson, along with the term "Persianate" in 1965, the term denotes the social and cultural complex historically associated with Islam, including its expressions in secular, transregional, and multi-faith contexts. *Islamicate* provides a generative framework for analyzing the aesthetic and political dimensions of Islamic-influenced forms in historically non-Muslim-majority spaces like the Americas. I am grateful to Dr. Fatima Burney for encouraging conversations around this distinction and for emphasizing the usefulness of *Islamicate* as a deliberately inclusive and historically attuned descriptor. See Caroline 'Olivia' M. Wolf, "Introduction: Transregional Manifestations of Islamic and Islamicate Architecture in the Americas," in Wolf, *Islamic and Islamicate Architecture*; Bruce Lawrence, "Islamicate Cosmopolitan: A Past Without a Future, Or a Future Still Unfolding?," *Franklin Humanities Institute* (blog) (May 2, 2017). Accessed August 15, 2025. https://humanitiesfutures.org/papers/islamicate-cosmopolitan-past-without-future-future-still-unfolding/.

[225] I see the Turkish cozy corner as an important example of how cultural objects circulate, accrue value, and take on meaning in global markets. See Arjun Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge University Press, 2013); Siegfried Giedion also discusses the components of a Turkish-style cozy corner as they entered ordinary Euro-American homes in the nineteenth century, "It began with the carpets," in Sigfried Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948), 345-346; Volait, *Antique Dealing*.

[226] The history of translation of *The One Thousand and One Nights* or the *Arabian Nights* is a fascinating one that could be discussed at length here for not only its influence on Orientalist interior design, but also in terms of gender as a lens of analysis for the translations. Horta, *The Annotated Arabian* Nights; For more on women's translations of the *Arabian Nights* tales see Catherine Lynn, "Dream and Substance: Araby and the Planning of Opa-Locka," *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* 23 (1998): 167-170; For more on World's Fair architecture see Çelik, *Displaying the* Orient; Research on memoirs and travel literature is extensive. A good introduction is Reina Lewis and Nancy Micklewright, *Gender, Modernity and Liberty.*

These forms of media not only reinforced a generalized and aestheticized image of the orient but also extended that imagery into the spatial practices of everyday life in Europe and the United States.[227] The cozy corner exemplifies how the phenomenon of mass-mediated orientalism was translated into domestic architectural forms through collections of exotic objects and small-scale spatial interventions.

The cozy corner, in its "oriental" style, condenses myriad ideas about the harem into a delineated section of the home. Photographic portraits of women lounging within the corners, as formulaic as the corners themselves, put their owners on display as much as the exotic objects within, and in doing so make clear reference to the spatial image of the harem explored in this dissertation (Figures 2.3-2.5). In the previous chapter, I traced the discursive construction of the harem's spatial image in popular novels written by European and American women authors, where it appeared as a contradictory, political space: alluring yet oppressive, decadent yet transgressive, a space at once feared and fetishized. With the Turkish-style cozy corner, these abstract and symbolic associations take on material and spatial form within the American bourgeois home. Though by no means ubiquitous, these corners warrant close study for how they condense a set of tensions into an accessible, domestic format, echoing fictional versions of the harem in both visual vocabulary and affective charge.

Yet unlike the fictional harems discussed in the previous chapter, which existed for their primary audiences in distant geographies and narrative projections, the cozy corner brought those fantasies into the rhythms of American homes. The Turkish-style cozy corner functioned well as popular architecture due to the ease of its reproducibility as well as the rapid, if brief, spread of the trend from western Europe across the United States.[228] The corners appeared in homes from New York to Montana, Missouri, California, and many cities and small towns in between. In addition to photographs documenting these spaces, their popularity is further evidenced by the

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[227] Edwards, "A Million and One Nights."

[228] I have so far found examples of Turkish-style cozy corners in Germany, France, England, and the United States. I have chosen here to focus exclusively on the American context. This decision reflects both the level of detail required for a sustained analysis and the specific contours of American Orientalism at the turn of the century, which differ notably from European models, which also differ significantly from one another. A comparative analysis would thus require a different framing and exceeds the scope of this chapter.

many illustrations and textual descriptions published in magazines, domestic manuals, and mail-order catalogs of the period.

The cozy corner's rapid diffusion through American homes owed much to the expanding landscape of late nineteenth-century media. Trade journals like *The Decorator and Furnisher* and *Upholsterer and Home Decorator*, alongside popular magazines such as *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Household News*, offered readers prescriptive advice and richly illustrated templates for constructing fashionable interiors, thus making the cozy corner both aspirational and reproducible. While some of the illustrations and textual descriptions discussed here might not document actual interiors, I treat them equally to photographic evidence. Even when not realized materially, the visual idea of the cozy corner shaped readers' spatial imaginaries and aesthetic desires. Unlike photographs, which record once existing interiors, illustrations in magazines depicted not necessarily what *was*, but what *should be*. As such they were part of a pedagogical system that trained readers in everything from decorating to architectural history, from proper bodily comportment to international affairs. Illustrations in print media were also circulated more widely than the one-off photographs of interiors that were sometimes published in magazines or books, but more often are found in family albums or loose in archival boxes. Furthermore, journals and magazines were physically present, read and discussed, within the domestic sphere. In this sense, they are both representations of space and spatial agents, mediating and transforming how domestic interiors were seen and used.

Just as important as print media was the parallel development of photographic technology: innovations such as dry plates and improved shutter mechanisms in the 1880s and 1890s dramatically reduced exposure times and costs, enabling not only commercial studio portraits but also domestic amateur photography, including interior snapshots and staged self-portraits. As a result, cozy corners have only been haphazardly documented. They appear in studio settings, family albums documenting home life, and unattributed snapshots that reveal how anonymous individuals performed taste, femininity, and domestic refinement within orientalist interiors. Taken together, images and descriptions in magazines, journals, and photographs illuminate how the spatial image of the harem, through the Turkish-style cozy corner, emerged as a reproducible spatial formula and a vehicle for visual self-fashioning for American women at home.

Materializing the Harem Image at Home

Since the mid-nineteenth century, American homes had been transitioning from places of work to spaces where the family retreated from the industrializing world. To furnish domestic spaces that should counteract the alienating effects of modernity, and instead provide an outlet for creativity and encourage cheer, following Ruskin and Morris, many homemakers looked to decor denoting the past or cultures that were perceived to retain a pre-industrialized sensibility.[229] That said, thanks to industrialization, the late-nineteenth century saw the rise of mass production and mail-order retail, which flooded the American market with inexpensive consumer goods. Formerly expensive decorative objects began to be broadly advertised as accessible to a growing middle-class public.

As Çevik notes, "nineteenth-century Americans became the first non-aristocratic people who could afford to decorate their houses in a real sense."[230] As a result, an ever growing demographic of American women felt compelled to venture into consumer spaces to purchase home decor.[231] An upper-middle class woman living in a major city such as Chicago or New York City in the 1890s might be inspired by consumer goods and visual motifs arranged into spatialized imagery of the orient in department store window displays, where Turkish rugs, tabouret tables, divans, and textiles were displayed against architectural backdrops evocative of the Levant; she might see similar aesthetics in the themed interiors of tea parlors or the lobbies of fashionable hotels like the Palmer House. While the harem depicted in European and American nineteenth-century popular literature operated primarily through a combination of second-hand observation, fantasy, and metaphor, the Turkish-style cozy corner brought an increasingly familiar imaginary into tactile, material form in the American parlor. As an assemblage of everyday Islamic and Islamicate objects and spatial gestures, such corners made harem fantasies accessible and reproducible. Consumers were able to both construct and inhabit an image of the harem within their own domestic spaces.

Interior design publications aimed at affluent readers frequently featured references to cozy corners at the turn-of-the-century. *The Decorator and Furnisher* stands out as a particularly

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[229] Elizabeth Hutchinson, *The Indian Craze: Primitivism, Modernism, and Transculturation in American Art*, 1890–1915 (Durham: Duke University Press, 2009), 18–19.
[230] Çevik, "American Style or Turkish Chair," 371.
[231] Penny Sparke, *The Modern Interior* (Reaktion Books, 2008),13-15.

prolific source on the topic. Along with *Upholsterer* and *Good Furniture* these were early leaders in the market of trade journals focused on interiors.[232] Published monthly in New York City from 1882 to 1897, *The Decorator and Furnisher* catered to an upper-middle-class readership and regularly showcased interiors that blended practical design with aspirational lifestyle cues. In the August 1897 issue, Mrs. Oliver Bell Bunce introduces readers to "Two Cosey Nooks and Corners for August." Her article offers visual and textual examples of how women might transform domestic interiors into spaces of imaginative escape. For those "who by business or lack of means" were unable to travel, Bunce suggests that cozy corners could "alleviate…sufferings" by offering a sense of vacation within the home.[233]

The first example, Miss Mary Gay Humphrey's rooftop "sky parlor" in New York, is accessed by first leaving Humphrey's apartment, climbing stairs to the top floor, walking a narrow hallway, and ascending a ladder to emerge on the roof. After this short journey, visitors enter a simple, wooden structure that we are told is decorated with patterned oriental rugs, imported Japanese crepe shades, and a corner lounge filled with cushions (Figure 2.6). The second example, an illustrated interior nook, offers a similar, if more modest, experience. A softly curtained arch gives way to a circular seating arrangement, framed by prints of birds or insects, and a small bookshelf (Figure 2.7). The corner in this second image functions as a room within a room, a delineated enclosure that promises aesthetic pleasure and privacy.[234]

Bunce's examples reflect the cozy corner's imaginative and escapist functions as well as their spatial and visual malleability. In addition to the parlor, corners could be found on the roof, in thematic rooms, stairways, bedrooms, bay windows, even attached to the backs of pianos, and fitted into other niches in the home (Figures 2.8-2.13). Cozy corners could also evoke a range of cultural motifs. These included Japanese, Dutch, Native American, and colonial American styles, among others, but by far the most popular and enduring variation was the Turkish-style corner

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[232] Kathryn Dethier, "The Early American Journals of Interiors: Reflections of an Emerging Profession," *Journal of Interior Design* 17, no. 1 (1991): 37. Before the 1880s the audiences for these publications were "architects, artisans, manufacturers, furnishings dealers, retailers, and antiquaries." After 1895 the audience was aimed at regular consumers due to falls in subscriptions. The *Decorator and Furnisher* was the first journal focused exclusively on the art of interiors.
[233] Mrs. Oliver Bell Bunce, "Cosey Nooks and Corners for August," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 30, no. 5 (1897): 134. A thank you to Nathaniel Walker who pointed out to me that Mrs. Bunce was the wife of Oliver Bell Bunce, a New York based journalist, novelist, and playwright.
[234] Bunce, "Cosey Nooks," 134.

(Figure 2.14). In practice, terms like "Turkish," "Moorish," "Persian," "Indian," and the catch-all "Oriental," were used interchangeably in domestic manuals, magazines, and catalogs, with little distinction made between aesthetic traditions; a "moorish nook" likely featured nearly identical furnishings to those of an "Indian corner."[235]

For instance, in Alexander George Morrison's *Drapery, Interior Decoration and Architecture: A Practical Hand-Book for the Dealer, Decorator and the Workroom* (1906), photographs of two corners, one located in an "India Smoking Room" and the other a more generic "Oriental" cozy corner are strikingly similar (Figures 2.15-2.16).[236] While not identical, the former is smaller and embedded into a full-room concept, and the latter appears as a Turkish-style cozy corner integrated into what might be a bedroom or boudoir, the ensemble of a low divan, arrangement of pillows, drapery, and inclusion of hanging weaponry and textiles operates through a consistent visual grammar. Whatever the label, cozy corners typically featured arrangements of a similar set of objects: richly patterned textiles, low divans, ottomans, smoking pipes, brass trays, cushions/pillows, tabouret tables, lamps, shields, scimitars or other decorative weapons, fans, beads, incense burners, small vases, screens, tapestries, small paintings, and intricately framed mirrors. Corners could be arranged in slightly different ways yet the repetition of key elements cohere into the same recognizable spatial image.

While publications like *The Decorator and Furnisher* and Morrison's professional handbook targeted affluent audiences and trained decorators, there is evidence that cozy corners were also popular for households on stricter budgets. Publications aimed at these audiences emphasized creativity, improvisation, and affordability over authenticity or prestige.[237] Hester Poole's column in *Household News*, a monthly magazine for lower-middle-class families

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[235]It is likely that the "Indian corner" referring to South Asia was more prevalent in Great Britain, reflecting the country's direct imperial ties to the Indian subcontinent. In contrast, the "Turkish corner" appears to have been the more common label for similar interior design trends in the United States. In Germany, such spaces were often described as *maurisch* (Moorish). This should not be confused with another type of "Indian corner" popular in the U.S. that drew on Native American aesthetics rather than South Asian ones. Francine Giese and Ariane Varela Braga, eds., *A Fashionable Style: Carl von Diebitsch Und Das Maurische Revival* (Peter Lang, 2017); Hutchinson, *The Indian Craze*, 18–19.
[236] Alexander George Morrison, *Drapery, Interior Decoration and Architecture; a Practical Hand-Book for the Dealer, Decorator and the Workroom* (New York: T.A. Cawthra & co., 1906), 19.
[237] Karina Corrigan, "Turcoman Portieres and Arabia's Sweetest Perfumes: The Turkish Style in American Middle-Class Interiors, 1890-1930" (1995), 2, 25-26.

published in Philadelphia, argued for cozy corners as accessible to anyone who is resourceful.[238] Examples of such resourcefulness include using fish nets for draping in lieu of textiles (Figure 2.17), constructing a low divan from "a long packing box," and cushions stuffed with hay.[239]

These variations, from elite designs to improvised versions in working-class homes, underscore the wide cultural appeal and malleability of the cozy corner. Penny Sparke, Kristin Hoganson, and Elizabeth Hutchinson have argued that the motivation for women to build "exotic" cozy corners often expressed not cultural fidelity, or identification to Middle Eastern domesticities, but aspirational desire for class mobility and even imperial dominance over the cultures represented.[240] Such readings emphasize the political and economic stakes of decorative choice, highlighting how interior design can encode broader political tensions and social ambitions. While I agree that American women hold considerable power through their chosen modes of consumption and these spaces were very much about the modeling of values and aspirations, I argue that their appropriation of Islamic visual culture offered white American women a distinct spatial medium through which to negotiate identity, authority, and cultural belonging within the frameworks of consumer capitalism and orientalist fantasy.

The expanding availability of Islamicate-inspired goods in the 1890s reflected not only consumer desire, but also the growing capacity of commodity culture to circulate fantasy through mass produced products. Between 1897 and 1905, subscribers to the Bloomingdale's or Sears Roebuck catalogs could purchase items like Turkish water pipes, smoking jackets, Turkish slippers, jardinier stands (also called tabouret tables), octagon ottoman footrests, lattice woodwork, "grand Oriental sumptuous hassocks," Turkish chairs, divans, and a wide array of rugs and textiles to be shipped directly to one's home at a range of price points (Figure 2.18).[241] Although wealthier homes and interiors are much better documented than those belonging to lower or middle-income Americans, the scale of Americans' desire for orientalist interior decor can be sensed through interior design periodicals, homemaking magazines, and mail order

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[238] Corrigan, "Turcoman Portieres," 40-41.
[239] "The Cosey Corner," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 27, no. 6 (1896): 182–182; Kristin Hoganson, "Cosmopolitan Domesticity: Importing the American Dream, 1865-1920," *The American Historical Review* 107, no. 1 (February 2002): 71.
[240] Hutchinson, *The Indian Craze*, 15, 18-19; Sparke, "Paradise in the Parlor," 206; Hoganson, "Cosmopolitan Domesticity," 59.
[241] Corrigan, "Turcoman Portieres," 26-28, 30, 51,

catalogs. Publications like the *Art Amateur* and *Household News*, aimed at women managing households on a budget, regularly featured articles on orientalist furnishings.[242] The increasing affordability of such decorative items led an author for the *Decorator and Furnisher* to conclude in 1896 that "there is every reason to believe it [the cozy corner] is fast becoming a permanent institution in our homes."[243]

From Collecting to Consuming

Turkish-style cozy corners were far from the only exotic decor that could be found in the late nineteenth-century American home. The trend was part of a broader, historical fascination with Islamic and Islamicate design, fueled by imperial expansion, global trade, international travel, world's fairs, and industrial capitalism.[244] Decorative objects found in cozy corners entered American homes through a range of channels: as souvenirs acquired during overseas travel, through dealers and intermediaries, as curiosities purchased at world's fairs, and as imports or reproductions purchased at department stores or through their mail-order catalogs. Each pathway demonstrates particular power relations and comprises its own set of assumptions about authenticity, class, and cultural access. The cozy corner functioned within this wider visual and material economy shaped by cosmopolitan aspiration and intimate, everyday acts of homemaking.

The trendiness of oriental-style decor in American homes during the last quarter of the nineteenth century echoes older traditions of collection and display. For example, decorative arts from Islamic lands were incorporated into European aristocratic collections since at least the early modern period. They could be found in private *Wunderkammern*, or cabinets of curiosity, where rarity and exoticism conferred status and displayed a depth of worldly knowledge (Figure 2.19).[245] Such collections emerged through centuries of transcultural contact, including

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[242] Corrigan, "Turcoman Portieres," 2.
[243] "The Cosey Corner," 182–182. Despite their widespread popularity across class lines, Turkish-style cozy corners largely fell out of favor by the 1910s, especially in wealthier homes, as interior design trends shifted and the cultural appetite for Orientalist décor waned. Echoes of the trend, however, would reemerge in the interwar period, no longer in parlors and bedrooms, but in themed commercial spaces that repurposed domestic fantasy for public spectacle. This will be the topic of the fourth chapter of this dissertation.
[244] Hoganson, "Cosmopolitan Domesticity," 9; Sparke, "Paradise in the Parlor," 206–208.
[245] Stephen Vernoit, "Islamic Art in the West: Categories of Collecting," in *A Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture*, ed. Finbarr Barry Flood (Somerset: John Wiley & Sons, 2017), 1172.

diplomacy, trade, and conquest although the historical narratives that accompany them have overwhelmingly been told from the perspective of European collectors, rather than non-European collectors or the communities from which objects were acquired. Evidence points to elite global exchange of high-value, luxury goods flowing in multi-nodal networks and in various directions, not just from the "East" to the "West," as early as the thirteenth century.[246]

While the history of European and American collections of Islamic art is typically framed as a "culture dominated by men,"[247] there is room to speculate that, even in earlier periods, women played a greater role than is typically assumed. Tülay Artan has demonstrated the extent to which elite Ottoman women collected European objects beginning in the seventeenth century, which suggests that the interest might have flowed in both directions.[248] Scholarship on aristocratic, European women's collecting of Islamic and Islamicate objects before 1800 is

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[246] As Sparke observes, there remains much work to be done to "unravel the cross-cultural influences that occurred during the era of European imperialism and colonization and the early years of international trade and travel" highlighting the ongoing need to decenter Eurocentric narratives and foreground the perspectives and agency of the cultures and makers of these objects. Sparke, "Paradise in the Parlor," 203. One important work specific to Islamic art and architecture is Volait's *Antique Dealing and Creative Reuse*. For another important contribution to the decentering of Euro-centric perspectives more generally see Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello, *The Global Lives of Things: The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World* (London: Routledge, 2015), 12-13.

[247] "The examples discussed here [in the edited volume] suggest that orientalist designs found themselves embedded in a specific collecting culture dominated by men, mostly bachelors, who sought for artefacts to be enjoyed in atmospheric rooms and immersive displays." Francine Giese, Mercedes Volait, and Ariane Varela Braga, "Introduction: Islamic Art and Architecture Exposed," in *À l'orientale: Collecting, Displaying and Appropriating Islamic Art and Architecture in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries* (Leiden and Boston: BRILL, 2020), 11. David J. Roxburgh, while pointing to the domestic origins of the field of Islamic Art, also focuses exclusively on male actors. See David J. Roxburgh, "Au Bonheur de Amateur: Collecting and Exhibiting Islamic Art ca. 1880-1910," *Ars Orientalis* 30 (2000): 9–38.

[248] Tülay Artan, "Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Princesses as Collectors: Chinese and European Porcelains in the Topkapı Palace Museum," *Ars Orientalis* 39 (2010): 113–47; Interestingly there is little scholarship on the reverse situation, of European women actively engaged in collecting Islamic decorative arts. There are accounts of aristocratic women collectors, but none specifically deal with collecting Islamic art objects: "Private collections of *objets d'art* appeared during the western Renaissance, and several women participated: Isabelle d'Este (1474-1539) and Mary of Austria (1505-1558), as well as Countess Alethea Arundel (1585-1654) and the Duchess of Portland, Margaret Cavendish Bentinck (1715-1785), who perpetuated the tradition of art collecting and patronage in England's aristocratic families. In the following centuries, the figure of the art-collecting female monarch became established thanks to Christine of Sweden (1626-1689) and Catherine II of Russia (1729-1796), whose large-scale art commissions represented both support for artists and a political instrument. That aristocratic practice of collecting was still dominant in the 19th century and remained a model for subsequent generations." Élodie Baillot, "Women Art Collectors in 19th-20th Century Europe," *Encyclopédie d'histoire numérique de l'Europe* [online], ISSN 2677-6588, published on 21/12/23, consulted on 08/08/2025. Permalink : https://ehne.fr/en/node/21918

noticeably thin although an interest in dress and decorative objects related to Ottoman court culture is evident through literature and portraiture. Take for example Lady Montagu's extensive descriptions in her *Turkish Embassy Letters* discussed in the previous chapter as well as portraits done in Turkish dress (Figures 2.20-2.21). Additionally, Madame de Pompadour's commissioned *Sultana* paintings by Charles André van Loo, Jean-Marc Nattier's *Mademoiselle de Clermont as a Sultana* (1733), and Élisabeth-Louise Vigée Le Brun's *Madame d'Aguesseau de Fresnes* (1789), as just a few examples, feature luxurious clothing, carpets, and textiles reminiscent of Ottoman examples (Figures 2.22-2.24).[249] Although women's involvement in these earlier histories of collecting Islamic art, when acknowledged, is often framed as more distant, fashionable, or fantastical than political or scholarly, portraits depicting European women as *sultanas* reveal a clear preoccupation with gender and power. Taken together, earlier practices of collecting and displaying objects from Islamic lands in Europe laid the groundwork for later incorporation of such design in American domestic spaces along with the gendered dynamics that accompanied them.

Such portraits of aristocratic women were part of an elite European fascination with Ottoman culture during the eighteenth century, most prominently expressed through the phenomenon of *Turquerie*. This manifested through a variety of media including painting as well as the display of imported coffee sets, smoking pipes, textiles, ceramics, and other luxury goods.[250] Nebahat Avcıoğlu has shown how *Turquerie* also influenced architectural design of the period in Western Europe with architectural types including the mosque, kiosk, and hammam being emulated and integrated into European aristocratic gardens and grounds. Rather than emerging from a detached fantasy or aesthetic interest in Islamic applied arts, Avcıoğlu argues

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[249] Figure 2.21 is described in the Stanisław August collection at The Royal Łazienki Museum in Warsaw as a portrait of Montagu although more recent scholarship has contested this attribution. The lack of research available on women's interest in Ottoman art and court culture, in comparison to the collecting habits of ambassadors, traders, and male aristocrats, suggests an area ripe for future investigation. As discussed in the previous chapter there is significant writing on Ottoman domestic spaces by European and American women pre-1900, both fictional and documentary. Thank you to Isabelle Gillet for bringing portraits commissioned by European women to my attention. D. Juszczak, H. Małachowicz, *The Stanisław August Collection of Paintings at the Royal Łazienki* (Warsaw: Royal Łazienki Museum, 2016), 242-244; "Guillotined turbans:" the decline of à la Turque fashions" in Isabelle Gillet, "Figures of Conformity, Gestures of Distinction: Civility and Portraits of Women in France (1815-1848)" (Dissertation, 2023), 160-203.

[250] Alexander Bevilacqua and Helen Pfeifer, "Turquerie: Culture in Motion, 1650–1750," *Past & Present*, no. 221 (2013): 75. See also Avcıoğlu, *Turquerie*, 7.

that "the emulation, and ultimately the promotion, of Turkish models was one of many tactical political strategies employed by people in positions of power, such as monarchs, princes, aristocrats, and diplomats."[251] These elite engagements forged a visual and material repertoire that would continue to be drawn on, albeit in diluted form and with a broadening consumer base, in the nineteenth century.

While *Turquerie* largely remained confined to aristocratic milieus, the nineteenth century witnessed a significant expansion of interest in the Islamic world, propelled by imperial ambitions, increased travel, global trade, and new technologies such as steamships and railways.[252] By the 1850s, the trade in Islamic antiques or "curiosities" was no longer limited to royal and aristocratic patrons but increasingly attracted well-to-do collectors of more varied social standing. Auction houses like Christie's in London and New York and dealers operating in the nodes of Paris, Cairo, and Damascus offered everything from small domestic objects to architectural fragments and even entire, disassembled rooms.[253] The nineteenth century also witnessed the expansion of museum collections to include Islamic decorative arts which introduced aspiring artists and architects, as well as general publics to these objects. The British Museum was the first institution to purposefully invest in expanding its collections of Islamic manuscripts and coins when the museum purchased the collection of Claudius Rich, the East India Company's Baghdad representative in 1825. The museum accelerated these collection practices beginning in the mid-nineteenth century. The Louvre and Hermitage Museums were also willing to pay high prices for Islamic art objects by 1885.[254]

While global trade networks facilitated an increased movement of artisanal or craft-produced goods from outside of Europe and the United States to public and private collections within, fakes and forgeries along with manufactured look-a-likes produced by European and

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[251] Avcıoğlu, *Turquerie*, 8.
[252] Christiane Gruber, "Islamic Architecture on the Move," in *Islamic Architecture on the Move: Motion and Modernity* ed. Christiane Gruber (Bristol, UK and Chicago, IL: Intellect, 2016), 3.
[253] Volait, *Antique Dealing*, 5, 14. For more on how collecting Islamic art developed in the late nineteenth century, with a focus on London see Isabelle Gadoin, *Private Collectors of Islamic Art in Late Nineteenth-Century London: The Persian Ideal* (New York: Routledge, 2021).
[254] Vernoit, "Islamic Art in the West," 1172–1176.

American industry also became highly sought after.[255] A new market for pieces that appeared to be authentic or unique, yet acquirable at low prices emerged. This increasingly diverse field of Islamic art and architecture was in part effectively promoted through world's fairs which brought exotic objects to ever expanding consumer demographics. In this context, Islamic and Islamicate objects embarked on increasingly accelerated pathways of dispersal and recontextualization while European and American-made products also spread rapidly and widely, shaping consumption across the globe.[256] This modern context of global exchange enabled new modes of cultural negotiation, display, and experimentation that, while operating on an unprecedented mass scale, nonetheless refracted the older elite practices of collecting and staging foreign objects. These were practices that were long intertwined with personal taste, political identity, and performances of worldly knowledge.

With the Means to Travel

The years between the end of the American Civil War and the First World War (1865-1914) witnessed an increase in the numbers of Americans making trips to what is now Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Israel, Lebanon, and Turkey. The core groups of Americans undertaking these travels consisted of tourists/pilgrims, missionaries, settlers/colonists, scholars, and diplomats.[257] Like their European counterparts, American tourists returned with souvenirs and aesthetic impressions that some then incorporated into their homes to commemorate such trips.[258] For much of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, portable objects were easily extracted by travelers to the Middle East. It wouldn't be until the 1890s that legal frameworks to regulate the acquisition, removal, and trade in such objects became effective.[259] Perhaps the most extensive and well preserved example from this period is the artist Frederic Edwin Church's (1826-1900)

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[255] "The escalating popularity of artworks from the Islamic world on the international collectors' market from the later 19th century onwards also pushed prices up to the point where sophisticated faking and wholesale forgery became financially rewarding." Margaret S. Graves, "Fracture, Facture and the Collecting of Islamic Art," in *Faking, Forging, Counterfeiting Discredited Practices at the Margins of Mimesis*, 1st ed., Edition Kulturwissenschaft 128 (Bielefeld : transcript Verlag, 2018), 91-92.
[256] Gruber, "Islamic Architecture on the Move," 21; Volait, *Antique Dealing*, 3.
[257] Lester I. Vogel, *To See A Promised Land: Americans and the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (Penn State Press, 2010), 36, 42.
[258] Corrigan, "Turcoman Portieres," 4.
[259] Volait, *Antique Dealing*, 2. Zainab Bahrani, Zeynep Çelik Alexander, and Edhem Eldem, *Scramble for the Past: A Story of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire, 1753-1914* (Istanbul: SALT, 2011), 3,6.

home and studio, Olana, begun in 1870 near Hudson, New York. Olana houses an extensive collection of objects acquired during Church and his wife Charlotte's travels in the Middle East and India staged alongside the artist's painted impressions of the landscapes they observed. The home creates an immersive orientalist environment within, while the windows and terraces frame the surrounding countryside, including the picturesque Hudson River, resembling the Middle Eastern landscapes depicted in Church's paintings (Figures 2.25-2.27).[260] Olana is a particularly compelling example of how Islamic and Islamicate objects, integrated into American interiors and architectural design, shape not only domestic space, but also frame the surrounding landscape.

Americans who did not travel themselves could still draw inspiration and acquire objects for immersive orientalist interiors through other means. The artist William Merrit Chase (1849-1916), for example, is not known to have travelled to North Africa or the Middle East. He did, however, travel extensively in Europe and move in the same circles as artists who did, such as Church and John Singer Sargent (1856-1925). Chase is known to have traveled to Paris where he might have visited the orientalist painter Jean-Léon Gérôme's studio (Figure 2.28). Chase is worth mentioning in relation to the cozy corner due to how he incorporated Islamic applied art and second-hand impressions of "Oriental" environments into his paintings and interiors.[261] A painting by Chase housed at the Brooklyn Museum, *The Moorish Warrior* (c. 1878) depicts a man inspecting his sword while seated cross-legged within a space that could easily be mistaken for a Turkish-style cozy corner. Seventeen years later, in 1895, a cozy corner appears in a photograph of Chase's New York Studio published in *Godley's Magazine* (Figures 2.29-2.30). As Penny Sparke notes, initial impulses of wealthy English and American women to construct

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[260] Julia B. Rosenbaum, "Outside In: Space, Light, and the Artful Interior at Frederic Church's Olana," *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 20, no. 2 (2021).

[261] There is no evidence that I could find that Chase spent time in Gérôme's studio, but given that his New York instructor Lemuel Wilmarth studied under Gérôme, it does not seem out of the question. Helene Barbara Weinberg, Doreen Bolger, and David Park Curry, *American Impressionism and Realism: The Painting of Modern Life, 1885-1915* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1994), 349. Linda Toth Graham's dissertation explores Chase's studio in depth and the way that the decoration and design of the studio influenced his painting, including *The Moorish Warrior*. She has a fascinating interpretation of Chase's studio as both a therapeutic and commercial realm. Linda Toth Graham, "Therapy, Commodities, and the Decorated Studio: Images of the Studio of William Merritt Chase" (Ph.D., United States -- California, University of California, Berkeley, 1996), 211. Graham cites Katharine Metcalf Roof when discussing how Chase acquired antiquities and other objects in Europe. See Katherine Metcalf Roof, *The Life and Art of William Merritt Chase* (New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1917), 47.

cozy corners in their homes had as much to do with trends amongst artists for decorating their studios as encounters with the East through travel or popular culture.[262]

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, it became increasingly common for non-aristocratic European and American women to travel to Cairo, Greece, Lebanon, Syria, and areas within what is today Turkey, and some published accounts of their experiences. As discussed in the previous chapter, travel writing by women who claimed to have accessed domestic spaces, especially harems, were especially popular and shaped Euro-American readers' perceptions of Middle Eastern interiors' relationship to gendered space.[263] With the expansion of organized tourism following the Tanzimat reforms (1839–1876), so-called "harem tourism" emerged as a marketable attraction in cities such as Istanbul and Cairo. This tourist niche was aimed exclusively at the growing demographic of women travelers. Travel companies like Thomas Cook & Sons (and their American equivalents) offered guided itineraries that included staged visits to women's quarters or audience receptions with upper-class Ottoman women.[264]

Annie Jane Harvey, writing in 1871, described the high demand for access to the "best harems," noting that such visits were often choreographed for tourists' expectations.[265] While male tourists were generally barred from domestic interiors and restricted to public and religious spaces such as mosques and bathhouses, women travel writers frequently boasted of privileged access to the private world of Eastern women, however mediated or performative those encounters may have been. These encounters, regardless of their authenticity, gave some European and American women a sense of familiarity with the domestic customs of Muslim households. As the author of *Artistic Home Furnishings* put it, the popularity of cozy corners in the late nineteenth century stemmed from the feeling that "we have become sufficiently well acquainted with these neighbors and feel at liberty to borrow from them."[266] However confusing

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[262] Chase was known as a tastemaker and his New York studio was famous. Sparke, "Paradise in the Parlor," 206-207.
[263] Lewis and Micklewright, *Gender, Modernity and Liberty*, 4.
[264] "Cook's Tours to Algeria and Italy," *Cook's Excursionist and Tourist Advertiser*, February 15, 1875.
[265] Lewis and Micklewright, *Gender, Modernity and Liberty*, 9.
[266] Julia Darrow Cowles, *Artistic Home Furnishing for People of Moderate Means* (New York: F.M. Lupton, 1898), 155. Cited in Kristin L. Hoganson, *Consumers' Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865-1920* (University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 24.

their designation as "neighbors," this comment suggests some kind of affinity that American women might have felt with Muslim women and/or their domestic spaces.

Encounters with the Harem Image within the United States: Festivals and Fairs

For those without the means to travel outside of the United States, immersive experiences of the orient could be had at large scale exhibitions as well as smaller and traveling fairs throughout the country. Ephemeral pastiches of mosques, bazaars, and palaces were frequently staged at these events, granting mass-market access to a commodified version of what had once been a more exclusive orientalist fantasy.[267] Timothy Mitchell describes orientalist exhibitions at international world's fairs as part of Europeans' effort to set up the world as if it were a series of pictures. He shows how the world exhibitions of the second half of the nineteenth century were not isolated or artificial representations of the outside world, but rather infiltrated everyday life to such an extent that the world beyond the exhibition gates came to resemble the exhibition itself. This aesthetic organization stretched beyond the fairs to shape architecture, fashion, and commodity culture. The cozy corner is one such instance of this infiltration.[268]

Beginning with the Exposition Universelle of 1867 in Paris, representation of Islamic cultures were popular attractions at most world's fairs. The 1889 iteration of the Paris fair famously included a "Ru du Caire" where visitors were immersed in the experience of window shopping and eating at street cafes in the city (Figure 2.31).[269] Representations of Egypt proved popular, and similar immersive street stagings would continue to attract large crowds at subsequent international events. The first fair in the U.S. to have areas of the Middle East represented was the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. This was followed by the World's Columbian Exhibition of 1893 in Chicago, the 1904 fair in St. Louis, and many smaller, local exhibitions such as one in New York City in 1893 and Buffalo in 1901.

While often framed as exotic fantasy, these displays were not purely Western fabrications. Syrian merchants, in particular, recognized the commercial opportunity of running such concessions:

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[267] Mitchell, "Orientalism and the Exhibitionary Order," 442–60.
[268] Mitchell, "Orientalism and the Exhibitionary Order," 442–60; Mitchell is drawing from Martin Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology, and Other Essays* (New York: Garland Pub., 1977).
[269] Vernoit, "Islamic Art in the West," 1180.

> Although Syrian businessmen had been marketing Orientalism since their first contacts with Americans [in Syria and neighboring areas], the Middle Eastern components of the nineteenth-century fairs spectacularly demonstrated to Syrian businessmen that the market for Orientalism was huge and at the same time fueled that market among the American public.[270]

Rather than functioning solely as top-down projections of Western fantasy, these environments emerged through uneven but reciprocal processes of cultural staging, in which Middle Eastern actors participated in constructing the images they marketed to Western publics. Large-scale, international exhibitions, and specifically the reproduction of Islamic architectures within them, as Zeynep Çelik has shown, had enormous impact on art and design in Europe and the United States.[271] In the last half of the nineteenth century, thanks to such festivals and fairs, more Americans than ever before came into contact with commercialized versions of Tunisian, Egyptian, Turkish, and Indian cultures, among others. The guarantee that such displays would attract large numbers of visitors, many of whom would spend money on experiences and souvenirs, made orientalist environments a staple of the fair's public spectacle.

By the 1890s fairs in the United States had become increasingly marketed towards women as daytime leisure visitors and as key participants in the emerging mass consumer culture. Architectural fragments, decorative objects, furniture, clothing, plants, weaponry, and more, if not sold outright in staged Turkish bazaars, could be bought at low prices during the dismantling of exhibits at the end of fairs.[272] The *Ladies' Home Journal*, one of the fastest growing women's magazines in the late nineteenth century U.S., covered the opening of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. Books guiding consumers as to the wares available for purchase, such as Rossen and Kaduck's *Columbian World's Fair Collectibles*, appeared.[273] While there were many other attractions that did not relate to staging the orient at such fairs, doing so was extremely lucrative. The most popular attraction by far at the World's Columbian

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[270] Linda K. Jacobs, *Strangers in the West: The Syrian Colony of New York City, 1880-1900* (Kalimah Press, 2019), 138-139.
[271] Çelik, *Displaying the Orient,* 2-5.
[272] Sparke, "Paradise in the Parlor," 208. In the last days of the Philadelphia fair of 1876 "Everything in the court was for sale." Jacobs, *Strangers in the West*, 140. "Turks, Moors, Algerines, and Syrians, genuine and bogus, were glad to accept one half of the prices they demanded for their trumpery and trinkets." in "Closing the Exhibition," *New-York Tribune*, November 18, 1876; Hoganson, *Consumer's Imperium*, 23.
[273] Carrigan, "Turcoman Portieres," 11.

Exposition was the Street in Cairo exhibit. The Street in Cairo saw "more than two and a half million visitors in less than six months." At its most visited period this one exhibition brought in around $2000 a day.[274]

Although, on the one hand, the organization of world's fairs officially promoted higher ideals about nation, industry, and culture, Walter Benjamin famously described them as "places of pilgrimage to the commodity fetish."[275] As spaces where "industrials, architects, artists and amateurs" converged,[276] the Chicago 1893 fair could contain both an official Ottoman Building that aimed at education, presenting a modernizing society with traditions in technical handicraft, steps away from whirling dervishes and belly dancing harem women at the Midway Plaisance.[277] The Horticulture Hall at the 1876 Philadelphia exhibition displayed a reproduction of the Damascus Gate, a layered archeological site reflecting centuries of cultural transformation in Jerusalem's old city, alongside performances of a muezzin sounding his call to prayer, a man grinding grain, whirling dervishes, and a harem scene. This duality of educational exhibits alongside entertaining attractions that underscored popular stereotypes was inherent to the workings of world's fairs. Such arrangements exemplified how the fairs' educational, scientific, and patriotic image were ultimately sustained by underlying commercial interests.[278]

Along with the educational and commercial aspects of the fair, it was also an important political space. One under-examined aspect of world's fair scholarship is the series of large international congresses on women's rights that regularly took place alongside the exhibitions. These gatherings revealed tensions between competing representations of womanhood within and outside of the fairs. Beginning with the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, official fairgrounds included designated women's pavilions. These were spaces that gave politically active women a platform to promote reform causes and foster international networks of solidarity

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[274] Jacobs, *Strangers in the West*, 149-151.
[275] Benjamin, "Paris, The Capital of the Nineteenth Century," 7.
[276] Giese, Volait, and Braga, *À l'orientale*, 10.
[277] Çelik, *Displaying the Orient*, 108-109; Carrigan, "Turcoman Portieres" 14. Jacobs mentions how many of the female performers within the oriental exhibitions at the fair were not what they appeared to be. She writes that the Persian Palace initially had "disappointing attendance" but then "the managers hit on the idea of importing French women from the Moulin Rouge to perform the can-can under the guise of Oriental entertainment." Jacobs, *Strangers in the West*, 146.
[278] Jacobs, *Strangers in the West,* 139, 141. Jacobs cites "Bazaar of the Nations," *Washington Review and Examiner* (Washington, PA) April 14, 1875.

(Figures 2.32-2.33).[279] Women's pavilions were among the first attempts to create an architectural language aligned with women's political activism. French feminists at the 1878 Exposition Universelle in Paris were the first to organize an International Congress for the Rights of Women alongside the fair to take place in the Women's Pavilion. Women involved in the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago expanded this model, organizing the "World's Congress of Representative Women," which featured 76 sessions with over 500 speakers, 126 women's organizations, and approximately 150,000 attendees.[280]

Yet these reformist and internationalist visions of white womanhood existed alongside, and were seen to be undermined by, more racialized representations of exotic or indigenous women. These portrayals, typically staged in the unofficial or entertainment zones of large fairs, reinforced colonial hierarchies and cast women of color as objects of spectacle rather than political subjects. An article for *The Sun*, on the Midway Plaisance at the Chicago 1893 fair, for example, describes a Moorish Palace in which visitors could take in a "harem decorated with antique oriental tapestries and rugs," as well as wax figures depicting the sultan surrounded by his "favorites."[281] The Midway was also populated with live villagers and dancers, sometimes brought from abroad to work at the fair or locals dressed in costume. Within the Turkish bazaar and Street in Cairo exhibits, visitors could watch the performances of belly dancers, who attracted a large and curious audience (Figure 2.34).[282]

The Board of Lady Managers working in the Women's Pavilion at the Chicago fair were scandalized by the belly dancing show. Some published opinions in local papers demanding that

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[279] "Perhaps most significantly feminists recognized the potential world's fairs offered to weave transnational connections and build international support for their claims of equality." Myriam Boussahba-Bravard and Rebecca Rogers, "Introduction: Positioning Women in the World's Fairs, 1876-1937," in *Women in International and Universal Exhibitions, 1876-1937* (New York, NY : Routledge, 2018), 3.

280 Kristy Maddux "Without Touching Upon Suffrage: Gender and Economic Citizenship at the World's Columbian Exposition" *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 47, no. 2 (March 15, 2017): 105; the Women's Building at the Chicago 1893 Fair was designed by the first female graduate of MIT, Sophia Hayden. Maria Elena Buszek, *Pin Up Grrrls: Feminism, Sexuality, Popular Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 72-74.

[281] "Midway Plaisance: Shows and Shops of All Nations at the World's Fair," *The Sun* (New York), June 23, 1893.

[282] Brandon argues alternatively that the belly "Dancers utilized Islamic mysticism and female power in Islam to their advantage, controlling colonizers in ways that extended into the public sphere and altering how Americans thought about sex and the body." Brandon, "Scheherazade at Ground Zero," 40.

the daily dance demonstrations stop for fear of undermining the efforts of the Women's Congress.[283] Such episodes highlight how American women's experiences of commercialized harem spaces were inherently conflictual in nature, calling attention to how women constructing cozy corners simultaneously challenged and participated in the gendered visual regimes that defined public and private space. Such international and domestic fairs presented the world not only as a series of digestible images, but as immersive, navigable environments. In this context, the harem was offered as a spatial commodity: a visual and physical experience that could be consumed, remembered, and later reassembled if one possessed the adequate materials.

Transporting the Orient to the American Home

In addition to the World's Fairs of the nineteenth century, smaller, national and regional exhibitions and festivals in cities including Atlanta, Georgia, Louisville, Kentucky, Antwerp, Ohio, and Atlantic City, New Jersey served as platforms for a wide swatch of Americans to encounter foreign cultures.[284] Permanent entertainment spaces such as Coney Island could also feature so-called side show exhibits where ticket holders gained access to orientalized spaces at a low price (Figures 2.35-2.37). These were also spaces in which American culture was encountered by foreign merchants. Jacobs notes that Syrian merchants including David A. Fuleihan, Yousef Kanawati, Ibrahim el Rayyes, George and Twefiz Wahsh, Ameen Moatelany, Selah Mousur, John Abd-el-Nour, Fares Ferzan, E.F. Kettaneh, and Abraham Samaha, just to name a few, were present at world's fairs as well as smaller, spin-off festivals. They were also known to travel across the United States, between festivals and fairs, selling their wares. These traveling salesmen generated a market in the United States for goods such as "tinted silks and embroidered muslins, jeweled weapons, brass and copper lamps, warm-hued rugs and silver filigree."[285] Some specialty stores such as Vantines or the Oriental Importing Company also opened in larger cities.[286] Capitalizing on this consumer craze in the decades surrounding 1900,

[283] Brandon, "Scheherazade at Ground Zero," 41; "Mrs. Palmer Misrepresented: She Did Not See the Midway Dance at the World's Fair," *New York Times*, December 6, 1893; "Midway Dancers Guilty and Fined: Police, Justices McMahon, Koch and Divver Brand the Danse Du Ventre as Sinful," *New York Herald*, December 7, 1893; Buszek, *Pin Up Grrrls*, 72-77.
[284] Giese, Volait, and Braga, *À l'orientale*, 10.
[285] Jacobs, *Strangers in the West,* 140, 158.
[286] Hoganson, *Consumer's Imperium*, 23.

buyers who found merchants they liked or could trust would continue ordering from them or sought similar, but cheaper objects from department stores.

Even those who did not live in big cities, have access to fairs, traveling salesmen, or specialty stores, by the end of the century, could simply order imported and mass produced items alike by mail. After the end of the American Civil War, ocean shipping began to steadily increase and, "although domestic manufacturers supplied the majority of household goods, an unprecedented amount of imports entered the country."[287] This included everything from carpets to furniture and smaller objects including baskets, silver, textiles, and more. An astounding variety of objects marketed as "Oriental" can be found in the mail order catalogs of Sears Roebuck, Bloomingdale's, Montgomery Ward, Wanamaker's, and Marshall Fields during these decades.[288]

Along with fairs and festivals, department stores are integral to understanding how the collection of objects that made up the cozy corner came to be assembled into a commodified spatial image. "In the language of W.F. Hotchkin, an advertising manager at John Wanamaker's, store decorators "transfigured" and "transposed" the stores as well as the goods into "pictures" to impress the customers."[289] Department stores also organized their own street fairs and festivals, although the store itself provided access to similar experiences on an everyday basis. As Leach describes in reference to department store displays, "The *Thousand and One Nights* served as a nearly inexhaustible resource for fanciful display ideas."[290] Wanamaker's New York, for example, transformed the store's rotunda into a spectacle of the *Tales*, embedded in which were thematically fitting commodities that could be purchased and taken home.[291] The innovative displays of early department stores staged commodities in a way that transformed individual objects into something theatrical. The primary focus of such staging was "stimulating the

[287] Hoganson, *Consumer's Imperium*, 22.
[288] Hoganson, *Consumer's Imperium*, 23.
[289] William R. Leach, "Transformations in a Culture of Consumption: Women and Department Stores, 1890-1925," *The Journal of American History* 71, no. 2 (1984): 322.
[290] Leach, "Transformations," 322.
[291] This was in May 1913, so a bit later than the period discussed here. Leach, "Transformations," 322.

willingness to buy" while consumers' observing, searching, and buying became a type of performance.[292]

The popularity of exotic decor in the late nineteenth century American home, especially amongst particularly trend attuned women was not only about demonstrating taste, but was influenced by the historical and social meanings attached to displaying Islamic art in Europe and the United States. A Turkish-style corner or entire themed room done in the Moorish style suggested that the owner had inherited objects, traveled abroad, knew someone who had, or was well-read and cosmopolitan. A visitor might see patterned, draped textiles, a brass incense burner, or a tasseled cushion and read them not only as aesthetic choices, but as markers of cultural distinction. Islamic and Islamicate interior decor functioned as visual markers of education, cultural fluency, and, especially, wealth. Before mass production and global trade dramatically increased access to foreign goods, orientalist decor signaled a privileged proximity to the "East." But by the 1890s,

> American consumers had access to products produced around the world, ranging from Argentine lamp shade covers to Aztec relics, Belgian linen, Bohemian Brazilian hammocks, German cooking ware, Hungarian pitchers, Javanese batiks, Norwegian pottery, Puerto Rican drawn work, Singapore malacca and Zulu baskets.[293]

The line between elite and mass-market cosmopolitanism began to blur. The cozy corner trend appeared during these decades of transition (before wealthier consumers would largely move on from exotic decor) and allowed women to participate in this performance of global knowledge and taste, whether or not their objects were rare, imported, catalog-ordered imitations, or homemade. In this sense, the corner became a manageable and flexible site of display and self-fashioning.

As Appadurai explains, luxury goods operate within regimes of value that transform material things into signs of prestige and power, not only reflecting the owner's wealth and hierarchy, but actively producing and sustaining it. Display plays an important role in this process. The value of acquired objects is less tied to any intrinsic qualities than to the social context of display: who sees them, who knows about them, and who recognizes their

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[292] Rudi Laermans, "Learning to Consume: Early Department Stores and the Shaping of the Modern Consumer Culture (1860-1914)," *Theory, Culture & Society* 10, no. 4 (1993): 79–102, 91.
[293] Hoganson, *Consumer's Imperium*, 22-23.

significance.[294] The cozy corner, and late nineteenth-century Islamicate decor in the American home more generally, reconfigured earlier practices of collection and display, allowing an ever broadening consumer base to lay claim to cosmopolitan sophistication and cultural capital within localized social circles. Importantly, the vast majority of these new consumers were women.[295] With the increasing availability of copies and affordable, imported furnishings, the connotations of displaying Islamic and Islamicate objects at home shifted considerably. The cozy corner condensed centuries of global exchange and elite collecting into a finite, feminized space, where performances of taste, cultural fluency, and gendered social power both echoed and reimagined relationships between the United States and an imagined orient, but also gender and domestic space.

Gender Negotiations: The Cozy Corner as Spatial Image of the Harem

The previous section situates the Turkish-style cozy corner within late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century consumer culture, demonstrating its role as popular architecture within an expanding mass market for Islamic and Islamicate goods. This section turns to the cozy corner as a gendered space in which leisure, self-presentation and tensions between independence and containment were negotiated. While not the only site in a turn-of-the-century bourgeois or middle-class home where such negotiations occurred, the cozy corner is a particularly revealing one, as its evocation of the harem's spatial image created an "other space" in which subtle subversions of domestic norms could take place under the guise of exotic fantasy. Especially given its distinctly feminine connotations, the cozy corner offers a particularly vivid case for examining how the commodified spatial image of the harem was mobilized to occasionally destabilize gendered hierarchies.

The spatial image created by the cozy corner is understood here not as a passive backdrop, but as an active element in the production of social relations, specifically gendered ones.[296] In the American domestic interior, this encompasses the dynamics of visibility and

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[294] Appadurai, *The Social Life of Things*, 6-9.
[295] Hoganson, *Consumer's Imperium*, 8.
[296] Following Doreen Massey, space is "the sphere of the possibility of the existence of multiplicity… in which distinct trajectories coexist" and is "always under construction." Such multiplicity is shaped by what she terms the "power-geometry of space-time," the unequal ways in which different social groups and individuals are positioned in relation to the flows and interconnections of people, goods, and ideas. Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 3, 149.

comportment that determined who could occupy particular spaces and how. As John Potvin observes in his study of Victorian Turkish baths, orientalist interiors could offer a socially sanctioned arena for forms of self-presentation, bodily practice, and interaction that might have been restricted in more normative environments.[297] The cozy corner, I argue, functioned in a similar way, though here the "other space" was not distanced from the everyday and importantly not restricted to men. It was folded into the domestic everyday.

Turkish corners embody intriguing historical and aesthetic paradoxes. Though the space is often meant to connote an idea of the orient, objects within are reminiscent of various geographic areas and stem from traditions of making spanning centuries. As described in "The Cosey Corner" poem, Turkish pipes, unidentified masks, and Indian curtains could be placed together within the typical American parlor with their organization determined by decorators' knowledge of tasteful display. This knowledge was disconnected from objects' origins or intended functions. The eclectic arrangement can be productively interpreted as a heterotopia or 'other space (*espace autres*).' The term stems from a 1967 lecture in which Michel Foucault states that heterotopias are 'somewhat like counter-sites' and are

> capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible [....] the heterotopia begins to function at full capacity when men arrive at a sort of absolute break with their traditional time [...] On the one hand they perform the task of creating a space of illusion that reveals how all of real space is more illusory, all the locations within which life are fragmented. On the other, they have the function of forming another place, as perfect, meticulous, and well-arranged as ours is disordered, ill-conceived and in a sketch state.[298]

According to Foucault, heterotopias manifest initially as spaces of crisis, arising at times of societal transformation, before becoming spaces of deviation in which power dynamics and social hierarchies are brought into tension. They reveal insights into preexisting knowledge by exposing its structure or arrangement, thereby presenting it for (re-)examination. Additionally, they reveal formerly implicit concepts and create new associations through rearranging objects (knowledge) in space.[299] Foucault explicitly names psychiatric hospitals, prisons, retirement

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[297] John Potvin, *Orientalist Interiors*.
[298] Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces (1967)', in *Heterotopia and the City: Public Space in a Postcivil Society*, ed. Michiel Dehaene and Lieven De Cauter (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 13–30.
[299] Robert J. Topinka, 'Foucault, Borges, Heterotopia: Producing Knowledge in Other Spaces', *Foucault Studies* 9, no. 9 (September 2010): 64-–66.

homes, museums, and libraries as examples of heterotopias, but excludes middle-class homes due to their familiarity and reinforcement of societal norms. Cozy corners add complexity to heterotopia by consciously inserting 'other spaces' into the domestic everyday. They function as heterotopias through fusing two apparently incommensurable spaces, inserting the orient into the American parlor. In what follows, interpreting cozy corners as heterotopic space will aid in our understanding of the trend as making visible gendered space within the home.

Conspicuous Spaces

A survey of *The Decorator and Furnisher* reveals a recurring concern with corners as problematic or underutilized zones within the American home. Articles propose a range of solutions for what to do with them such as creating a corner library or hanging something brightly colored in the space, but a particularly effective solution is a cozy corner. In an article on this topic by Carrie May Ashton from 1891 she writes, "In order to have a room cosey and homelike the corners should be utilized."[300] A similar piece from 1896 argues for the importance of removing "the hard, angular lines of a reception-room, parlor or drawing room,"[301] suggesting that home interiors require softening interventions. Whether through art cabinets, improvised divans, or fake fireplaces, such prescriptions reflect a broader anxiety about emptiness and spatial inefficiency in domestic interiors. Edward Lee Young notes that when corners are "treated" correctly they can ease discomfort, attracting "one with the solace of cosey comfort."[302] Other underutilized spaces such as alcoves and niches on second floor landings, bay windows, and spaces underneath stairs are also "easily and simply constructed" as "oriental corners."[303]

Alongside their decorative appeal, cozy corners were praised for their practicality. The low divan, for example, could conceal storage space for everything from reading material to children's toys, towels, or sewing supplies. Articles also describe them as adaptable sites within the home: a "sheltered space to sit and read," a setting for entertaining guests, and a place for homemakers to experiment with and display their decorative taste. They could also serve as

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[300] Carrie May Ashton, "Interior Decoration," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 18, no. 6 (1891): 227.
[301] "An Oriental Cosey Corner," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 28, no. 2 (1896): 47–47.
[302] Edward Lee Young, "The Corners of a Room," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 19, no. 3 (1891): 89–92; "The Cosey Corner," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 27, no. 6 (1896): 182–182.
[303] "Design for an Octagonal Recess" *The Decorator and Furnisher* 18, no. 6 (1891): 226–27; Carrie May Ashton, "Cosey Corners," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 19, no. 1 (1891): 29–30.

retreats for moments of privacy when domestic demands became overwhelming.[304] These interventions responded not only to a perceived need for spatial and organizational efficiency, they rendered overlooked or hidden spaces conspicuous, recasting functional voids as sites of sensory richness and imaginative projection.

Calling attention to peripheral domestic spaces, the visual contrast created by a Turkish cozy corner made them particularly striking. A photograph of a "Turkish Corner" in the upper stairwell or hall of Harrison Gray Otis' Los Angeles home from 1897 captures this dissonance well (Figure 2.9).[305] The corner, occupying the center of the image, is framed by spatial and symbolic disjunctions: to the left, an American flag hangs loosely over the threshold of a darkened room; to the right, a brightly lit, spare bedroom recedes into the background. Another example, most likely in a parlor, shows a mass of overstuffed pillows spilling out of a tented-space (Figure 2.38). A dark fabric, hung simply from a curtain rod to disguise the right angle of the wall, delineates the space from the surrounding room. The cluttered corner interrupts the equally busy, ornamental surfaces of wall and floor.

These two examples appear as strange fragments from a distant and vague elsewhere that have begun encroaching on the familiar rhythms of the surrounding domestic interior. Their appeal lay precisely in this incongruity: by juxtaposing supposedly incompatible visual languages, cozy corners invited contemplation of otherwise unremarkable spaces. They reframe marginal areas of the home not only as decorative features but as spaces that interrupt patterns of seeing, moving, and interacting in the home. In this sense, their spatial and symbolic disjunctions echo heterotopia's capacity to unsettle normative arrangements, drawing attention to the construction of domestic order through comparison and suggesting possibilities for reimagination.

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[304] Bunce, "Cosey Nooks and Corners," 134-135; "Editorials," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 28, no. 1 (1896): 3–4; Ashton, "Cosey Corners," 29-30.

[305] Harrison Gray Otis was the president and general manager of the *Los Angeles Times.* His eclectic home, known as 'The Bivouac', was donated after the death of his wife in 1916 to the city of Los Angeles to be used for the Otis Art Institute. The building was demolished in the mid-1950s. "An eclectic architectural specimen, with dominant Mission Revival features, such as an arched facade and tile roof, blended with Greek revival elements, like the front portico and its columns, pediments and cornice work." Paul R. Spitzzeri, "No Place Like Home: Harrison Gray Otis' 'The Bivouac,' Los Angeles, ca. 1900," *The Homestead Blog*, November 3, 2018, https://homesteadmuseum.blog/2018/11/03/no-place-like-home-harrison-gray-otis-the-bivouac-los-angeles-ca-1900/.

Containing Desire in the Parlor

Mrs. Bunce, in her description of "Two Cosey Corners for August," emphasizes their curative value as retreats from the demands of life.[306] Yet their typical location in the parlor or sitting-room meant that both the corner itself as well as the bodies lounging within it were, in a sense, on display. Nineteenth-century American parlors were formal spaces, designed primarily to stage social encounters. As such, the cozy corner's promise of privacy was always mediated by the parlor's role as a room that was carefully staged. The corner's reference to the harem, a spatial image with layered associations, introduced an undercurrent of ambiguous yet provocative allure to the parlor. Its inclusion balanced suggestions of worldliness, eroticism, and displays of self-possession.

Initially, parlors were exclusively found in wealthy homes or commercial spaces that the wealthy would frequent such as hotels, steamships, and train cars. By the second half of the nineteenth century, parlors were increasingly integrated into middle-class homes.[307] As spaces meant for hosting guests, parlors "became a kind of stage upon which the family presented itself for visitors."[308] Katherine Grier describes the tensions decorators navigated in staging the parlor to represent both the ideal, Christian, American home alongside notions of cosmopolitanism and worldliness: "consumers balanced their budgets and dreams to create a representation of their desired public facade in a private room."[309] An externally facing private space, the parlor was a site where the arrangement of furniture, designed objects, artwork, and textiles were composed into readable images, an interior facade that functioned as a spatial image of the family. It was in the parlor that guests encountered a family's taste, morality, and social standing. The image of the family presented by the parlor was necessarily gendered in that the responsibility for achieving this projection was assigned to the woman of the house. Her choice of style, sense of

[306] Bunce, "Cosey Nooks and Corners," 134-135.
[307] Grier, *Culture and Comfort*, 23, 64.
[308] Çevik, "American Style or Turkish Chair," 370-371. Grier, *Culture and Comfort*, 2.
[309] Grier, *Culture and Comfort*, viii.

cleanliness, moral discipline, and hospitality were read as the family's own.[310] In effect, the parlor presented the family as seen through the homemaker.

In *The Art of Decoration* (1881), Mary Haweis explains to those interested in home decoration that "A room is like a picture; it must be composed with equal skill and forethought" and that to "obtain a harmonious whole, you must not omit the main element — yourself."[311] An anonymous photograph of a woman reclining in a parlor in Wakefield, Massachusetts ca. 1900 captures this interplay between personal presence and an attention to decorative arrangement in a respectable middle-class interior (Figure 2.39). The informal composition, natural lighting, visible cords supporting a gas or electric light, and modest clutter suggest that the photograph was likely taken not by a professional, but by the sitter or a family member after the introduction of Kodak's portable cameras. The Kodak N. 1 camera, equipped with 100 exposures and introduced in 1888, offered middle-class consumers unprecedented ease and affordability in creating photographs, moving the practice beyond the professional studio and into the realm of personal life and informal snapshots. By the turn of the century, such amateur photographs of domestic interiors had become increasingly common. What remains offers a visual record of how middle-class families staged and inhabited their parlors. Kodak advertisements from the 1890s onward targeted women as the camera's primary consumers, positioning photography as both a leisure pursuit and a means of enhancing women's roles as keepers of the home's visual record (Figures 2.40-2.41).[312] Haweis's dictum that a room should integrate "yourself" thus found new visual expression, as Kodak's portable cameras allowed middle-class women to inscribe their own presence directly into the pictorial frame of their parlor.

The Wakefield photograph, although unclear whether it was intended as a portrait, casual snapshot, or simply a record of a furnished room, can nevertheless be read as an act of self-presentation. It records a parlor furnished with various, if stiff, seating possibilities, a piano, and tastefully framed artworks arranged symmetrically around the large windows and sofa. A woman

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[310] Gwendolyn Wright, *Moralism and the Model Home: Domestic Architecture and Cultural Conflict in Chicago, 1873-1913* (University of Chicago Press, 1980); For more on the tensions between how women influenced the architecture of the home and were also seen to be dangerous influences on that same space around 1900 see Annmarie Adams, *Architecture in the Family Way: Doctors, Houses, and Women, 1870-1900* (McGill-Queen's Press - MQUP, 2001).
[311] Mary Eliza Haweis, *The Art of Decoration* (Repressed Publishing LLC, 2012) 125.
[312] Nancy Martha West, *Kodak and the Lens of Nostalgia* (University of Virginia Press, 2000).

reclines, bathed in soft light, wearing a neatly tailored, high-neck dress; her posture, although supposedly asleep, remains composed and contained. The room is sparse, but tasteful. Haweis reminds readers that "the placing of objects betrays the taste…far more than the quantity of precious things" and that a room serves as "an accessory and support to beings who move and change," its walls forming "a background…to faces" as much as to furniture.[313] The photograph reflects this ideal, presenting both room and occupant as aligned in a projection of propriety and middle-class social standing.

Photographic portraits of women in Turkish-style cozy corners, similarly to the Wakefield image, feature a lone, reclining figure, yet they introduce a different set of material and symbolic cues. Unlike the candid, possibly incidental quality of the Wakefield photograph, cozy corner photographs that contain figures are clearly staged as formal portraits, with the sitter's pose, surroundings and attire carefully composed for the camera. In cozy corner portraits, sitters typically recline into a mass of pillows and gaze languidly away from the camera (Figures 2.3-2.5). While some compositions allow a glimpse of the surrounding parlor, many obscure their exact location, creating the impression that the sitter is fully immersed within an orientalized atmosphere. Some corners are simple, consisting only of a low seat topped with pillows that rest against the wall, while others are more elaborate, overflowing into the surrounding space, with hanging fabric and tabouret tables topped with palm plants delineating the corner's boundaries.

A number of these photographs survive, some preserved in institutional, but more often family archives and others shared on flea-market enthusiasts' blogs. The majority feature anonymous sitters, though a few depict well-known personalities. In an image of the French actress Sarah Bernhardt in a cozy corner, she meets the viewer's gaze with confidence and defiance (Figure 2.42). An image of the actress turned interior decorator Elsie de Wolfe shows her sinking into an excess of cushions that spill off of the sofa and onto the floor (Figure 2.5).

It is possible that anonymous sitters sought to emulate the aura of famous and successful women photographed within cozy corners. These compositions also recall the seventeenth-century paintings previously discussed in which aristocratic women portrayed themselves as

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[313] Haweis, *The Art of Decoration,* 10, 29, 31, 214.

sultanas. In these paintings, aristocratic women claimed the trappings of the harem as symbols of status and authority (Figures 2.20-2.24). It is unclear how familiar nineteenth-century American women might have been with this earlier French aristocratic imagery. More likely, the late nineteenth century-visual repertoire of the harem they knew was shaped by a combination of popular and artistic sources. Novels, theater, commercial interiors, advertisements for products like tobacco, and fine art alike tended to portray the harem as a setting of mystery, eroticism, and containment.[314] In this context, photographic cozy corner portraits operate within a double register: they draw on precedents of self-fashioning while also invoking a visual trope that sexualized and objectified the female body.

Images of reclining female figures were common in nineteenth century European and American painting, and the poses in cozy corner portraits resonate with this broader visual repertoire. They invite comparison particularly with the figure of the "odalisque" found often in orientalist painting, as discussed in Chapter 1. Holly Edwards points to American painter Frederick Bridgman's *Siesta* (1878) as important for understanding how this figure differed in terms of American orientalism vis a vis European versions. In comparison to highly sexualized depictions popular in Europe, such as Ingres's *Odalisque with Slave* (1839), Bridgman's figures are always fully clothed (Figures 2.43-2.44).[315] In *Siesta,* a young woman naps on a low sofa in an outdoor area protected by dense palms. She sleeps innocently with her arm lifted lazily overhead, discreetly signaling that she is passively available. In this pose, Bridgman's odalisque embodies Laura Mulvey's 'sex goddess' archetype, akin to those in classic Hollywood cinema, enticing yet restrained.[316] The young woman in *Siesta* exudes an innocence that is subtly but inherently erotic, embodying modesty alongside accessibility. As such, even when American artists softened the European odalisque through moral propriety and sentimental restraint, they retained an underlying fantasy of masculine dominance. This dynamic also informs cozy corner portraits.

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[314] Of course with important exceptions already discussed by Billie Melman, Mary Roberts, and Reina Lewis. For more on these stereotypical versions of the harem woman in popular culture see Grotenhuis, "Smoking Hot"; Ciarlo, *Advertising Empire*; Edwards, *Noble Dreams*.
[315] Edwards, "A Million and One Nights," 33.
[316] Laura Mulvey, *Visual and Other Pleasures* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

The nuances of American orientalist portrayals of the harem and harem women also draw attention to how widely circulated images were adapted to, and reshaped by, the social norms and cultural geographies through which they moved. While elite paintings formed part of this visual repertoire, the imagery most likely encountered by many Americans was commercial and mass-produced, and some of it probably had explicitly erotic overtones. Malek Alloula describes how nineteenth-century French women sent and received postcards featuring photographs of women from North Africa. In these images the women depicted were understood by French viewers to occupy two roles: one of the imaginary harem woman and the other of the everyday prostitute. Alloula describes how these photographs were staged in studios by both North African and European photographers who hired local sex workers as models.[317] In such postcard images anonymous orientalized women are shown lounging, sometimes semi-clothed, smoking, and drinking coffee within staged environments (Figures 2.45-2.46).[318] While these photographs, known in the U.S. as "French postcards," would have not been circulated through regular mail, there is evidence that they were brought back as souvenirs by tourists and sold "under the table" to U.S. consumers.[319] Their compositional parallels to cozy corner portraits, and their place within a transnational distribution of commodified images of the harem, underscore the potential for subtle erotic associations to inflect even the most domesticated settings.[320]

Photographs of women posed in Turkish-themed nooks capture the incongruity between dress, posture, and behavioral expectations of American femininity at the turn-of-the-century and the languorous sensuality implied by the corner's orientalist style. In photographs with

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[317] Alloula, *Colonial Harem*, 18, 26.
[318] Alloula, *Colonial Harem*, 18; Corrigan, "Turcoman Portieres," 8-9.
[319] "While postcards were not an entirely new phenomenon in the 1890s, they did enormously expand a mass market culture based in communication. Roughly 140 billion postcards were sent worldwide between 1894 and 1919. By 1909, 800,000,000 postcards were sold in England alone each year." Particularly pornographic postcards were the most consumer medium for ponography in these decades due to their accessibility. Lisa Z. Sigel, "Filth in the Wrong People's Hands: Postcards and the Expansion of Pornography in Britain and the Atlantic World, 1880-1914," *Journal of Social History* 33, no. 4 (2000): 860-61.
[320] Corrigan makes this connection as well in her dissertation. Corrigan, "Turcoman Portieres," 10. Importantly, American women's staged self-representation within cozy corners adopts a commodified harem image that differs significantly from imperial Ottoman women's own commissioned portraits from around the same period. Mary Roberts, "Contested Terrains: Women Orientalists and the Colonial Harem," in *Orientalism's Interlocutors : Painting, Architecture, Photography*, ed. Jill Beaulieu, Objects/Histories (Duke University Press, 2002), 191-197.

anonymous sitters, women lounge in fashionable day attire that would have typically been worn outside the home (Figures 2.3-2.4). These dresses feature high collars, fitted bodices with cinched waists (most likely with a corset underneath), and ankle-length skirts. These would have been structured, heavy, and not particularly suited to physical relaxation.[321] Although pictured within a space coded for leisure, these women are wearing clothing designed with public viewing and social respectability in mind. The combination of restrictive clothing and the low, wide seating suggests an awkward fit, one that may have made relaxation difficult or even impractical. In one image, featuring a group of women having tea, this problem has been mitigated by placing high backed, wooden chairs in front of the corner's low divan (Figure 2.47). Adding standard Victorian furniture into an otherwise exotic scene allows those seated to occupy the space socially without compromising bodily decorum.[322]

In the images of Elsie de Wolfe and Sarah Bernhardt, the actresses wear noticeably different garments than their anonymous counterparts (Figures 2.5, 2.42). Much more in line with garments intended for private, at-home leisure, their dresses are loose, lightweight and made of pale fabric. Their sleeves and skirts are full length, but they are unstructured and both women clearly do not wear corsets. In the years around 1900 such dresses might have been worn in the afternoon or evening for receiving close friends or family at home. What these images reveal is that staging a portrait of oneself in a Turkish-style cozy corner might have carried different connotations depending on the sitter's social identity. For anonymous middle and upper-class women, having one's portrait made while reclining within a space reminiscent of harem imaginaries already bordered on the erotic or, at least towards what was "improper." Retaining full, formal day dress would have been a way to visually anchor the scene in respectability, even if the setting suggested sensuality. For well-known actresses, however, public image and celebrity already operated in a space where the display of the body, performance of leisure, and flirtation with exoticism were marketable assets. Wearing a loose at-home garment in a widely distributed photograph could amplify their public persona, allowing them to trade on glamour,

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[321] For more on Victorian corseted dress and expectations of women's comportment see: Çevik, "American Style or Turkish Chair," 375.

[322] For more on how the corset dictated women's posture and the expectations of comportment at the turn-of-the-century see Valerie Steele, *The Corset History: A Cultural History* (Yale University Press, 2001); Sarah Berry, "Mass Movement: Popular Culture and the End of the Corset," in *The Routledge Companion to Global Popular Culture* (Routledge, 2014).

intimacy, and theatricality without the same reputational risks that would face an "ordinary" or "respectable" woman.[323]

While the cozy corner invites ideas about escape, relaxation, and perhaps even an erotic intimacy (as per "The Cosey Corner" poem and mass-circulated, orientalist imagery just described), the women posing in these photographs remain constrained by the proprieties of posture and dress as the physical limits of a bounded space within the parlor. A Turkish corner was materially set apart, often framed by hanging textiles, drapery, or a tent-like canopy that marked it as a distinct zone within the parlor. This visual and spatial containment tempered the more provocative connotations of its orientalist references, transforming them into decoration that could be admired without destabilizing respectable norms. In this sense, the cozy corner operates as a kind of "heterotopia of crisis" in Foucault's terms: a contained and set-apart location for those in a moment of transition or instability.[324]

Feminist readings of domestic and visual culture push this idea further, noting that such enclosures could evoke the harem, a space widely imagined in American culture as erotic and imprisoning, yet also understood by some observers as female governed. Orientalist representations of women often rely on careful visual framing that renders cultural difference alluring while simultaneously containing it within socially acceptable bounds.[325] Doreen Massey's concept of space as the product of ongoing social relations complicates Foucault's model by showing how such enclosures are not fixed "other" places but are continually made and remade through gendered practices in the home, holding multiple, even contradictory meanings at once.[326] The corner's striking visual impact within the parlor thus drew attention to these tensions and invited contemplation. When compared to another common orientalist interior

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[323] Buszek, *Pin Up Grrrls*, 129.
[324] Foucault, '"Of Other Spaces'," 18. These are "privileged, or sacred, or forbidden spaces, reserved for individuals who are, in relation to society and the human environment in which they live, in a state of crisis"
[325] Pohl, *Women, Utopia, Space,* 131.
[326] Massey also explicitly critiques Edward Said's lack of discussion about gender in elaborating his concept of orientalism, writing that orientalism is part of a larger debate about space's relationship to place in which gender is necessarily a central aspect of this relationship: "with the radical polarization into two genders which is typically hegemonic in western societies today, and with the bundles of characteristics typically assigned to each." Doreen Massey, "Introduction," in *Space, Place and Gender* (Polity Press, 1994), 5-6.

of the nineteenth-century American home, the smoking room, the corner's promise of freedom appears far more circumscribed than its masculine counterpart.

Gendered Spatial Fantasies

This need to maintain appearances while enjoying a cozy corner, while purportedly a space uniquely suited to both solitary and social time, contrasts with the dynamics of the smoking room (also often done in an orientalist style and sometimes doubling as a game or hunting room). In a photograph of "Mr. Groves' Oriental Den" (Figure 2.48), every surface, including windows, has been covered with thick fabric, creating a dark and enveloping atmosphere. One can easily imagine that, once the door is closed and concealed by hanging fabric, the inhabitant would feel entirely removed from the rest of the household.[327] An "Oriental Room" designed by Eugene L. Isaacs for the owner of the Anheuser-Busch Brewing Company, offers another, more elaborate example (Figure 2.49).

An 1897 article describes the Isaacs room as evoking both a "sultan's palace" and a "fairyland." Located on the second floor of the St. Louis residence, the room featured layered oriental carpets, tabouret tables, ottomans, folding wooden chairs, and a conspicuous display of weaponry. The authenticity and provenance of Busch's objects are meticulously affirmed: Isaacs reportedly "spent several weeks in the East gathering up antique rugs, ornaments, and the like, and on several occasions sent as far as Constantinople for something."[328] Heavy curtains, patterned upholstery, and fifteen distinct light sources, including both incandescent bulbs and candle-shaped gas jets, heightened the atmospheric nature of the space. Used as a retreat for enjoying tobacco before or after hunting expeditions, the room's function was inseparable from its visual excess and performative masculinity. The elaborate display of exotic weaponry, ranging from antique firearms to decorative daggers, calls to mind a private trophy room, evoking imperial conquest and mastery over distant cultures. Persian shields, "an old Arab pistol," battle axes, swords, scabbards, as well as "a pair of leather cowboy trousers with a pistol and cartridge belt," collapses imaginaries of both the American frontier and the orient into a unified fantasy of adventure and conquest.[329] In this sense, Busch's smoking room did not

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[327] "'Oriental Den' of Mr. Charles Mullikin Groves, St. Louis, Mo. Designed and Decorated by The J. L. Isaacs Decorative Co., St. Louis, Mo," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 30, no. 2 (1897): 37–37.
[328]"A Beautiful Oriental Room," *The Decorator and Furnisher*, February 1897, 134.
[329] "A Beautiful Oriental Room," 134.

merely suggest exotic escape; it staged dominance through curated references to violence, turning a section of the home into a theater of colonial fantasy.

This convergence was not incidental. The late nineteenth century was a moment when U.S. expansionist ideology, rooted in the language of Manifest Destiny, was being reimagined to encompass overseas ambitions. This stemmed from the "closing" or completed expansion into the U.S. western frontier, a moment in the last decades of the century that was laden with anxieties about the perceived end of American opportunity, self-reliance, and national vitality.[330] Smoking rooms like Busch's link these dual geographies of conquest, the frontier and the orient, as interchangeable terrains. Chapter 1 explored a similar conflation through exploring how abolitionists like Harriet Beecher Stowe employed Islamic architectural references to frame the American South, and plantations specifically, as a place of moral depravity that was deceptively cloaked in romantic fantasy. Even the title of Stowe's novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, draws on the log cabin as a symbol of the United States' origin myth rooted in the "discovery" and settlement of the frontier. The cabin, glimpsed only briefly at the novel's outset, serves as a foil to Tom's descent into the morally corrupt (and orientalized) plantation South. That said, the ideological work of Busch's smoking room differs. Rather than a pointed critique, here a Christianized Middle East as the biblical Holy Land is merged with American myths of continental conquest, casting both as righteous and civilizing missions.

Oleg Grabar describes a widespread conflation of the "new world" of the American West and the imagined orient in discourse and visual culture of the nineteenth century as being related to the "biblical message of a Promised Land as imagined by American Protestantism."[331] For Grabar, this conflation was not simply aesthetic but psychological: both geographies were framed as spaces of escape from modernity, normalcy, and struggle. In this sense, American orientalism of this period "answers deep psychological and social needs."[332] Such observations help illuminate how interiors in which both objects from the Middle East and Indigenous cultures of the American West could participate in a global imperial imaginary of settlement and control.

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[330] For more on anxieties about the American frontier at the end of the nineteenth century see David M. Wrobel, "The Closing Gates of Democracy: Frontier Anxiety Before the Official End of the Frontier," *American Studies* 32, no. 1 (1991): 49–66.
[331] Grabar, "Roots and Others," 4.
[332] Grabar, "Roots and Others," 8.

Postcolonial scholars such as Timothy Mitchell and Anne McClintock have shown how domestic interiors could work to naturalize imperial power, arranging colonial geographies into a controlled, ornamental order.[333]

This conflation of the American frontier and the orient was not limited to smoking rooms. It could also be found in some cozy corners. A striking example includes a corner where the focal point of the ensemble is a sculpted bust of a Native American man wrapped in a shawl, surrounded by patterned textiles, weapons, and other objects typical of a Turkish-style cozy corner (Figure 2.50). Elizabeth Hutchinson has identified such arrangements as "Indian corners," a late nineteenth-century variation on the cozy corner that combined Near Eastern referents with material culture associated with Native America. While she emphasizes how Indian corners defined their owners as emphatically *not* Native, I argue that they suggest a more layered dynamic. As a material manifestation of the harem's commodified spatial image, coded as alluring, improper, or potentially dangerous, such conflations could invite identification as much as distance or perceived mastery.

While cozy corners in the parlor or other open spaces of the home might have provided women with a feminine version of imperial desire, the objectification of the woman's body within a cozy corner differentiated the two phenomena. Unlike cozy corner portraits, it is rare to find a photograph of a nineteenth-century smoking room with humans in it. Many photographs and illustrations of cozy corners do show the incorporation of weaponry into cozy corner designs, with shields and swords mounted on the wall or spears used to hang fabric over the space (Figures 2.1-2.2, 2.8, 2.10, 2.15-2.16, 2.38, 2.49-2.50). Yet when such items are organized to frame a woman's reclining body their connotations shift: rather than signifying the owner's prowess as a hunter, traveler, or combatant, the lounging body itself becomes an exoticized prop, heightening the sensual and theatrical quality of the scene. In smoking rooms, by contrast, similar objects carried a more direct association with masculine forms of adventure and personal experience, reinforcing the occupant's authority as a worldly collector. Additionally, the authenticity or provenance of weapons in cozy corners is rarely emphasized in interior design periodicals; their value lay less in their origin than in their ability to signal a generalized

[333] Mitchell, Timothy. *Colonising Egypt: With a New Preface*. University of California Press, 1991; McClintock, *Imperial Leather.*

atmosphere. In contrast, the origins and narratives behind specific objects and pieces of furniture are often discussed in relation to smoking rooms.

Both smoking rooms and Turkish corners stage gender through appropriated cultural identity. “Of all spaces in the nineteenth-century home, none was more charged with masculinity than this one [the smoking room].”[334] Hoganson has likewise suggested that cozy corners should be considered as simply a feminized counterpart to the masculine smoking room, fulfilling parallel fantasies of access, eroticism, domination, and control of the mysterious and prohibited harem and a broader imperialist desire.[335] That said, cozy corners and smoking rooms differed significantly in how they enclosed and framed the body. Unlike the smoking room, which offered an immersive and private retreat, the cozy corner remained exposed within shared domestic spaces. While both were steeped in orientalist fantasy, each space’s relationship to surveillance and display reflect divergent gendered logics.

The spear seen in the photograph of Busch’s “Oriental Room” pointing upwards from the right-hand side is probably part of a cozy corner embedded in the room, just out of the photo’s frame. The article mentions that the low bench of a divan could be opened to reveal ammunition and hunting supplies. While often treated in secondary scholarship as strictly feminine spaces, cozy corners are sometimes found embedded within smoking rooms or as taking up entire rooms themselves (Figure 2.8).[336] Furthermore, they are not discussed in interior design publications as exclusively the purview of women. Yet, as seen in the “Cosey Corner” poem, their decor and uses remain distinctly gendered. An article from 1896 compares two hypothetical cozy corners, one “devoted to the lord and master” located in a room of the house that has been made into a smoking room and the other for “his lady” located in a bay window. According to the author, his corner can be draped with fishnet, “in its natural condition,” and a simple home-made mattress and cushions make up the low seating. “Any simple material that is pretty and will not soil easily,” will do. The “lady’s” corner in contrast should be more visually complex, curtains tied back with “pretty ribbons,” a “bright and inexpensive rug,” and “plenty of comfortable

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[334] Gülen Çevik, “Idleness on the Sofa: Under the Spell of Acedia,” *Journal of Interior Design* 46, no. 1 (2021): 109.
[335] Hoganson, "Cosmopolitan Domesticity," 73; Joan DelPlato, *Multiple Wives, Multiple Pleasures*, 19, 72.
[336]Hoganson describes cozy corners as the feminine counterpoint to the smoking den. Hoganson, "Cosmopolitan Domesticity," 72. Sparke, "Paradise in the Parlor," 206.

pillows."[337] As is to be expected, corners and smoking rooms associated with the men of the house are connected to reprieve from activity taken place outside the home while those associated with women's use refer primarily to rest taken from housework and familial life, while not being completely separated from either.

Oriental style smoking rooms began to gain in popularity in the first half of the nineteenth century when it was "considered anachronistic to smoke in medieval and Renaissance interiors."[338] Cozy corners would begin to appear in the 1880s. Hoganson argues that the popularity of Turkish- style cozy corners in the late nineteenth century "helped make exotic interiors seem specifically feminine,"[339] transforming a domain once associated with men's leisure into a feminine one. The centrality of the divan in cozy corner constructions is especially relevant in this regard. Whereas smoking rooms featured a range of furnishings, with textual descriptions in design publications often emphasizing descriptions of exotic objects over seating arrangements, the cozy corner is organized almost entirely around what periodicals refer to as the "divan." It is the divan that anchors the tented enclosure and invites bodily repose, surrounded and softened by layers of drapery and decorative objects.

The term divan itself has a layered etymology: originating in Persian, it referred to a governmental council, essentially a "seat of political power." In Ottoman Turkish, it came to signify both this political function (*divanhane*), referring to formal reception spaces that were masculine-coded, and a particular form of seating furniture. This seating furniture became widespread in Ottoman domestic interiors, appearing in both male and female quarters, and was not in itself specifically gendered (Figure 1.4).[340] In eighteenth and nineteenth-century Europe and America, the word divan (often used interchangeably with the terms 'sofa' and 'ottoman') came to refer to a single piece of upholstered furniture.[341] In American cozy corners and smoking rooms, however, the divan's earlier associations with formality, power, and male dominated reception spaces are subtly inverted. The oriental-style smoking room becomes a secluded, private space within the home, while the cozy corner transforms the divan into a distinctly

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[337] "The Cosey Corner," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 27, no. 6 (1896): 182–182.
[338] Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command*, 367.
[339] Hoganson, "Cosmopolitan Domesticity," 72.
[340] Çevik, "American Style or Turkish Chair," 369.
[341] Çevik, "American Style or Turkish Chair," 369; Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command*, 367.

feminine intervention in the parlor, the most public space of the home. At the same time, in descriptions of these spaces, smoking rooms remain central locations of male sociability and displays of power through collected objects. The cozy corner, on the other hand, seems to center on the lounging body with surrounding objects framing it. Whether or not a body was present, lounging in a cozy corner, the composition inevitably conjured the lone figure of the reclining odalisque.

The Turkish-style cozy corner does not simply mirror and feminize the aesthetics of the orientalist smoking room; it subtly references and reorients its spatial logics. The corner and the bodies lounging within remain contained, yet the corner's drastic departure from the decor of the surrounding home marks it as a space apart. In this sense, the cozy corner approaches the notion of heterotopia, a real space that reflects, distorts, and challenges the structures around it. Neither fully public nor entirely private, the cozy corner occupies a liminal position in the home, calling attention to gendered spatial norms even as it remains embedded within them. It is in this tension, between enclosure and encroachment, containment and critique, that the corner subtly models an alternative spatial imaginary for American women at the turn of the century.

Reframing the Lounging American Odalisque: Lounging, Labor, and the New Woman

Both oriental-style cozy corners and smoking rooms engage in aesthetic practices that were deeply rooted in colonial imaginaries. They are also both products of narratives put forth by Eurocentric histories of art and architectural styles,[342] yet their uses and meanings were inflected by gendered conventions of space, posture, and decorum. While smoking rooms were more private retreats, cozy corners were embedded within shared domestic space, its fantasies of mobility tempered by visibility. This visibility did not strip the corner of its transgressive charge; rather, it reframed it, enabling experimentation with self-presentation and even subtle challenges to normative comportment within the ostensibly safe bounds of exoticism and interior

[342] For readers of the *Decorator and Furnisher*, for example, Edward Dewson wrote a series on the historical styles. In the installment on the "oriental styles" Dewson describes oriental styles as worthy of study due to their usefulness in understanding the Christian styles that emerged after. E. D., "Guide to the Styles. Historical Series. I," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 29, no. 6 (1897): 170–170.

decoration. The lounging body in a cozy corner can be read simultaneously as compliant to domestic gender hierarchies as well as an embodied refusal of them.

Between 1880 and 1910, cozy corners emerged during a historical moment in which American women were negotiating shifting roles in domestic and public life. Higher education was becoming more accessible to middle- and upper-class women, women's clubs and reform organizations were proliferating, and the suffrage movement was gaining visibility. At the same time, industrial capitalism expanded women's roles as consumers, tastemakers, and, albeit in limited numbers, professionals in fields such as journalism, education, and the decorative arts. These changes were accompanied by anxieties about women's health, propriety, and the maintenance of domestic order, producing contradictory expectations: women were encouraged to cultivate taste, self-possession, and even a cosmopolitan outlook, while also embodying ideals of moral purity, modest comportment, and self-sacrificing domesticity. The cozy corner, with its associations of leisure, exoticism, and controlled enclosure, became one arena in which these tensions could be materially staged and visually negotiated.

As Çevik argues, "period [nineteenth century] visual representations of idleness speak about the asymmetrical power relations between the genders,"[343] and indeed, the act of lounging, especially by women, was loaded with contradictory meanings. On one hand, middle- and upper-class women in the late nineteenth century were increasingly diagnosed with illnesses such as neurasthenia, a condition linked to modern life's overstimulation and the supposedly detrimental effects of technological advances such as indoor plumbing and electric lighting.[344] Physicians prescribed rest cures, and domestic interiors were increasingly designed to accommodate this need.[345] Yet even as women were told to rest, cultural norms cast bodily comfort, languor, and idleness as morally suspect; traits associated not only with illness, but with non-western sensuality and excess. As Çevik insightfully remarks, it is no coincidence that rest cures came

[343] Çevik, "Idleness on the Sofa," 101.
[344] Edwards, "A Million and One Nights," 33.
[345] Çevik, "Idleness on the Sofa,"101-104.

into existence at the same moment in which activism for women's rights began to intensify at the turn-of-the-century.[346]

Medical discourse also reinforced this tension between a fantasy of the democratization of leisure and the perceived dangers of women's lounging. The British physician P. H. Chavasse, in his 1880 book *Advise to a Wife on the Management of Her Own Health*, writes, "I do not approve of a girl lounging and lolling on a sofa; but, if she be tired and wants to rest herself, let her, like any other reasonable being, sit upon a comfortable ordinary chair."[347] Another doctor, George Wilson added that, "There is no doubt that amongst the well-to-do classes, ladies suffer far more from the effects of idleness than do men."[348] Within this context the cozy corner, with its invitation to recline, emerges as a site of tension, highlighting anxieties surrounding the female body at rest. Chavasse's disapproval of the "sofa" in particular underscores a broader concern with the implications of the increasing popularity of Turkish-style furniture in Euro-American homes.[349] The cozy corner thus became a visible stage for negotiating normative ideals of femininity. It was an enclosed yet conspicuous setting in which an American version of the odalisque could be reframed as both a product of, and a subtle challenge to, prevailing gender norms.

"How to Sit on a Divan"

Articles in interior design periodicals and women's magazines at the turn-of-the-century offer glimpses into how American women encountered, used, and understood Turkish-style furniture. As the nineteenth century drew to a close, an increasing number of descriptions,

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[346] Cevik, "Idleness on the Sofa," 93. Cevik cites British Physician Pye Henry Chavasse: "I do not approve of a girl lounging and lolling on a sofa; but, if she be tired and wants to rest herself, let her, like any other reasonable being, sit upon a comfortable ordinary chair." n. 48 Also Çevik argues that it is no coincidence that the rest cure was a thing at the same time that women's activism was starting to ramp up at the turn of the century.

[347] P. H. Chavasse, *Advise to a Wife on the Management of Her Own Health* (New York: John Wurtele Lovell, 1880), 234. Cited in Cevik, "Idleness on the Sofa," 101.

[348] G. Wilson, *Healthy Life and Healthy Dwellings: A Guide to Personal & Domestic Hygiene* (London: J. & A. Churchill, 1880), 81. Cited in Cevik, "Idleness on the Sofa," 101.

[349] Whether in Orientalist imagery or more conventional domestic scenes, the divan, the centerpiece of the Turkish-style cozy corner, became a key site for visualizing feminine leisure and for negotiating the boundary between proprietary and indulgence. Çevik links the popularity of Orientalist imagery to the rising demand for Turkish-style furniture, but also to what she understands as the democratization of idleness in the domestic sphere. Cevik, "Idleness on the Sofa," 93.

illustrations and "how-to" guides for arranging or using Islamic and Islamicate furniture and decor were directly or indirectly informed by Americans who had traveled or lived in the Middle East. Sometimes, the source came from women who worked in missionary capacities. These women occupied a paradoxical position: as agents of Christian settlement and reform, they approached Islamic and Middle Eastern domestic spaces with the moralizing gaze of the missionary, yet their gender granted them privileged access to interiors that male travelers and writers could only imagine. Through letters, memoirs, published travel narratives, and public speaking tours they reported on household layouts, furnishings, and social customs. Interior design articles about orientalist interiors distilled, adapted, and reframed these accounts for their readers. The result was a hybrid discourse in which bodily comportment, moral judgment, and decorative taste converged. How one arranged one's body on a divan could signal propriety or transgression, modesty or ease, and in print, these postures became both aesthetic instructions and moral lessons, inflected by the political and religious agendas of the women who first described them.

Some women inserted Western-style furniture into cozy corners, selectively appropriating "the alluring elements of Oriental domestic space … while obliged to reject the religious, moral, and physical implications that these spaces inherently carried." Others embraced the changes in posture required to sit comfortably on low, undivided divans referred to interchangeably as "Turkish couch," "sofa," or "ottoman."[350] A supposedly first-hand testimonial published in *The Decorator and Furnisher* instructs "How to Sit on a Divan" through a young American woman's travel experience. The author explains how, without knowing how to properly sit on a "Turkish couch," it becomes for western women the "apotheosis of physical comfortableness." She recounts how, on a trip to Constantinople she was taught to sit on a "genuine Turkish couch" while at a reception hosted by a "recently emancipated" Armenian woman. Out of fifty-four guests, only four were women: three Americans and the Armenian hostess. While the men in attendance played cards, the women wandered through the home inspecting its interior furnishings. When the young narrator came upon the couch she drew "her skirts primly about her, she sat gingerly upon the very edge, with two neat little toes carefully balanced to touch the floor." An "impossibly handsome" Greek man observed this and corrected her: "Sit on your

[350] Çevik, "American Style or Turkish Chair," 368–369.

foot…curl it comfortably under you, so. Now be seated far back, build a wall of cushions about your shoulders, and know true happiness." Concluding her story, the narrator explains that in the "far East…old prejudices" about comportment are "promptly dissipated." Men and women sit in a similar fashion which is "infinitely more comfortable" than cultural norms back home.[351]

However dubious its authenticity, the story is telling: the divan, a piece of furniture that dictates a certain posture, becomes a vehicle for soft transgression. Its association with a socially liberated, Armenian woman serves to justify (even slight) deviation from American norms of comportment, bodily decorum, and relations with the opposite sex. The divan, while central to many Muslim households as a space of masculine sociability and public hospitality, was recontextualized in the American cozy corner as a feminized site of social engagement and rest. This reversal underscores how orientalist appropriation can not only displace, but also invert, the cultural meanings of the spaces it borrows from. Within this cultural framework, the cozy corner became a sanctioned, but highly coded, location for feminine retreat, both embracing and containing the destabilizing potential of idleness. Also notable is the inability of non-"emancipated" women to participate in such a postural transgression.

The description of the hostess in the "How to Sit on a Divan" article as Armenian also signals a complex religious and political dimension to American women's interest in Islamic lands and the harem's spatial image at the turn-of-the-twentieth century. As Anderson explains, the reaction to the Armenian genocide, beginning in 1894, varied globally. Armenian human rights gained significant political support in Christian, English speaking areas where Armenian communities were seen as outposts of western enlightenment within the Ottoman Empire. Activists such as Julia Ward Howe, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and Jacob Schiff argued for financial contributions through their framing of the situation as religious persecution.[352] In this light, the figure of the "emancipated" Armenian hostess would have carried a particular moral resonance for American readers, framing the posture learned on her divan not as an act of exotic

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[351] "How to Sit on a Divan," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 19, no.1 (1891): 8.

[352] The Armenian genocide is generally understood to have occurred in 1915-1917, but that some scholars trace the origins of the genocide to Hamidian massacres against Armenians beginning in the 1890s. See for example Bedross Der Matossian, *The Horrors of Adana: Revolution and Violence in the Early Twentieth Century* (Stanford University Press, 2022); Margaret Lavinia Anderson, "'Down in Turkey, Far Away': Human Rights, the Armenian Massacres, and Orientalism in Wilhelmine Germany," *The Journal of Modern History* 79, no. 1 (March 1, 2007): 83-84, 91-93.

indulgence but as a gesture aligned with a Christianized vision of liberation and cross-cultural solidarity.

Such accounts that appear now and again in interior design publications and women's magazines may have been informed by American women living abroad, particularly in missionary capacities. American women's growing exposure to and interest in the Middle East is evidenced by increasing numbers of women taking up missionary work in Lebanon, Israel/Palestine, Egypt, and northern Anatolia in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. While abroad, strict rules separating men and women sometimes provided missionary women unparalleled access to the domestic spaces and social lives of Muslim women from a wider range of social backgrounds. This access was unavailable to their male missionary counterparts. Unlike the wealthy travelers discussed in the previous chapter, whose visits were often limited to aristocratic households and elite hammams, missionary women, many from middle-class or modest means, could travel more affordably and were invited into the private interiors of women in smaller towns or villages and whose circumstances more closely reflected everyday life in the region.[353] In addition to their missionary work, they observed furnishings, spatial arrangements, and forms of hospitality firsthand. Some conveyed these details through letters, memoirs, published travel narratives, and even speaking tours throughout the United States.

Ads such as one for a "Turkish compassionate fund" in *The Decorator and Furnisher* ask subscribers to donate money or purchase local handicrafts to support women and children's causes in Anatolia.[354] These philanthropic appeals often drew on orientalist discourse that portrayed conditions for women and children in the Ottoman Empire as especially dire. Such messaging, circulating alongside articles about Middle Eastern domestic spaces, might have influenced American women's support for missionary work in the region. By the late nineteenth century, missionaries had become the largest and most educated group of Americans living abroad, a movement rooted in networks established during the "Second Great Awakening" earlier in the century.[355] Missionary organizations embraced mass media and new

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[353]Melman, *Women's Orients*, 47, 75-76.
[354] Mrs Oliver Bell Bunce, 'The Turkish Compassionate Fund', *The Decorator and Furnisher* 30, no. 6 (September 1897): 172–174.
[355] Mehmet Ali Doğan and Heather Jane Sharkey, *American Missionaries and the Middle East: Foundational Encounters* (University of Utah Press, 2011), x; Vogel, *To See a Promised Land*, 58; Melman, *Women's Orients*, 47.

communication technologies to maintain public interest and solicit donations. For example, Lillian Trasher, the American Protestant founder of the first orphanage in Egypt in the early twentieth century, appeared in a promotional film appealing directly to American donors for financial support.[356]

Despite, or perhaps due to, sensational depictions within American popular culture, foreign missions to the Middle East mobilized American women, leading to the formation of mission-support societies whose members also championed domestic social reforms like temperance and women's suffrage. "These missionary women were more likely to be able to experience Turkish domestic interiors *as a social space*, a place where women interact with one another."[357] As Doğan and Sharkey note, in missionary intervention in the Middle East in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, "the history of changing gender relations bound American and Middle Eastern women together."[358] These encounters, while framed within a Protestant moral lens and embedded in American Christianity's relationship with imperialism, they also open channels for cross-cultural dialogue and, in some cases, for explicitly political claims to emerge about women's education, autonomy, and political representation.

The work of Etta Doane Marden demonstrates how cross-cultural encounters within missionary contexts could both reinforce Protestant moral narratives and open unexpected avenues for political reflection. Born in Michigan, Marden was commissioned by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in 1881 to teach in Turkey, where she remained for over four decades. While working at a mission complex in Constantinople that included a day school for girls and vocational training for adult women, she reported on the transformative potential of women's education for *Life and Light for Women*, the monthly magazine for the Woman's Board of Missions published in Boston, Massachusetts. Marden framed her pupils as harbingers of Ottoman modernity:

> girls…are very earnest and zealous pupils…most commendable…The development of these young girls will be somewhat in contrast to that of the 'veiled and silent lady' of the

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[356] Doğan and Sharkey, *American Missionaries and the Middle East*, xiii.
[357] Çevik, "American Style or Turkish Chair," 372; L. J. Pruitt, *A Looking-Glass for Ladies: American Protestant Women and the Orient in the Nineteenth Century* (Macon: Mercer University Press, Macoturquen, 2005); D. L. Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice*, (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1998); B. Melman*, Women's Orients.*
[358] Doğan and Sharkey, *American Missionaries and the Middle East*, xxi.

> olden time, but it is ultimately upon them that the future of the Ottoman Empire will depend.[359]

Marden also remarks on the interest her students and local women took in public lectures, noting the enthusiasm with which they sought out opportunities to hear and discuss topics such as politics, philosophy, and scientific discoveries for combatting infectious diseases.[360] For *Life and Light*'s American readership, still excluded from many avenues of higher education and public intellectual exchange, such images of Ottoman women actively engaging in learning and debate could not help but resonate.

Grace Ellison's *An English Woman in a Turkish Harem* (1915) In the book Ellison interviews Turkish nationalist and feminist Halide Edib Adıvar, asking how European and American women could aid their 'eastern sisters'. Edib replies,

> ask them [...] to delete for ever that misunderstood word '"harem"', and speak of us in our Turkish '"homes"'. Ask them to try and dispel the nasty atmosphere which a wrong meaning of that word has cast over our lives.[361]

Ellison, a British journalist, advocated for women's access to universities in Istanbul and was co-founder of the French Nursing Corps, which would become the French Red Cross. After giving lectures in the United States throughout the 1910s, she returned to Turkey in the early 1920s to cover the Turkish War of Independence.[362] Ellison's story is one example of interwoven and contradictory connotations of harems for American and English women missionaries, travel writers, activists, and decorators.

The Cozy Corner and the New Woman: Self-Fashioning, Autonomy, and Professionalization

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[359] Etta Doane Marden, "The Effect of the Constitution on Education in Turkey," *Life and Light for Women*, November 1910, 485–89., 488.
[360] Etta Doane Marden, "Modern Movements in Turkey," *Life and Light for Women*, November 1910, 523–24.
[361] Grace Ellison, *An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem* (New York: McBride, Nast, 1915). Hunt, "Suffragettes of the Harem," 12.
[362] Davide Deriu, "A Challenge to the West: British Views of Republican Ankara," in *The City in the Muslim World: Depictions by Western Travel Writers*, ed. Mohammad Gharipour and Nilay Ozlu, (London: Routledge, 2015): 281–283; Asako Nakai, "Shakespeare's Sisters in Istanbul: Grace Ellison and the Politics of Feminist Friendship,'' *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* 51, no. 1 (2015): 22–33; Lewis, *Rethinking Orientalism*, 42–50.

The construction of cozy corners as "other spaces" and integration of exotic decor into the home more generally perhaps enabled their creators to enter "elsewheres" where they could break with rigid societal expectations, at least within the confines of their own home. At the turn of the twentieth century, this model of spatial and visual experimentation found a counterpart in the "New Woman." This cultural figure signified a shift that provided women with more leeway for such experimentation. Educated, cosmopolitan, and increasingly visible in public life, this figure embraced professional work, cultivated a distinct aesthetic, and engaged in pursuits, like cycling and smoking, that challenged the era's gendered codes of propriety. The New Woman tested the limits of propriety through radical uses of clothing and posture to signal independence. Some activists who identified with this figure experimented with carte-de-visites where they mimicked actresses and pin-ups in photographing themselves as the "New Woman": a paradoxical image of contemporary womanhood.[363]

The American photojournalist Frances Benjamin Johnston's 1895 self-portrait, titled *Self-Portrait as New Woman*, offers a striking example (Figure 2.51). Johnston sits before her studio fireplace with a beer stein in one hand and a cigarette in the other. Along with a row of portraits of prominent men, decorative objects including ceramic vases, a woven basket or plate, a pedestal table draped in fabric and supporting a long-legged sculpture and another ceramic vessel are strategically placed throughout the image. These items, although not strictly Islamic or Islamicate, collectively stage a frame for the sitter. Johnston's pose, ankle crossed boldly over her knee, eyes focused beyond the camera, suggests not leisure but assertion, conversation, and critique. The visual language resonates with cozy corner portraits in its framing of the subject through symbolic objects, yet Johnston's posing is more explicitly about challenging norms of women's behavior, authorship, and control.

In a second photograph of Johnston in her studio, taken four years after her *Self-Portrait* in 1900, a Turkish-style cozy corner appears in the far right of the frame (Figure 2.52). Tellingly, Johnston herself does not lounge in the corner. Her subjectivity in the image is that of photographer and artist. The cozy corner is likely more for her clients than her own use. Still, its presence in her studio, reminiscent of a similar tented space in William Merritt Chase's studio (Figure 3.30), forms part of her curated environment. The feminine-coded retreat is juxtaposed

[363] Buszek, *Pin Up* Grrrls, 46.

with Johnston's own modern, assertive stance and direct gaze towards the viewer. This contrast becomes a visual foil, the cosy corner's associations of repose and sensuality set against Johnston's enactment of active, public-facing independence.

The designation of something as "Turkish" had already been used in 18th-century England to signify naughtiness or indecency. By the late nineteenth century activities associated with the harem, especially smoking, were firmly linked in Euro-American contexts to feminine indolence, sensuality, and transgression (Figure 2.53).[364] Orientalist paintings and, increasingly, in advertising imagery, particularly for tobacco products, frequently depicted harem women smoking in lavish, exotic interiors, drawing on the spatial image of the harem to evoke temptation and erotic excess (3.35, 3.59).[365] While masculine-coded smoking rooms encouraged tobacco use, smoking remained taboo for "respectable women" who would have been the target demographic for the cozy corner fad in the 1890s. Tobacco advertisements sidestepped this restriction by locating such behaviors in distant geographies and in racially marked bodies. Johnston's cigarette, when read alongside the Turkish cozy corner in her studio, thus acquires layered meanings: it resonates with orientalist visual tropes of transgressive femininity, yet her self-possessed, forward-leaning posture resists the passivity of these archetypes.

If Johnston mobilized the cozy corner's connotations of retreat and passivity to confront and subvert them, Elsie de Wolfe used the corner toward a different end. Posing in a Turkish corner in her New York home, taken shortly before she abandoned acting for interior decoration, De Wolfe did not adopt Johnston's assertive, forward-leaning stance (Figure 2.5). Instead, her portrait aligns more closely with other cozy corner portraits and their associations of leisure, refinement, and cosmopolitan taste. These were qualities she would later market as central to her professional identity as "the mother of modern interior decoration." Although during her career as interior designer De Wolfe promoted French designs over oriental ones, her design philosophy centered around the home interior as a stage setting for the personality of the woman

[364] Grotenhuis, "Smoking Hot," 6; Amanda Amos and Margaretha Haglund, "From Social Taboo to 'Torch of Freedom': The Marketing of Cigarettes to Women," Cover Essay, *Tobacco Control* 9, no. 1 (2000): 3.
[365] The discrepancy between the connotations of exotic women, sex workers, or "respectable" women smoking will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

inhabitant.[366] She stressed that her designs allowed clients to blend personal comfort and taste with tradition: "It enabled them to keep a foot in the past while simultaneously defining themselves as modern, independent women."[367]At the time of the photograph's making, posing in a cozy corner probably aligned with her actress persona: the epitome of the New Woman.[368] The contrast of a self-fashioned, American New Woman of the late nineteenth century with a collectively imagined, formative, historical past is apparent in this image. While less overtly political in tone, the image was nonetheless strategic. By presenting herself in a cultivated, exoticized interior, De Wolfe reinforced her authority as an arbiter of taste, using the cozy corner to visually position herself within an elite, worldly sphere.[369]

Placing this oft- published photograph of De Wolfe into conversation with another, lesser- known photograph encourages close looking at an otherwise inconspicuous design element. The caption for an image of the bedroom belonging to "the daughter of E.L. Flaherty in Montana," taken around 1900, describes it as an 'elaborate scheme' to personalize a private area, diverging from the architectural design (Figure 2.54). In addition to the usual bed, dressing table, and mirror, a "cloud of photographs" disrupts the regularity of the square space and a small "Turkish cozy corner full of cushions" is arranged in the left- hand corner.[370] Though less elaborate than the examples mentioned thus far, this corner demonstrates how widespread the trend was, as well as a pointed depiction of its use by amateur decorators to assert individuality and agency within a predetermined architectural space. An article titled "Pretty Corners in Girls'

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[366] Penny Sparke, "Elsie de Wolfe and Her Female Clients 1905-–15," in *Women's Places: Architecture and Design 1860-–1960*, ed. Penny Sparke, (New York: Routledge, 2003), 46; Louise Fersslund, '"Woman's Influence in House Decoration'," *Good Housekeeping* 42 (May 1906): 497.
[367] Fersslund, "Woman's Influence," 47.
[368] Nina Campbell and Caroline Sheebohm, *Elsie de Wolfe: A Decorative Life* (New York: Panache Press, 1992): 1–2. Campbell and Sheebohm write that Elsie de Wolfe was the first paid woman interior designer, but this is not true. Candace Wheeler and others paved the way for De Wolfe to take up the profession. Amelia Peck and Carol Irish, *Candace Wheeler: The Art and Enterprise of American Design, 1875-1900* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001), 2-–3.
[369] De Wolfe lived for decades with her partner, theatrical agent Elisabeth Marbury, and their household operated outside the heterosexual norms that dominated the interior design profession. This context adds another layer to her carefully curated domestic imagery, which could be read both as conventional displays of taste and as coded affirmations of alternative domestic arrangements. Jasmine Rault, "Designing Sapphic Modernity: Fashion Spaces and Subjects," in *Fashion, Interior Design and the Contours of Modern Identity* (Routledge, 2017), 185.
[370] William Seale, *The Tasteful Interlude: American Interiors Through the Camera's Eye 1860–1917* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975), 173.

Rooms," from the *Ladies' Home Journal* in 1898 pictures a variety of similar designs for cozy corners and emphasizes the appropriateness of Turkish corners for young women (Figure 2.55). The author, Alice J. Maynor, also underscores "The pleasure of fitting up a room for one's self, and doing the work actually with one's own hands."[371] Such examples suggest that, beyond their decorative appeal, cozy corners could serve as formative sites for cultivating a sense of ownership over her environment. This principle was also taken up in contemporary advice literature, linking interior arrangement to personal autonomy and professional opportunity.

In addition to feminist discourse of the time, the cozy corner can be linked to strategies of financial independence through the professionalization of women in interior design. An excerpt from "How to Make a Room Inviting" (1879) encourages women, especially girls, just arrived in a new home after finishing university (most likely after marriage), to create a space for regularly spending time alone. The article advises for a dedicated space and time built into everyday 'to think and read and plan [...] After a little space of solitude we go back to others rested and cheered.''[372] The author suggests that "sisters" sharing an apartment or younger girls still living with family, could arrange a separate corner for each to have her own area. Predating Virginia Woolf's argument that 'a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction',[373] cozy corners can be seen as a precursor to this idea, providing women with a space for creative expression and independence.

Until the last quarter of the nineteenth century, though sometimes female pen names are given, authors writing for American interior design journals were mostly men. Sometimes publications would designate that women were the intended audience for certain sections. For example, one regular section in *The Decorator and Furnisher* throughout the 1890s is simply titled 'Of Interest to Women'. This began to change when designers like Candace Wheeler began to promote textile and interior design as opportunities for women to turn hobbies into paid careers.[374] As McNeil writes, 'Whereas the outfitting of houses in earlier periods was considered a normal and suitable interest for gentlemen, by the last quarter of the nineteenth century

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[371] Alice J. Maynor, "Pretty Corners in Girls' Rooms," *The Ladies' Home Journal* (September 1898): 15.
[372] "Articles of General Interest," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 30, no. 2 (May 1897): 57.
[373] Virgnia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (Orlando: Harcourt Inc., 1929), 57.
[374] Peck and Irish, *Candace* Wheeler. Fersslund, '"Woman's Influence."

decorating was gendered feminine and allied closely to consumerism and rapid fashion changes.''.[375]

Within this transitional moment, the Turkish corner became popular, though its prevalence lasted little more than a decade. Connections between cozy corners, the professionalization of interior design, and women's financial independence are made explicit in the October 1891 'Of Interest to Women' section:

> Cosey corners and nooks are frequently fitted up for special occasions and always add much to the attractiveness of any house. Oftentimes three or four of these little places are arranged with but little work or expense for an evening's entertainment. This opens a new avenue to women in search of employment who are artistic and have talent for household decorations.[376]

The fashionable corner is described as a creation of someone who is 'artistic' and whose skills in decoration can be applied to earning money, though it seems unlikely that much could be earned designing corners for home parties. Serving as both social spaces and personal retreats, cozy corners embody a contradiction in their design and function. Their location in the parlor, the 'ideal setting for the articulation of the social status of the family', [377] also adds to their complexity.

Conclusion

Turkish-style cozy corners functioned as spatial images of the harem embedded within the late nineteenth century American home. More than just a short-lived, decorative fashion, the cozy corner condensed a set of abstract, symbolic, and affective associations attached to the harem into a reproducible domestic space. Repeatedly copied with seemingly endless variations, they consisted of a distinct set of objects and furniture that could be arranged and rearranged according to the owner's taste. Corners consisted of tabouret tables, palm plants, a low seating area or divan, patterned rugs, cushions, and other textiles, metal lamps and hanging lanterns, weaponry, wallpaper featuring arabesque patterns, and other small objects, translating the literary

[375] Peter McNeil, "Designing Women: Gender, Sexuality, and the Interior Decorator 1890-–1910," *Art History* 17, no.4 (Dec. 1994): 639.
[376] "Of Interest to Women," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 19, no. 1 (October 1891): 29–30.
[377] Çevik, "American Style or Turkish Chair," 370.

fantasies of authors such as Montagu, Owenson, and Stowe, discussed in the previous chapter, into accessible and experiential spatial images of the harem.

In assembling a form of popular architecture that reproduced spatial images of the harem, makers of cozy corners drew on a range of visual media spanning painting, photography, postcards, magazines, professional journals, sales catalogs, and more. They were also influenced by commercial spaces such as department stores as well as international and regional fairs. Some designers might have also learned about the domestic interiors of Muslim women and their families through reports, memoirs, or traveling lecture tours of missionaries and others who had traveled to areas in the Middle East. Whatever the source, reproduction, imitation, and the generation of "copies of copies" was not secondary to the environment of the cozy corner, but constitutive. In a moment at the end of the century when elite collecting logics and mass-market consumption of Islamic and Islamicate objects were beginning to blur, the cozy corner emerged as a brief yet quickly circulating trend that benefitted from shifting ideas about authenticity, taste, and social standing.

Women, in particular, occupied a crucial position within this system as consumers, interpreters, and curators of orientalist space. Through interior design, they negotiated questions of labor, authority, rest, and self-presentation within the constraints of capitalism and respectability, using spatial practice rather than overt political discourse to articulate shifting forms of modern femininity. At the same time, the chapter has shown that orientalism within the American home was neither uniform nor uncontested. By comparing cozy corners to contemporaneous orientalist smoking rooms, this study has highlighted how gender, visibility, and bodily presence (or lack thereof) shaped the meaning of interior spaces. While smoking rooms staged a hyper-masculine imperial fantasy through weaponry, privacy, and authenticity, cozy corners remained embedded within the visual economy of the home, often situated in parlors that functioned as staged spatial images of the family. The presence or imagined presence of a reclining female body within a cozy corner fundamentally altered how these spaces were read, transforming the divan into a focal point for both self-fashioning and objectification. In this sense, the cozy corner functioned as a site of tension rather than escape or leisure.

This chapter functions as a conceptual bridge within the dissertation. In Chapter 1, spatial images of the harem emerged through literary description and fictional interiors, where attention

to furnishings, textiles, designed objects, and architectural style allowed writers to sharply critique social and gendered orders from within the imaginary orient. Chapter 2 traces how these such fictional interiors translated to American homes and were assembled into curated domestic displays. The cozy corner thus marks a transitional moment in which the harem's spatial image moves from narrative and fiction into everyday spatial practice.

This logic of spatial condensation and symbolic abstraction continues in the following chapter, where the focus shifts from domestic interiors in the United States to an industrial landmark in Dresden, Germany. Like the cozy corner, the Yenidze Tobacco Factory straddles transitionary decades where the entangled architectural trends of nineteenth century historicism and visual expressions of functional clarity and abstraction emerge. The factory mobilizes a different architectural reference, the mosque, as a publicly legible sign within the urban landscape, yet it remains connected to the images of harem space explored in the first two chapters. Like the cozy corner, the Yenidze translates a complex set of cultural associations into a condensed, symbolic form, but it does so in a context where the harem's spatial image had already acquired negative connotations through nineteenth-century discourses surrounding factory labor, gendered bodies, and moral disorder. The factory's design can thus be read as an attempt to work against the harem image as transposed onto industrial space by emphasizing openness, light, and hygienic modernity, even as the orientalism of the factory's exterior prevents a complete break. The transition from the American parlor to the German factory therefore reflects not a rupture but a change in scale, visibility, and social function, allowing the dissertation to trace how orientalist spatial imaginaries circulated, mutated, and conflicted across media, national contexts, and architectural typologies at the turn of the twentieth century.

Figures



Figure 2.1 “An Oriental Cosey Corner,” *The Decorator and Furnisher* 28, no. 2 (1896): 47.



Figure 2.2 Byron Company, “Mrs. Hughes’ Turkish Corner,” 1899. Photograph. Museum of the City of New York, MNY30041.



Figure 2.3 Wallace G. Levinson or George B. Brainerd, “Rosalie Kelsey reclining on her Turkish divan, in a dreamy mood,” January 17, 1891. Photograph. Dahlstrom Collection, The LIFE Picture Collection, no. 12128301a.



Figure 2.4 Byron Company, “A Woman Lounging in a Chair, Reading a Book,” ca. 1896-98. Photograph. Museum of the City of New York, no. MNY380883.



Figure 2.5 Byron Company, "Elsie de Wolfe in Turkish Corner," 1896. Photograph. Museum of the City of New York, MNY42724.

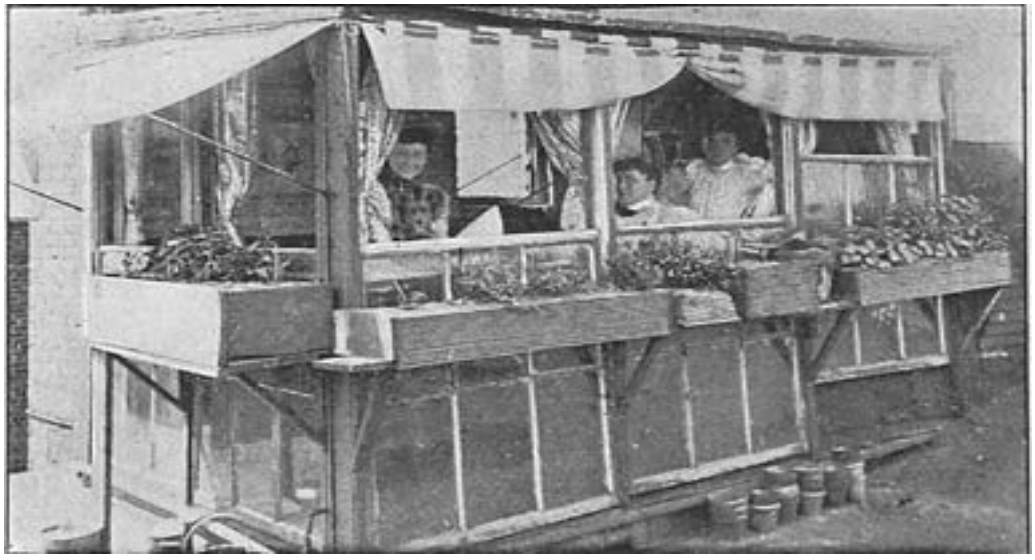

Figure 2.6 "Miss Mary Gay Humphrey's Cosey Roof Garden," in Mrs. Oliver Bell Bunce, “Cosey Nooks and Corners for August,” *The Decorator and Furnisher* 30, no. 5 (1897): 134.



Figure 2.7 "A Comfortable Indoor Cosey Corner," in Mrs. Oliver Bell Bunce, “Cosey Nooks and Corners for August,” *The Decorator and Furnisher* 30, no. 5 (1897): 135.

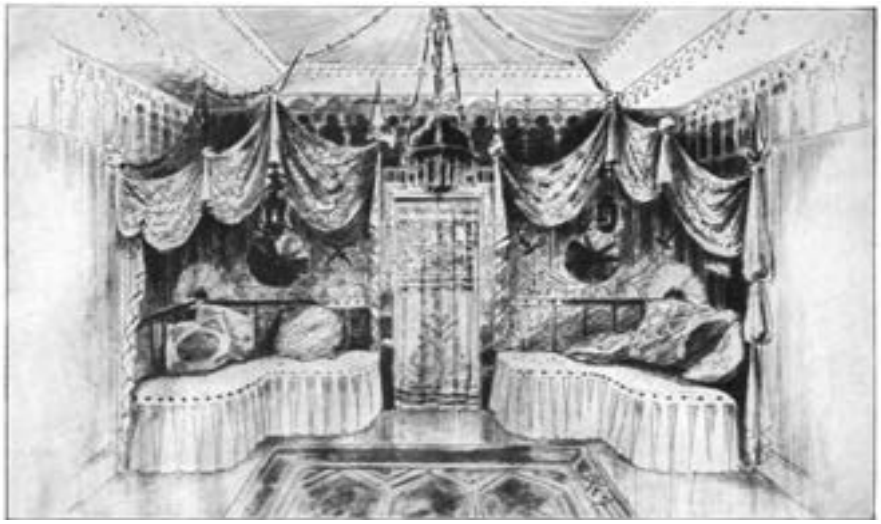

Figure 2.8 “The Oriental Room Complete,” in Alexander George Morrison, *Drapery, Interior Decoration and Architecture: A Practical Hand-Book for the Dealer, Decorator and the Workroom* (New York: T.A. Cawthra & Co., 1906), 20.



Figure 2.9 “A Turkish Corner,” home of Gen. Harrison Gray Otis, Westlake, Los Angeles, 1897. In Harrison Gray Otis, *The Bivouac* (1901). The Huntington Library, RB 250716.



Figure 2.10 "Suggestion for Oriental Stairway Recess," in Alexander George Morrison, *Drapery, Interior Decoration and Architecture: a Practical Hand-Book for the Dealer, Decorator and the Workroom* (New York: T.A. Cawthra & Co., 1906), 24.

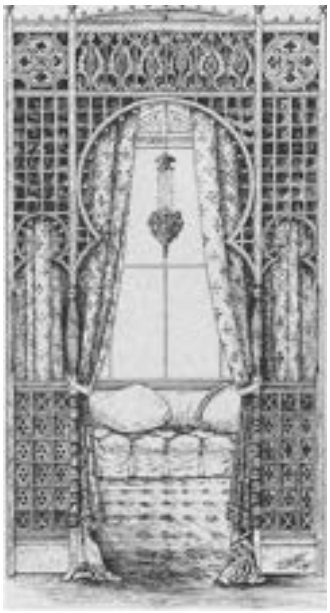

Figure 2.11 “Design for an Octagonal Recess” *The Decorator and Furnisher* 18, no. 6 (1891): 227.



Figure 2.12 "Another Arrangement of a Cosey Corner," in Carrie May Ashton, “Cosey Corners,” *The Decorator and Furnisher* 19, no. 1 (1891): 30.

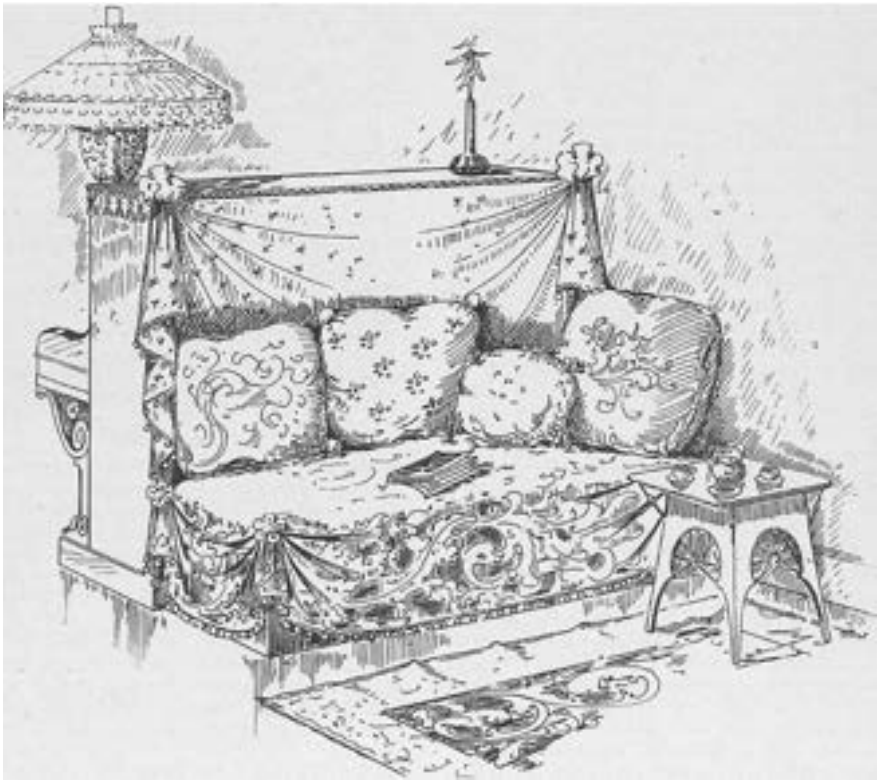

Figure 2.13 "Cozey Corner Decoration for Back of Piano," in James Thomson, "Piano Decorations," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 25 (Oct. 1894): 31.

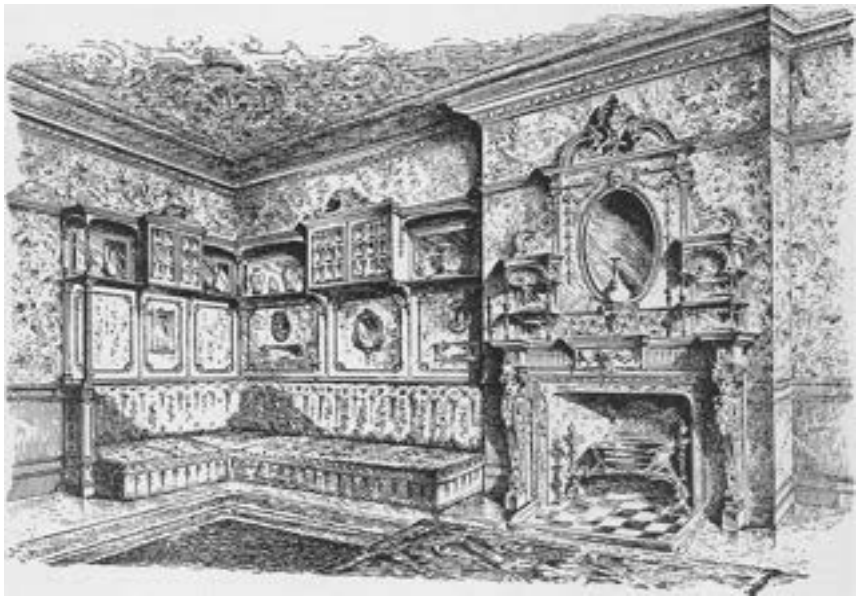

Figure 2.14 "A Cosey Corner," *The Decorator and Furnisher* 21, no. 1 (1892): 30.



Figure 2.15 "India Smoking Room," in Alexander George Morrison, *Drapery, Interior Decoration and Architecture; a Practical Hand-Book for the Dealer, Decorator and the Workroom* (New York: T.A. Cawthra & Co., 1906), 19.



Figure 2.16 "An Oriental Room," in Alexander George Morrison, *Drapery, Interior Decoration and Architecture; a Practical Hand-Book for the Dealer, Decorator and the Workroom* (New York: T.A. Cawthra & Co., 1906), 33.

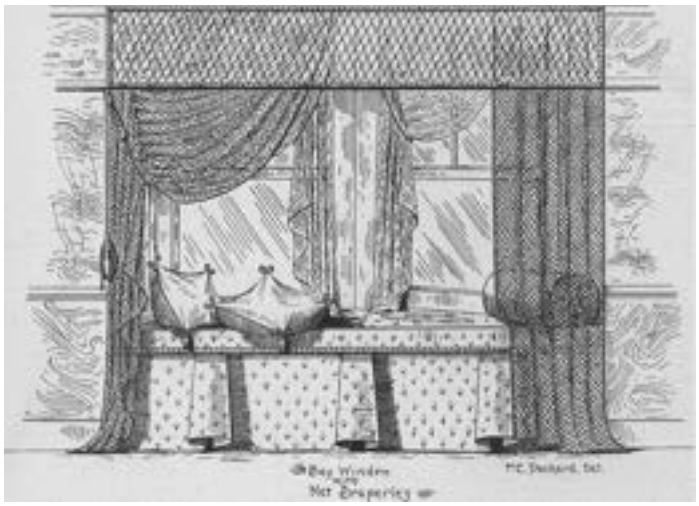

Figure 2.17 F.C. Packard, "Bay Window with Net Draperies," in “The Cosey Corner,” *The Decorator and Furnisher* 27, no. 6 (1896): 182.

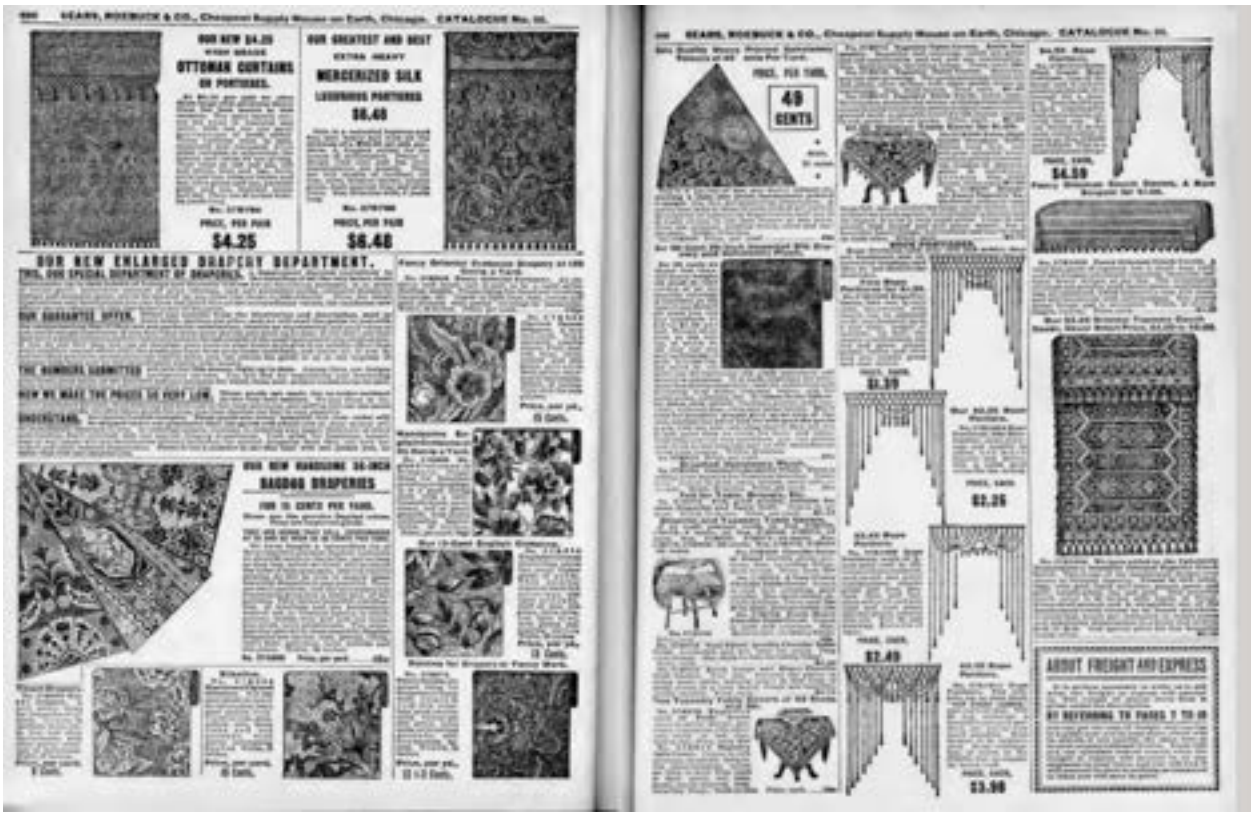

Figure 2.18 Sears, Roebuck & Co, *Catalogue No. 111* (Boston: Sears, Roebuck & Co, Spring 1902), 886-888.



Figure 2.19 G. Wingendorp, "Musei Wormiani Historia" in Olaf Worm, *Museum Wormianum* (Leiden: Apud Iohannem et Danielem Elzeviriorum, 1655.



Figure 2.20 Jean-Étienne Liotard, *Lady in Turkish Dress Holding a Fan*, 18th century. Oil on Canvas. The Royal Łazienki Museum in Warsaw, Poland.



Figure 2.21 S. Hollyer, *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Porträtsammlung, Vienna, digital object no. 10D866C4.



Figure 2.22 Charles-André van Loo, *Une Sultane prenant le Caffé que lui présente une Négresse*, 1754. Oil on canvas. State Hermitage Museum, Leningrad, 05127.



Figure 2.23 Jean-Marc Nattier, *Mademoiselle de Clermont en sultane*, 1733. Oil on canvas. The Wallace Collection, London, UK, P456.



Figure 2.24 Élisabeth-Louise Vigée Le Brun, *Madame d'Aguesseau de Fresnes*, 1789. Oil on wood. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Samuel H. Kress Collection, 1946.7.16.



Figure 2.25 Frederic Edwin Church's Olana, 1870–1891. Near Hudson, New York. Photograph by the author, 2019.



Figure 2.26 Frederic Edwin Church, The Court Hall in the main house at Olana, 1870–1891. Near Hudson, New York. Photograph by Andy Wainwright.



Figure 2.27 Sarah LaDuke, "View from the Bell Tower at Olana, showing the Hudson River Valley below," 2019. *In Frederic Church's Ombra: Architecture in Conversation with Nature*, Olana State Historic Site, Hudson, New York. Reproduced from WAMC Northeast Public Radio, "New Exhibition 'In Frederic Church's Ombra' at Olana," June 13, 2019.



Figure 2.28 Edmond Bénard, *Gérôme* (Gérôme in His Studio), c. 1884. *Alteliers d'artistes* (1884-94), f. 25. Bibliothèque de L'INHA, Paris, 4 PHOT 055.



Figure 2.29 William Merritt Chase, *The Moorish Warrior*, ca. 1878. Brooklyn Museum, New York, Gift of John R.H. Blum and Healy Purchase Fund B, 69.43.



Figure 2.30 Unidentified photographer, "Mr. Chase's Large Studio," ca. 1895. In W. A. Cooper, "Artists in Their Studios," *Godey's Magazine* 130, no. 777 (March 1895): 293.



Figure 2.31 Unidentified photographer, “Rue du Caire, Exposition Universelle, Paris," 1889. Henry Clay Cochrane Collection (COLL/1), Marine Corps Archives and Special Collections.



Figure 2.32 Centennial Photographic Co., "Women’s Pavilion from Horticultural Grounds," Centennial Exposition, Philadelphia, 1876. Stereoview. Designed by Hermann Joseph Schwarzmann. Free Library of Philadelphia Digital Collections, c061826.



Figure 2.33 "The Woman's Building, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago," 1893. Designed by Sophia Gregoria Hayden. In James W. Shepp and Daniel B. Shepp, *Shepp's World's Fair Photographed* (Chicago, Philadelphia: Globe Bible Publishing Co, 1893), 279.



Figure 2.34 B. West Clinedinst, "The World's Columbian Exhibition: Dancing Girls in the Egyptian Theater on the Midway Plaisance," *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly* (New York: F. Leslie, August 10, 1893): 83.



Figure 2.35 Byron Company, "Dancer Posing Outside at Coney Island," ca. 1896. Photograph. Museum of the City of New York, Photograph Collection, 93.1.1.3388.



Figure 2.36 Byron Company, "Dancer Posing in Her Side-Show Theatre at Coney Island," ca. 1896. Photograph. Museum of the City of New York, Photograph Collection, 93.1.1.3387.



Figure 2.37 Byron Company, “Crowd at a Side-Show titled: Original Turkish Harem at Coney Island,” 1896. Photograph. Museum of the City of New York, Photograph Collection, 93.1.1.3383.



Figure 2.38 The Rockfield's New York City Apartment, 1904. Private Collection of Mary Julia Oliver.



Figure 2.39 Charles F. Richardson, "Woman Laying on Couch in Parlor, Wakefield, Massachusetts," ca. 1900–1910. Stereograph. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., LOT 13684.



Figure 2.40 "The Kodak Girls at the World's Fair," In Nancy Martha West, *Kodak and the Lens of Nostalgia* (University of Virginia Press, 2000), 57.



Figure 2.41 "Cover of Truth Magazine, 28 September, 1898," Cited in Nancy Martha West, Kodak and the Lens of Nostalgia (University of Virginia Press, 2000), 59.



Figure 2.42 Nadar (Gaspard-Félix Tournachon, dit), "Sarah Bernhardt chez elle (Sarah Bernhardt in her home)," ca. 1890. Photograph. Petit Palais, Musée des Beaux-arts de la Ville de Paris, PHDUT43.



Figure 2.43 Frederick Arthur Bridgman, *The Siesta*, 1878.



Figure 2.44 Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Odalisque, Enslaved Woman, and Eunuch*, 1839-1840. Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Bequest of Grenville L. Winthrop, 1943.251.



Figure 2.45

"Femme Arabe dans son Interieur," Postcard. Reproduced in Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 69.



Figure 2.46 "Belle Fatma," Postcard. Reproduced in Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 34.



Figure 2.47 Universal Photo Art Co., "An afternoon tea," stereograph card, ca. 1901. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., 20540.



Figure 2.48 "'Oriental Den' of Mr. Charles Mullikin Groves, St. Louis, Mo. Designed and Decorated by the J.L. Isaacs Decorative Co., St. Louis, Mo." *Decorator and Furnisher* 30, no. 2 (May 1897): 37.



Figure 2.49 Eugene L. Isaacs, “Oriental Hunting-Room, Home of Mr. August A. Busch, St. Louis, Mo.,” *The Decorator and Furnisher* 29, no. 5 (February 1897), 134.



Figure 2.50 Unidentified photographer (possibly Nathaniel L. Stebbins), photograph found in a Boston antiquarian shop. Reproduced from “Nathaniel L. Stebbins (1847–1922) Early Work,” *Vintage Photos Johnson*, April 25, 2024.



Figure 2.51 Frances Benjamin Johnston, "Self-Portrait (as “New Woman”)", 1896. Photograph. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., LOT 11734-1.



Figure 2.52 Frances Benjamin Johnston, "*Self-portrait of the photographer in her studio at 1332 V Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.*," ca. 1900. Cyanotype photograph. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C., LOT 11738.



Figure 2.53 Carl Ludvig Emil Jensen, “Kvinde-emancipation (Emancipation of the female)," ca. 1900. Caricature. In C. E. Jensen, *Karikatur Album*, Kopenhagen 1912.

Reproduced in Liesbeth Grotenhuis, “Smoking Hot: The Odalisque’s Eroticizing Cigarette,” *Via* 11, nos. 11–12 (2017), 9.



Figure 2.54 “May Flaherty's Bedroom, Helena, Montana” 1905. Photograph. Courtesy of the Montana Historical Society, Helena, MHS Legacy Photograph Collection, 953-931.



Figure 2.55 Alice J. Maynor, "Pretty Corners in Girls' Rooms," *The Ladies' Home Journal* (September 1898): 15.

Chapter 3 Negotiating Representation and Spaces of Production in the Yenidze Tobacco Factory

The Yenidze, which began operations in 1909 as a cigarette factory, has since become a beloved landmark in Dresden, Germany (Figure 3.1). Today, the building houses a range of businesses including a culinary school, lawyer's office, artificial intelligence start-up, and a rooftop restaurant (Figure 3.2). Despite its repurposing, the Yenidze continues to be nicknamed the *Tabakmoschee* (Tobacco Mosque).[378] This moniker, already in use by 1909, condenses contradictions by combining sacred associations with the exotic and the commercial trade of tobacco. The factory's exterior was designed to be viewed from the perspective of commuter trains passing adjacent to the building. It functioned successfully as a monumental billboard, or what the architectural critic Adolph Behne called "a gigantic landscape advertisement,"[379] for Yenidze tobacco products until the Second World War. This dynamic, of the factory as architectural advertisement, still works today although the building (bombed in 1945 and renovated in 1992) is now associated more with Dresden's tourism economy than with cigarette advertising.

Traveling through Dresden by train, it is difficult not to notice this unusual building. Passing by quickly, passengers are only able to take in the most distinctive elements: the smoke stack, disguised as a minaret and topped with a tear shaped filial, the large dome made of colored glass, horizontal striping, and hundreds of repeated arched windows. Maybe passersby have time to notice the word Yenidze, wrapped three times around the base of the dome, but any signal that this used to be a cigarette factory is absent. For those unfamiliar with the history of the Yenidze, the reaction upon first glance is often confusion at this building's unexpected appearance in a German city. In 2025, when I last visited the building, a receptionist remarked that visitors sometimes arrive hoping to find a functioning mosque or prayer space. Although anecdotal, this

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[378] Holger Starke, ed., *Tabakrausch an Der Elbe: Geschichten Zwischen Orient und Okzident* (Dresden: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2020), 127.

379 "eine riesige Landschaftsreklame vor dem Bahnreisenden" (translation my own) Adolf Behne, "Fabrikbau Als Reklame," *Das Plakat* 11, no. 6 (1920): 275.

comment points to the continuing resonance of the building's design and its capacity to produce dissonant expectations in contemporary Dresden.

Traveling along the same train tracks, or perhaps by streetcar or by boat, in 1909, the year that the building was completed, attention might also have been drawn to signage atop the building that read "SALEM ALEIKUM" (a Germanized version of the Arabic greeting *as salam alaykum* meaning 'Peace be with you') (Figure 3.3). At night these words would have been lit up in neon green.[380] Also visible in 1909, though perhaps more difficult to see from the train, were the words "CIGARETTEN FABRIK (cigarette factory)" along with the name of the building's owner, Hugo Zietz, wrapped around the base of the dome, revealing the purpose and function of the monumental building. Through the appropriation of not only recognizable motifs of Islamic architecture, but also the Arabic language, made accessible to a German audience, the factory connected the cigars and cigarettes manufactured there with exoticism and luxury as well as travel by train to and from the imagined orient. Not visible to travelers coming and going by train were the thousands of employees, mostly women, streaming in and out of the factory's entrance at the start and end of the work day.[381]

Recognizing the significance of the Yenidze's exterior as advertisement and spectacle, particularly in relation to the company's overarching brand image, this chapter shifts attention to the less visible question of the factory's interior. I situate the Yenidze within a longer discourse on factory interiors in the nineteenth century, with particular attention to how these spaces were imagined and described in relation to spatial images of the harem (as elaborated in Chapters 1 and 2). The chapter then brings representations of the harem and harem women in tobacco advertising into conversation with publicity photographs of *Zigarettenarbeiterinnen* (female cigarette workers) at the Yenidze. From this perspective, the Yenidze emerges not only as a successful architectural advertisement and a technologically advanced factory, but also as an architectural mediation between imaginaries and the material realities of labor. The interiors, I argue, were shaped not only by the requirements of manufacturing and developments in machine

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[380] Ayesha Usman Shaikh, "The Yenidze Oriental Tobacco and Cigarette Factory: An Example of Islamic Ornamental Architecture in Germany" (MA Thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2020), 58.
[381] Georg Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt zum Besuch der Mitglieder der Bulgarischen Sobranje in Dresden und bei der Orientalischen Tabak- und Cigaretten- fabrike 'Yenidze" Inhaber Hugo Zietz, Königlich Sächsischer Hoflieferant am 6. und 7. Mai 1916* (Orientalischen Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze, May 1916), 23.

technologies, but also by the interplay between embodied labor and the imagined, eroticized bodies of the harem. The chapter thus reframes the Yenidze, reading its design as the outcome of a broader negotiation between orientalist imagery, public perception, industrial modernity, and women's labor. The tension between the Yenidze's public facing exoticism and its workforce thus underscores the contradictions of modern industrial capitalism, in which the same orientalist image that symbolized escapist consumption for the public also structured the physical and social constraints of those who produced and sold its goods.

A Complex Legacy and Limited Source Material

While public and cultural interest in the Yenidze has increased in recent years, sustained scholarly attention to the building is still surprisingly limited. This is likely due both to the personal lives of the factory's architect and owner and to mixed critical reception of the factory. This was the young architect, Martin Hammitzsch's, first large-scale commission received just two years after completing his PhD with a dissertation titled "*Der moderne Theaterbau* (Modern Theater Design)" (Figure 3.4).[382] Although the Yenidze cleverly adhered to early twentieth century zoning codes restricting buildings that appeared to be factories from being built close to Dresden's center, the Yenidze's domes and minarets nevertheless radically broke with the city's identifying Baroque skyline.[383]

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[382] Although Hammitzsch's dissertation focuses mainly on early modern case studies of theater architecture and set design, the overarching argument he makes is that architecture is perhaps the most important tool in capturing attention and creating drama. According to Hammitzsch, "it was not the actor, the singer, or the musician, but the theater architect, who also acted as a scenic painter and master of machinery, who actually exercised dominion on the stage." Martin Hammitzsch, *Der Moderne Theaterbau:Der Höfische Theaterbau, Der Anfang Der Modernen Theaterbaukunst, Ihre Entwicklung Und Betätigung Zur Zeit Der Renaissance, Des Barock Und Des Rokoko*, (Berlin: E. Wasmuth, 1906), vii; David Nielsen, *Smoke and Mirrors: The Yenidze Cigarette Factory, Dresden* (Berghahn Books, 2024), 2.

[383] Existing publications about the Yenidze, including museum texts, newspaper and tourism information, and even some academic publications, repeat claims about the building's architect Martin Hammitzsch and the owner Hugo Zietz without clear citation to primary sources. This includes the widespread story that, shortly after the factory's completion, Martin Hammitzsch, was expelled from the "*Reichsarchitektenkammer*" due to the strong disapproval of his colleagues and subsequently had to leave the city of Dresden for a period to find work. Thank you to Anke Blümm for pointing out to me that no such group of architects existed in this period. Another frequently repeated anecdote claims that Hugo Zietz commissioned the Yenidze's mosque-like exterior in order to circumvent municipal building regulations that allegedly prohibited the construction of an industrial factory near Dresden's city center.

Popular reception was more positive with travel guides exclaiming that the building "would amaze even the well-traveled."[384] The building's effectiveness as a marketing tool was also not lost on those considering architecture's relationship to the burgeoning field of advertising. Behne includes the factory in his 1920 "Fabrikbau als Reklame" ("Industrial Building as Advertising") for the publication *Plakat* (Poster), a periodical dedicated to the emerging field of poster and graphic design. The factory is mentioned alongside designs by Peter Behrens, Bruno Schmitz, Hermann Muthesius, Walter Gropius, Max and Bruno Taut, and Hans Poelzig, although Hammitzsch is not named. The building is simply described as the "*arabisches Zigarettenfabrik in Dresden* (Arabic cigarette factory in Dresden)" by an unknown architect.[385] Hammitzsch would receive the title Professor of Architecture in Chemnitz, before being drafted in the First World War. He returned to Dresden in the 1920s as the Director of the Dresden *Bauschule* (vocational architecture school) and, after joining the NSDAP, he married Adolf Hitler's sister, Angela, in 1936. The fact that Hammitzsch not only became the head of the *Reichsbauverwaltung* (Reich Building Administration) directly under the leadership of Albert Speer, but was also a member of Hitler's extended family, might have contributed to the Yenidze's uneasy position in architectural scholarship.[386]

Not much is known about Hugo Zietz (1857-1927), the founder of the *Orientalische Tabak-und Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze* (Yenidze Oriental Tobacco and Cigarette Factory) although he is understood to have been a close collaborator on the factory's design (Figure 3.5). What can be gleaned about his heritage and life is found in addressbooks, tax documents, general knowledge passed down by Dresdeners, and the wills and obituaries of Zietz, his wife, and

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Versions of this story appear in local histories, tourist literature, museum texts, and even in some academic publications, yet no building ordinances, planning documents, or contemporary correspondence have been identified that substantiate such a legal prohibition or link the orientalist design to a regulatory workaround. In the absence of archival evidence, this explanation should be understood as a retrospective narrative that rationalizes the building's unusual appearance rather than as a demonstrable historical cause. Nielsen, *Smoke and Mirrors*, 11.

[384] Nielsen, *Smoke and Mirrors*, 2; Kerstin Eckstein, "Ein Stück Orient an der Elbe, Yenidze und die Geschichte der Zigarette," *Konturen. Magazin für Sprache*. *Literatur und Landschaft* no. 3 (1993): 20.

[385] Behne, "Fabrikbau," 275.

[386] Although, anecdotally some reactions from German architectural historians working on the Nazi period have been uncomfortable with my reference to this later period of Hammitzsch's life in reference to a much earlier project. In other words, it is not simple to infer anything about the Yenidze based on Hammitzsch's later politics.

children.[387] Zietz was a German entrepreneur of Jewish background who moved from somewhere in the Rhineland to Dresden in 1886 after which he seems to have immediately started the company. One contemporary source describes him as "a flamboyant personality within Dresden's conservative tobacco industry."[388] Zietz's company managed to secure success early on with the Salem Aleikum brand of cigarettes. After only a few years, the Yenidze company had acquired over 1,000 employees. By 1909, when the new factory building became operational, Zietz owned six factory buildings in total with ca. 4,000 employees.[389] Zietz was recognized with the title of Royal Saxon Commercial Councillor (*Königlich-Sächsischer Kommerzienrat*) and also acted as the Honorary General Consul of Bulgaria in Saxony.[390]

More recent mentions of the Yenidze in studies of industrial architecture are rare and typically brief.[391] Annemarie Jaeggi, for example, mentions the building to make the argument that, unlike Peter Behrens' later work for the AEG (*Allgemein Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft*), the Yenidze is a well known example of emerging superficial tendencies in commercial architecture in which the form alluded more to the product than to notions of architectural identity.[392] Daniel

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[387] *Estate of Hedwig Zietz, Willy Zietz, Administrator, Petitioner v. Commissioner of Internal Revenue*, decision of May 31, 1960, *Reports of the Tax Court of the United States* 34 (1961): 351, accessed November 21, 2022, https://uniset.ca/tax/css/34TC351.html.
[388] Nielsen, *Smoke and Mirrors*, 9.
[389]Exact numbers of how many employees worked for the Yenidze company contradict each other in the sources. 4,000 comes from the 1914 report of a Bulgarian Diplomatic visit to the factory."Besuch Der 'Yenidze' Durch Die Abgeordneten Der Bulgar. Sobranje," *Die Tabakwelt* 11 (1916): 337–38; Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt*, 1-3.
[390] Hugo Zietz, *Visitenkarte mit Beileidsbekundung an Karl August Lingner*, 9 June 1916, inventory no. DHMD 2010/253, Deutsches Hygiene-Museum Dresden; *Adreßbuch für Dresden und Vororte*, 1919 (Dresden: Buchdruckerei der Dr. Güntzschen Stiftung, 1919), Einwohnerverzeichnis "Zietz, Hugo," digital facsimile, SLUB Dresden, accessed January 14, 2026, http://digital.slub-dresden.de/id32253152Z.
[391] Most existing scholarship mentions the Yenidze only in passing and/or only focuses on the exterior. See Annemarie Jaeggi, *Fagus: Industrial Culture from Werkbund to Bauhaus* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000), 41-42; Starke, *Tabakrausch*, 19–24; Koppelkamm and Mueller, *The Imaginary Orient*; Andrea Lermer, "Von Kairo nach Dresden: Zu den islamischen Vorbildern der Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze," in Francine Giese and Ariane Varela Braga, *The Myth of the Orient: Architecture and Ornament in the Age of Orientalism* (Lausanne: Peter Lang, 2016).
[392]*Allgemein Elektrizitäts Gesellschaft* (AEG) can be translated as General Electricity Company and was a German producer of electrical equipment. Jaeggi mentions the Yenidze factory as a well known example of a trend around 1900 to use architecture for "commercial purposes." She provides the example of an unnamed brewery made to look like a castle as evidence of companies utilizing architecture as a monumental, permanent advertisement that was very cost effective. Behrens' AEG, for Jaeggi, was the first to move beyond such a superficial use of factory architecture as brand identity, creating an all encompassing company image and elevating factory buildings to "Architecture." Jaeggi, *Fagus*, 41.

Nielsen's recent book-length study *Smoke and Mirrors: The Yenidze Cigarette Factory, Dresden* (2024) is perhaps the first in depth scholarly work to situate the factory within a broader architectural history, particularly its relationship to the commodification of Mamluk funerary architecture in the nineteenth century.[393] Amongst what little scholarship exists, information about the building's interior is even more scarce. The original interiors are gone, having been renovated in the early 1990s to office spaces and a restaurant. While the interiors as they exist in 2025 mostly feature drop ceilings, fluorescent lighting, cubicles, and neutral carpeting, some newer tenants have opted to strip back the 90s additions to reveal some of the building's original concrete construction (Figures 3.6-3.7).

The Yenidze's Original Interiors

The surviving visual evidence that can provide some insight into the factory's original interiors include a bounded report documenting the visit of a Bulgarian diplomatic delegation in 1914 and two films, *Die Säulen der Yenidze* (Pillars of the Yenidze, 1920) and *Ein Besuch bei der Orienatlischen Tabak- und Zigarettenfabrik 'Yenidze'* (A Visit to the Oriental Cigarette Factory Yenidze), from 1926. From these sources it is clear that the factory's design was aspirational in its use of new building and machine technologies as well as the efficient organization of departments and workers. For example, the Yenidze was one of the first industrial buildings in Germany to utilize reinforced concrete frame construction.[394] Tracks from the train line located directly next to the building were diverted to allow freight loads to enter the building from below. This created a vertical assembly line flowing from basement storage and cutting areas, to customs and sorting rooms on the ground floor (Figure 3.8-3.9), machinery and rolling stations on the second, third, and fourth floors (Figures 3.10-3.12), and finally back to ground level for shipping (Figures 3.13-3.15).[395] Eight elevators transported workers, goods, and raw materials to the five levels of the factory. The manufacturing halls were large rooms lined with windows providing natural light. These windows could be opened to allow for clean air

[393] David Nielsen, *Smoke and Mirrors.* Previous to this Ayesha Usman Shaikh wrote a wonderful MA thesis, submitted in 2020, that touched on this topic and has been a great help in researching this chapter. Shaikh, "The Yenidze Oriental Tobacco and Cigarette Factory."
[394] Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt*, 16. Many sources that are local to Dresden refer to the Yenidze as the first concrete frame construction in Germany, but this is difficult to verify. https://www.blog-stadtmuseum-dresden.de/whataboutorientalism/; https://www.stadtwikidd.de/wiki/Hugo_Zietz
[395] Shaikh, "The Yenidze Oriental Tobacco and Cigarette Factory," 67-69.

circulation and cooling during warmer months. For the cooler seasons the building featured centralized heating. Dust removal systems were installed on every level and each room was equipped with a water source and wash basin from which workers could draw drinking water and also clean their workspaces.[396]

According to the Bulgarian delegation's 1914 report, manufacturing within the building could be divided into two categories: the process of turning tobacco leaves into cigars and cigarettes and the manufacturing of packaging. Although the more expensive cigarettes and cigars continued to be rolled by hand, all packaging was produced mechanically at a rate of 100,000 cartons a day.[397] The Yenidze employed an in-house marketing and illustration team whose draft rooms and offices were located on the fourth floor of the main factory building. The fourth floor also housed tube and stamping machines, the machinery that produced the cheaper brands of cigarettes, and the cardboard packaging production areas. An individual *Zigarettenarbeiterin* was estimated to roll between 1500 and 2000 cigarettes a day while cheaper brands were mechanically rolled by machines at a rate of about 100,000 - 200,000 cigarettes per day.[398] Those rolling cigarettes by hand worked in large, long halls on the second and third floors that had stations for between 200-400 workers (Figures 3.11-3.12).

In the 1914 report, the Bulgarian visitors are particularly impressed by the employee welfare spaces. Five pages are devoted to descriptions and photographs making them the most well documented areas of the factory's interior. To support the ca. 4000 employees on site daily,[399] each floor featured large, gender segregated changing and wash rooms with around one hundred individual sinks that provided both hot and cold water, seventy-five toilets, and showers (Figures 3.18-3.19). The delegation was very impressed that bathtubs and standing showers were made available free of charge to all employees. Workers could go to a nurse's station if there was an accident or they were feeling unwell (Figure 3.20). On the fifth floor, the highest, workers could utilize a cafeteria that accommodated 1000 workers who took their meals in shifts (Figure 3.21). The roof of the building, stretching out next to the large glass dome, provided an outside space for breaks. Within the dome, workers were provided with a circular Ruhesaal (quiet/rest

[396]Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt*, 22.
[397] Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt*, 9.
[398] Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt*, 8-10.
[399] Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt*, 17.

space) with 360 degree views over the city (Figure 3.22).[400] In the report these spaces are highlighted as proof that the company was a modern, progressive workplace attentive to the needs of its majority female workforce.

In order to understand how the Yenidze's exterior and interiors mediated between imaginaries of the orient and the material realities of labor in early twentieth century Germany, it is necessary to place the building within a longer nineteenth century discourse on women and factory work. This discourse did not simply describe factories where women worked, it also produced them by casting factories as sites of danger, desire, and moral risk, often by mobilizing the harem as a ready made spatial image. This spatial imagery shaped how factory interiors were imagined by the general public, how women workers were seen, and which architectural remedies reformers proposed. By tracing the metaphors, anxieties, and prescriptions in this discourse, we can see how the Yenidze emerged within a pre-existing vocabulary of gendered industrial space.

Women and Industrial Labor: Visibility, Anxiety, and Opportunity

Dresden's tobacco industry was one of many industries rapidly expanding in Germany in the second half of the nineteenth century. As a result of this accelerated change, discourse regarding factory work was predominantly negative. Central to this pessimistic perception for many commentators was the increasingly visible figure of the female factory worker. As in much of Europe and the United States, the industries that employed the highest number of women were those related to textiles and garments.[401] Within Germany, by the end of the nineteenth century,

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[400] Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt*, 11.

[401] Most scholarly studies about women and factory work around 1900 thus focus on the textile industry. See Kathleen Canning, *Languages of Labor and Gender: Female Factory Work in Germany, 1850-1914* (University of Michigan Press, 2002); Stefan Bajohr, *Die Hälfte der Fabrik: Geschichte der Frauenarbeit in Deutschland 1914 bis 1945* (Marburg: Verlag Arbeiterbewegung u und Gesellschaftswiss., 1979); Amal Amireh, *The Factory Girl and the Seamstress: Imagining Gender and Class in Nineteenth Century American Fiction* (New York: Routledge, 2021). This analysis, like the scope of nineteenth century sources I refer to, necessarily leaves out areas in the Ottoman Empire, India, and elsewhere where women were also becoming a larger demographic amongst factory workers. These areas were shaped by very different political economies and global commodity flows. For more on textile and tobacco industries outside of Europe and the United States in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries see Susie S. Porter, *Working Women in Mexico City: Public Discourses and Material Conditions, 1879-1931* (University of Arizona Press, 2003); Gülhan Balsoy, "Gendering Ottoman Labor History: The Cibali Régie Factory in

women were outnumbering men in the textile and garment industries as well as in the production of *Nahrungs* (consumables) and *Genußmittel* (luxury commodities).[402] As with industrialization in general, this development took place later in Germany than it had in England and the United States, but the pace of change was more accelerated in Germany. A byproduct of this was a widespread feeling of crisis amongst the general population. As Canning explains, the ever increasing number of women working outside the home, understood to be a direct result of hyper-industrialization, resulted in "a profound rupture in the relations between the sexes, between social order and sexual order."[403] The female factory worker, related to the emerging idea of the *Neue Frau* (the German counterpart to the Anglo-American New Woman discussed in Chapter 2), became the central figure in a heated debate about women's right to work and a perceived disintegration of German morality.

Although the *Neue Frau* is most often connected to the 1920s and the city of Berlin, this figure, as Despina Stratigakos convincingly shows and as we saw in the context of the United States in Chapter 2, began to appear in popular discourse as early as the 1880s. Unlike the codified figure of the 1920s, the Wilhelmine Era *Neue Frau* was characterized in turn as the sexual rebel, the "emancipated bundle of nerves,"[404] bookish frump, fashionable cyclist, man-hating suffragette, and even cigarette-smoking lesbian.[405] In a broad sense, the label was used in the press to describe single, independent women who broke with societal norms in some way and who were quickly becoming regular fixtures in public life.[406] Factory work was one method for attaining a semblance of independence for working class women as it provided favorable

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the Early Twentieth Century," *International Review of Social History* 54, no. S17 (2009): 45–68; Samita Sen, "Gender and Class: Women in Indian Industry, 1890–1990," *Modern Asian Studies* 42, no. 1 (2008): 75–116.

[402] Kristina Huttenlocher, *Menschen in der Fabrik: Industriefotografie in Konsumgüterfirmen 1895 bis 1970 – Appel, Bahlsen, Sprengel, König & Ebhardt, Pelikan, Continental und andere* (Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co KG, 2021), 55.

[403] Canning, *Languages of Labor*, 2.

[404] "In Postscript to 1895 Preface to Jude the Obscure Hardy mentions the views of a German reviewer about the heroine Sue Bridehead as 'the slight, pale "bachelor" girl - the intellectualized, emancipated bundle of nerves that modern conditions were producing…" Harold Orel, ed., *Thomas Hardy's Personal Writings* (London: Macmillan, 1967), 35. Cited in Stratigakos, *Women's Berlin*, 11.

[405] Stratigakos, *Women's Berlin*, 11.

[406] It is impossible to consider single women in Germany around 1900 as a homogenous group as they came from all walks of life including white collar, university students, working class, artists, widows, and sex workers. Jill Suzanne Smith, *Berlin Coquette: Prostitution and the New German Woman, 1890-1933* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press: Cornell University Library, 2013), 5.

conditions to other positions available to them. Farming (*Bauerin*), maid service (*Hausmädchen*), and nannying (*Wartfrau*), required much more time than the typical nine to eleven hours per day at the factory and normally required employees to live and work in the homes of their employers. Tobacco companies were appealing as the work was structured on a piecework basis, with companies paying per cigarette or cigar instead of time spent, sometimes allowing women to come and go from the factory or work from home as needed.[407]

It was not only single women who began to work in factories in significant numbers, but married women as well. German census data show that the employment of married women outside the home nearly doubled between 1882 and 1907, with their share in factory work jumping from 21 to 29 percent between 1895 and 1899.[408] The attraction of factory work is demonstrated by the statistic that, at the turn of the twentieth century, an estimated 80 to 90 percent of applicants for factory jobs in Germany were women.[409] To much of the German public, it appeared as though, in a sudden development, thousands of women were abandoning their domestic roles to become industrial laborers. And not only that, but working alongside men in centralized factories.

Yet in many instances, women were performing the same tasks they had previously done at home.[410] Before mechanization in the tobacco industry *Zigarettenarbeiterinnen* hand rolled cigars and cigarettes at home. They would pick up sorted tobacco and rolling papers from their employer, work at home, rolling thousands of cigarettes per day/night, and return the finished product to the company to be paid and pick up more materials. Workers often enlisted their children to help until daughters were old enough to begin working for themselves, usually around the age of twelve.[411] These jobs were badly paid, existed in a legal gray zone, and were far from hygienic as tobacco was stored and tasks were completed in employees' cramped living

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[407] Franz Anton Bankuti, "Die Geschichte des Tabakanbaus in Hockenheim," *Badische Heimat* 1 (2019): 48.
[408] Canning, *Languages of Labor,* 2, n.1.
[409] Margrit Grabas, *Konjunktur und Wachstum in Deutschland von 1895-1914* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1992).
[410] Canning, *Languages of Labor*, 16.
[411] Bankuti, "Die Geschichte des Tabakbaus," 49.

quarters.[412] The Tobacco Museum in Hockenheim has recreated a typical domestic interior of a *Zigarettenarbeiterin* that provides insight into living and working conditions (Figure 3.23). In the display, a mother rolls cigars or cigarettes at the kitchen table while keeping an eye on the children. A memorial in the center of Lorsch, Germany portrays a similar scenario in which a woman works with tobacco leaves in her lap while a young boy plays with a cat close by (Figure 3.24).

Such visualizations replicating Dresden's tobacco workers' homes are not available, but it is reasonable to assume that the situation was similar. In contrast to the widespread perception of the sudden emergence of the female factory worker, the rise of Dresden as Germany's tobacco capital was shaped by an uneven transition from home-based to factory production. This shift was marked by improvisation, rapid industrial growth, and significant overlap between the two forms of labor. Many women moved between factory floors by day and home based labor by night until regulations were passed forbidding home-based labor in the tobacco industry in 1906, underscoring the gradual and contingent nature of the change.[413]

That said, in Dresden alone, at least 130 tobacco factories were recorded within the city's borders between 1860 and the Second World War (Figure 3.25).[414] Given that, on average, around fifty-five to seventy percent of workers in Dresden's tobacco factories were women, their visibility in the workforce would have had a profound impact not only on the tobacco industry but on the fabric of the city itself. Yet this increased visibility was a double-edged sword. On one hand, it led to significant public campaigns slandering the image of the female factory worker. On the other, it gave women the strength in numbers necessary to stage unprecedented strikes and push for meaningful labor reform. As women's presence in factories grew more visible, so too did anxieties surrounding their role in public life. Social reformers, journalists, and

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[412] Bernd Hüttner, "Blauer Dunst und rote Fahnen?" in Frank Jacob and Gerrit Dworok eds., *Tabak und Gesellschaft: vom braunen Gold zum sozialen Stigma* (Nomos, 2015), 216. Starke, *Tabakrauch an der Elbe,* 51.

[413] Marie Wadwiß, "Zur Lage der Zigarettenarbeiterinnen in Dresden," *Sächsische Arbeiter Zeitung* no. 138 (June 15, 1905): 2; Hüttner, "Blauer Dunst," 216.

[414] The city of Dresden has a great interactive map of many historic tobacco companies once located in the city: https://tabakstadt-dresden.de/.Zabala's many tables and graphs in his PhD dissertation are a great resource as to how many companies existed at various moments between 1860-1930 in Dresden. Juan Carmona Zabala, "State Expansion and Economic Integration: A Transnational History of Oriental Tobacco in Greece and Germany (1880-1941)" (PhD Dissertation, UC San Diego, 2018).

academics increasingly framed industrial labor not just as an economic necessity but as a profound moral crisis that threatened the very foundations of German social order.

Moral Panic and the Eroticization of the Factory Floor

As women entered industrial labor, social reformers and scholars increasingly framed the factory as a site of moral danger. Rather than focusing solely on the economic impact of female employment, many late 19th-century studies portray factories as spaces of unrestrained sexuality, social decay, and moral corruption, drawing direct comparisons to harems, brothels, and other sites of illicit pleasure. Criticism of women's factory work centered on two key concerns: the physical and moral dangers of the factory environment and, in the case of textiles, the fear that women were displacing male workers by accepting lower wages.[415] Tobacco manufacturing, however, differed from textiles in this regard. Unlike weaving and garment production, once dominated by male craftsmen, tobacco processing in Europe had always been associated with women and skilled immigrant workers. Tobacco sorting and cigar rolling in Dresden were, from the beginning, jobs performed by women and children at home with Ottoman Greek *Tabakmeister* dealing, mixing, and sorting the various tobacco strains in warehouse-like storage buildings.[416] The work of rolling cigars and cigarettes was considered particularly suited to women and children due to its supposed "ease" ("*Leichtigkeit der Arbeit"*) and the belief that their small, dexterous hands made them ideal for the task.[417] Due to these differences, anxieties about female tobacco workers were less focused on men's economic displacement and more on women's moral and physical vulnerability in factory environments.[418] It was only with the increasing transition of cigarette manufacturing into factory settings that the long-term health effects of the job became a widespread concern, fueling anxieties about the impact of industrial labor on women's bodies.

In the 1870s, German scholars in the newly developing field of social science began to methodically survey regions and factories where women made up the majority of factory labor.

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[415] Canning, *Languages of Labor*, 16.
[416] Holger Starke, ""Industrieprodukt und Massenkonsumgut: Dresden als Metropole der deutschen Zigarettenindustrie," in *Tabakrausch an Der Elbe: Geschichten Zwischen Orient Und Okzident* (Michael Imhof Verlag, 2020), 51.
[417] Gustav Lewinstein, *Die deutsche Tabak-Industrie: Eine Skizze Ihrer Entwickelung Und Ihrer Wirthschaftlichen Bedeutung*, Volkswirthschaftliche Zeitfragen (L. Simion, 1897), 36.
[418] Lewinstein, *Die deutsche Tabak-Industrie*, 36.

Their published findings portray men driven out of their jobs, families decimated by women deciding to work, children left in isolation to fend for themselves, and men driven to alcoholism due to dirty homes, as just a few examples. In these early studies, the factory environment is portrayed as playing a crucial part in the degeneration of workers' moral well being. The descriptions of factories are sensational and sometimes downright erotic in their quest to draw attention to the perceived social crisis. Serious scholarly studies portray textile factories as spaces characterized by "sexual abandon" or a "carnal underworld in which young girls succumbed to seduction or unbridled desire."[419] If we replaced the word 'factory' with 'harem,' such descriptions could have been taken directly from the genre of harem fiction, discussed in Chapter 1, and which was incredibly popular during this same period. Drawing comparisons between factories and harems in the late nineteenth century was, in fact, not uncommon and early sociological studies play up this comparison. For social scientists like Alphons Thun (1853-1885) and August Bebel (1840-1913) factories were not just spaces of labor but sites of dangerous sexual energy, where women's morality unraveled in the heat and confinement of industrial buildings.

Thun, a Professor at the University of Basel in Business Economy and History, was perhaps the most influential person to publish on the topic of women in factories in the 1870s. He describes the "hot, steamy" interiors of textile factories in Germany's Niederrhein region as particularly conducive to arousing "sexual desire." While working in a hot and dusty environment women tended to shed outer garments or wear light clothing despite working in close proximity to men. Thun writes,

> Thus all modesty necessarily disappeared. The tone, like the dress, was crude and unrestrained. So at dusk…and also during the night, when they worked back to back or side by side, vulgar words became vulgar deeds.[420]

Thun goes so far as to describe "dreadful orgies of wild lust amid the leftover scraps and spools in the dusty and dirty shops."[421] For Thun, the factory environment corrupted young women who in turn were responsible for the "moral infestation of the people (*sittliche Verpestung des*

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[419] Canning, *Languages of Labor*, 121.
[420] Alphons Thun, *Die Industrie am Niederrhein und ihre Arbeiter* (Duncker & Humblot, 1879), 66-67, 123-124.
[421] Thun, *Die Industrie am Niederrhein*, 173 - 175.

Volkes)."[422] Thun's text was widely cited by academics and social reformers alike over the next thirty years. In these studies the female factory worker was made explicitly threatening to the nation's moral health.

For August Bebel, a contemporary to Thun and often credited as the founder of social democracy in Germany, it was not only the interior environment, but the bodily comportment required to man the machines housed within which were stimulating young women in dangerous ways. He writes,

> Among the poor, it is certain exhausting occupations, especially of a sedentary nature, that promotes [sic] congestion of blood in the abdominal organs, and promotes [sic] sexual excitations. One of the most dangerous occupations in this direction is connected with the, at the present, widely spread sewing machine…Excessive sexual excitement is also promoted by long hours of work in a steady high temperature, for instance, sugar refineries, bleacheries, cloth-pressing establishments, night work by gaslight in overcrowded rooms, especially when both sexes work together.[423]

For Bebel, the factory was not just a space of economic production but a machine that transformed women's bodies in unnatural and dangerous ways. He suggested that the very act of working at a machine, especially in confined, heated spaces, stimulated female workers, leading to moral corruption and even physical degeneration. In this passage women's physical health is portrayed as directly influencing their emotional and sexual state. According to Bebel, exhausting yet sedentary activities, such as working at a sewing machine, cause blood clotting around the abdomen, resulting in sexual arousal. This is only compounded by other aspects of the factory environment. Nevermind that women had been completing similar work at home for decades or that wealthy women were also known to be quite sedentary.

Through such reasoning, Bebel successfully provoked connections between class, new technologies, sexual health, and moral panic. Although for the majority of social reformers it was the physical health of women and children that was at the core of their concerns, these topics evoked less outrage than the moral implications that women's factory labor potentially had for the German family and German *Sitten*.[424] Therefore, in social reformers' writings, descriptions of the close quarters, bad air, dark, and dank qualities of the late nineteenth century factory interior

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[422] Canning, *Languages of Labor*, 101.
[423] August Bebel, *Die Frau und der Sozialismus* (Verlag der Volksbuchhandlung, 1879), 73-74.
[424] Canning, *Languages of Labor*, 101.

are heightened and made unredeemable by the sexually charged effects such spaces (and the machines they housed) had on those working within.

Such descriptions of factories with majority female employees was, of course, not new. Thun and Bebel's concerns echo those made by Leon Faucher and Frederick Engels three decades earlier. In his articles on English factories for the *Revue des deux mondes* Faucher conflates what he describes as the female factory worker's promiscuity with prostitution. According to his observations, the factory was much like a brothel given that a great number of workers in the factory also participated in sex work.[425] Engels, in his *Conditions of the Working Class in England* (1845), also discusses the "moral consequences of employment of women in factories" at length. For Engels it was not only the crowding of the factory, "the inevitable contact" that led to scandalous behavior. It was also the social relations between employers and employees, the exploitation of female employees by male factory owners that was a cause for concern. He writes,

> It is, besides, a matter of course that factory servitude, like any other, and to an even higher degree, confers the jus primae noctis upon the master. In this respect also the employer is sovereign over the persons and charms of his employees. The threat of discharge suffices to overcome all resistance in nine cases out of ten, if not in ninety-nine out of a hundred, in girls who, in any case, have no strong inducements to chastity. If the master is mean enough, and the official report mentions several such cases, *his mill is also his harem*; and the fact that not all manufacturers use their power, does not in the least change the position of the girls…[426]

Engel's analogy between the harem and the factory here does similar work as women activists' fictional harems discussed in Chapter 1 in that it is invoked to insight intense emotion through reference to an imagined archetypal, gendered space of oppression and depravity. Although German sociologists did not always mention the harem by name, they continued this rhetoric of "sexual licentiousness" of female factory workers in order to excite German audiences to support

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[425] Léon Faucher, "Études Sur L'angleterre Vi Birmingham," *Revue Des Deux Mondes (1829-1971)* 7, no. 2 (1844): 182.

[426] Frederick Engels, *Condition of the Working Class in England* (London: ElecBook, 2000), 233-234. Emphasis my own. Logan notes that Engels is echoing Martineau's earlier analogy between plantations and harems. "Factory owners are configured as harem masters, their factories as harems, and women employees as harem wives and slaves. The resulting emasculation of working class men (and of black slave men) casts them as eunuchs." Deborah A. Logan, "Harem Life, West and East," *Women's Studies* 26, no. 5 (June 1997): 471 n. 11.

social reform. Notably, these sensationalist depictions would inform written propaganda and policy recommendations regarding women's factory work up until the First World War.[427]

The growing visibility of women factory workers fueled anxieties not just about morality, but about the structure of industrial labor itself. While early critics like Thun and Bebel framed the factory as a site of sexual disorder, government investigations in Germany began to shift attention toward the very real and dangerous physical and environmental conditions of factory work. Instead of restricting women's ability to participate in work outside of the home (as was the goal of Thun and Bebel), the governmental inspectors "focused on the mingling of the sexes at work, specifically on the failure of mill owners to establish sexually segregated restrooms, dining halls, exits, and entry halls or to prohibit women from going to or from work in the dark."[428] One report, from 1878, concluded that the harmful effects of factory work could be solved through architectural innovation that would improve poor ventilation, excessive amounts of dust, and the overheated interiors of factories.[429] This shift, from moral panic to structural solutions, set the stage for later reformers who sought to redefine the debate over women's factory work. Among them was economist Elisabeth Altmann-Gottheiner, whose research challenged earlier sensationalist claims and reframed the discussion in terms of worker health and economic stability rather than sexual morality.

Altmann-Gottheiner's Recommendations

In 1903 Elisabeth Altmann-Gottheiner (1874 - 1930), an economist and women's rights activist, published her dissertation, *Studies of the Wuppertal Textile Industry and Its Workers in the Last Twenty Years*, the first published study of women's factory labor by a female scholar.[430]

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[427] Canning, *Languages of Labor*, 100, 102. For more on the 'imaginative trigger' terminology to analyze the sexualization of women's bodies in medicine during this same period see also L. J. Jordanova, *Sexual Visions: Images of Gender in Science and Medicine Between the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Univ of Wisconsin Press, 1993).
[428] Canning, *Languages of Labor*, 109-110.
[429] Reichskanzler-Amt, *Ergebnisse der uber die Frauen- und Kinderarbeit in den Fabriken auf Beschluss des Bundesraths angestellten Erhebungen, zusammengestellt im Reichskanzler-Amt* (Berlin: Heymanns, 1878). Cited in Canning, Languages of Labor, 108.
[430] Elisabeth Altmann-Gottheiner, *Studien über die Wuppertaler Textilindustrie und ihre Arbeiter in den letzten zwanzig Jahren* (Duncker & Humblot, 1903). Born into a liberal Jewish family in Berlin and the daughter of the architect Paul Gottheiner, she, like many other academic women at the time, pursued her promotion in Zurich given that women were barred from pursuing doctorates within Germany until well into the first decade of the twentieth century.

She mentions Thun's study in the first sentence of the introduction, asserting that her study is a significant update and improvement of the highly influential work. She criticizes Thun's "*lebhafte Phantasie* (lively fantasy)" and shallow treatment of the subject of women's labor.[431] Altmann-Gottheiner's analysis is absent of the erotic undertones of her predecessors and instead opts for a straightforward description of her own observations of factory life. She uses these observations to then suggest a series of solutions on the part of the factory owners as well as the government.

The study substantiates the claim that factory work was leading to a new social demographic of young, single women, yet emphasizes the hardship that these women faced due to low salaries. Without family or spousal support, it was next to impossible to survive on these wages. Therefore, according to Altmann-Gottheiner, the blame cannot be put on workers for turning to other means in order to supplement their income. She writes,

> For the single female worker who has no financial support from parents or other relatives, it becomes almost impossible to satisfy her remaining needs... It is therefore not surprising that the female textile workers from Wuppertal constitute a significant portion of the prostitutes there.[432]

Like Thun and Bebel she points to the dark, hot, and loud interiors of factories as detrimental to psychological and physical health, but disregards claims that the contact between men and women workers led to erotically charged spaces. If anything, she explains, the close proximity of working men and women in these environments led to young women taking on the mannerisms in behavior and speech from their male colleagues. She cites a report from 1884 where female worker's clothing is described as extremely baggy and their speech as so vulgar that they would not be attractive in any way to potential romantic partners.[433]

More troubling for Altmann-Gottheiner was the impact such environments had on women's health. Although she was writing about textile workers, similar issues also existed for women in tobacco factories. In the tobacco industry, girls would often leave school at twelve to go to work in factories where contact with the raw product over the course of years was proven to cause anemia and skin problems not to mention frequent nicotine poisoning from a lack of

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[431] Altmann-Gottheiner, *Studien über die Wuppertaler Textilindustrie*, 2.
[432] Altmann-Gottheiner, *Studien über die Wuppertaler*, 41-42.
[433] Altmann-Gottheiner, *Studien über die Wuppertaler*, 42-43.

hand protection and breathing in tobacco dust that lead to headaches, dizziness, and a racing heart. Along with arthritis of the fingers from performing a repetitive hand intensive task, the resulting health problems from working in this environment typically led to cigarette workers ceasing to work around forty years old.[434]

Altmann-Gottheiner's conclusions aligned with those of the 1878 *Reichskanzler-Amt* report: the issue of women's factory labor was not a moral one, but a political, economic, and architectural one. She explicitly rejects the sexualized rhetoric of earlier studies, arguing that such portrayals were fabricated to stoke public fears that women's factory labor was eroding German morality. Instead, she reframed the issue as a matter of labor rights and industrial safety, asserting that women's participation in the workforce was not only a necessity for working-class families but also beneficial to the national economy. The real problem, she argued, lay with factory owners who failed to provide safe working environments. Significant architectural and technical improvements, such as better ventilation, ergonomic workstations, and fair wages, were the only real solutions to the challenges facing women in industrial labor.[435]

Despite changing perceptions of women at work in the early twentieth century, the language of early commentators such as Bebel, Thun, and others continued to haunt public perceptions of women in factories into the first decades of the twentieth century. Factory owners such as Hugo Zietz had to contend with the contradictions between the material realities of women working in tobacco production and the ways in which their products were imagined in relation to women's bodies. In the case of tobacco, this imaginary was powerfully structured by the figure of the harem woman, a trope that was drawn upon heavily in early Yenidze advertising.

Labor and Migration in Dresden's Tobacco Industry

The first tobacco company to open in Dresden in 1862 was an outpost of the St. Petersburg company Valbella, later LaFerme, owned by the Austrian Joseph von Huppman.[436]

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[434] Bankuti, "Die Geschichte des Tabakanbaus in Hockenheim," 49.
[435] Reichskanzler-Amt, *Ergebnisse der über die Frauen- und Kinderarbeit*, 109.
[436] Before leaving St. Petersburg Huppman was also in the business of hydrotherapy, a developing wellness and therapeutic trend known as "the water cure" which is an important component in the development of a European version of the "Turkish bath." Nielsen, *Smoke and Mirrors*, 6.

The first employees to roll cigars and cigarettes for Valbella in Dresden were Russian women who had previously been employed by Huppman in St. Petersburg. By 1877 the business had grown exponentially, employing 430 *Zigarettendreherinnen*, 20 *Tabakmeister*, and an unknown number of additional *Hilfsarbeiter* who produced a total of 20 million cigarettes a year, about 10% of Germany's market at the time.[437] Georgios Antoniou Iasmatzig moved from Constantinople to Dresden in 1868 to work for Huppman as a *Tabakmeister*, before opening the Jasmatzi Cigarette Company in 1883.[438] The Jasmatzi Cigarette Factory would be the third tobacco factory opened in Dresden and would become one of the biggest players in the city before being bought by the American Tobacco Company in 1901. By 1888 twenty-one out of thirty-three cigarette factories in Germany were in Dresden with the majority of manufacturing founders being of German origin and two registered tobacco leaf merchants of Ottoman Greek origin. It was in this context that Hugo Zietz (1857-1927) arrived in Dresden and founded the Yenidze Tobacco company in 1886.[439]

In addition to the interiors of homes in which *Zigarettenarbeiterrinen* worked, the architecture of Dresden's tobacco industry, before the introduction of consolidated factory buildings, consisted of small buildings throughout the inner city. Regulations for industrial cities were put in place in 1827, before the arrival of tobacco companies to the city, and remained in place until 1905.[440] As a result, tobacco companies usually consisted of storage facilities, spaces for sorting tobacco leaves, and storefronts where customers could buy products directly.[441] Therefore it was fairly easy to break into the tobacco industry if one was able to acquire a storage

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[437] Starke, *Tabakrauch an der Elbe,* 51.
[438] Originally he would work for the company Laferme. Sometime before opening his own cigarette company he would change his name to Georg Anton Jasmatzi. Jasmatzi was successful due to the early date with which he arrived in Dresden, with most Ottoman Greeks arriving in the 1880s or 1890s, and due to this early date he was also able to introduce rolled cigarettes to the Dresden tobacco industry. David Nielsen, *Smoke and Mirrors*, 7-8.
[439] As Zabala wries, the presence of Ottoman Greek tobacco leaf merchants would continue to increase with 24 Ottoman Greek owned tobacco trading companies in the city in 1913 out of 61 total. Zabala, "State Expansion," 37, 54. I've come across conflicting dates for the start of the Yenidze Oriental Tobacco Company. 1886 comes from Nielsen, *Smoke and Mirrors,* 9. A documentary film from 1926 claims that Zietz started the company in 1856. *Dokumentarfilm: Ein Besuch Bei Der Orientalischen Tabak- Und Zigarettenfabrik "Yenidze", Dresden*, Wirtschaft/Wissenschaft & Stadt/Architektur (CineMedia Film AG, 1926), https://mediathek.slub-dresden.de/vid00038147.html.
[440] Nielsen, *Smoke and Mirrors*, 6.
[441] Nielsen, *Smoke and Mirrors*, 9-11.

building at the very least. It was also relatively simple to begin work rolling cigars or cigarettes, as long as one had the space at home in which to work.

The LaFerme, Jasmatzi, and Yenidze companies quickly became some of the largest manufacturers in the city and, due to their rapid expansion, required an ever expanding pool of workers. Dresden, similarly to other large cities in Germany, was experiencing rapid population and demographic changes. In the last half of the nineteenth century, between 1850 and 1914, "5 million Germans crossed the Atlantic to work in the United States," more than any other European country or Russia (3.2 million).[442] The catalyst, from 1849-1853 was the combination of an agricultural depression in Germany as well as the American gold rush. Although the American Civil War (1861-1865) briefly lessened the number of German emigrants to the U.S., rates picked back up almost immediately following the conflict and the American economic boom of the 1880s drew even larger numbers. Whereas, until around 1850, emigration had been an important "safety valve" for German industry, in that, although expanding, it could not keep up with population growth,[443] by the 1880s it was creating a dire labor shortage.

Recognizing opportunities, millions of domestic and foreign workers relocated from rural areas to German cities and this transformation in urban demographics had significant effects on Dresden's tobacco industry. Within a century, Dresden went from a relatively small aristocratic residence, with around 94,000 residents, to a leading industrial city with the population multiplying by five in the second half of the nineteenth century to over 500,000 before WWI.[444] Foreign workers moving to German cities consisted largely of Eastern European Polish, Jewish, and Russian groups.[445] In the case of Dresden, a significant Ottoman Greek population also

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[442]David Khoudour-Castéras, "Welfare State and Labor Mobility: The Impact of Bismarck's Social Legislation on German Emigration before World War I," *The Journal of Economic History* 68, no. 1 (March 2008): 213-214.
[443] Khoudour-Castéras, "Welfare State and Labor Mobility," 213-214.
[444] "Population Growth in Large Cities (1875–1910)," *German History in Documents and Images*, German Historical Institute (Washington DC), accessed September 19, 2025, https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/forging-an-empire-bismarckian-germany-1866-1890/population-growth-in-large-cities-1875-1910.
[445] Saskia Sassan, *Guests and Aliens* (New Press Distributed by W.W. Norton, 1999), 53-55. It should also be noted that a significant number (at least 1.8 million) of ethnically German people also moved into areas of Eastern Europe during these decades as well. J. Diefendorf and J. Ward, *Transnationalism and the German City* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 1. I have found little information on Zietz's family

arrived in the city hoping to try their luck in the burgeoning tobacco industry.[446] Domestic migrants seeking work in cities consisted in large part of single and married German women who found positions in factories, as service workers, and as white collar workers in unprecedented numbers.[447] Through these population shifts in the last half of the nineteenth century, women came to make up ca. 70% of the workforce in Dresden's cigarette industry with German women being the largest sub-group followed by women from Eastern Europe.[448] Zietz and other tobacco company owners were able to take advantage of hundreds of thousands of single women moving to German cities looking for work and accepting low wages.

Given the immense population shifts just described, a significant housing crisis also developed. This lack of housing was especially difficult for young, single women moving to German cities without familial attachments in the region. This was because renters generally preferred to rent to men. Young women living alone were often discriminated against due to assumptions regarding prostitution. Many of this demographic ended up living in various boarding houses or dark, cramped spaces that no other renter would take without running water or a proper kitchen.[449] Needless to say, this situation often did not allow for rolling cigars and cigarettes at home. While tobacco production had initially relied on home-based labor, urban housing shortages, technological developments, and governmental regulations in response to international pressure pushed companies to begin consolidating tobacco manufacturing into large factory spaces, sites that, as can be observed in the case of textile factories, also became central to conflicts over morality, working conditions, wages, and appropriate design.

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heritage. I do know he was German Jewish, born in northwestern German. His role as founder of the Yenidze factory was well documented until he suddenly sold the company and died in 1927, I think from a fast developing illness. His wife moved to Switzerland and died in 1945 while the one surviving son moved to New York City. Shaikh, "The Yenidze," 56; Tax Court of the United States, "Estate of Hedwig Zietz."

[446] Fritz Blaich, *Der Trustkampf (1901-1915): Ein Beitrag z. Verhalten d. Ministerialbürokratie Gegenüber Verbandsinteressen Im Wilhelmine, Deutschland* (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1975), 21-34.

[447] Stefan Bajohr, *Die Hälfte der Fabrik,* 25. The majority of women worked in textiles, but the second industry with the most female employees was cigar and cigarette making.

[448] In 1893 it was recorded that, out of 138,114 workers in the German tobacco industry, 76,355 were women, so 55.3%. Jacob and Dworok, *Tabak und Gesellschaft,* 50. Starke, *Tabakrausch an Der Elbe*, 8, 55.

[449] Stratigakos, *Women's Berlin*, 54-55.

The Dresden *Zigarettenarbeiterrinen* Strike of 1905

If the real problem of women's factory labor lay not with the workers, but in the decisions made by factory owners and politicians, as Altmann-Gottheiner argued, then the challenges of the tobacco industry's rapid industrialization were twofold. As Dresden's tobacco industry grew, factory owners felt growing pressure to compete in an international market while also determining new paradigms for industrial labor conditions. By 1909, when the new factory became operational, the Yenidze company had become one of Germany's largest tobacco producers and employed over 4,000 workers.[450] Yet, coinciding with this success was mounting worker unrest across industries, fueled by low wages, unsafe conditions, and exploitative practices.[451] In 1905, two years before construction of the new factory began, and four years before it opened, a major labor conflict erupted when *Zigarettenarbeiterinnen* in Dresden attempted to unionize. The ensuing strike exposed not only the vulnerabilities of a predominantly female workforce, but also the resistance of German trade unions and factory owners to integrate women as serious economic and political agents. The 1905 strike, a pivotal moment in women's labor activism in Germany, would force Zietz to reconsider how Yenidze's factory environments were designed. The new factory's incorporation of welfare amenities reflected an attempt not only to improve conditions but also to pacify and control the workforce in the aftermath of the strike.

Up to this point, in the first decade of the twentieth century, women had not been taken seriously by German trade unions as labor organizers. Yet by 1900, a growing faction within the labor movement began recognizing women workers as a crucial force in union politics. Many within the movement argued that *Frauenarbeit* (women's work outside the home) could no

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[450] Starke counts over 2000 by 1913 in "Industrieproduckt und Massenkonsumgut," 54. The number 4000 in 1909 comes from a report in 1916. Georg Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt*, 16.

[451] There was an overall uptick in labor activist in Europe throughout 1905-1906. In Germany alone, the *Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung* (Saxon Workers' Newspaper) recorded labor disputes taking place at 41,373 workplaces involving ca. 1,117,070 employees in 1905. According to the daily paper, an organ of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), nearly three quarters of all strikes in 1905 ended in success, a first in German union organizing history. Heightened wages, a lowering of total working hours, improved safety regulations, and improved workshop design were all counted as important "cultural achievements (*Kulturerrungenschaften*)" of the movement. Christoph Nonn, "Putting Radicalism to the Test: German Social Democracy and the 1905 Suffrage Demonstrations in Dresden," *International Review of Social History* 41, no. 2 (1996): 183; "Statistik über die Lohnbewegungen, Streiks, und Ausperrungen im Jahre 1905" *Sächsiche Arbeiter-Zeitung* (October 19, 1906): 1.

longer be dismissed, as it was only going to become more central to industrial labor. Some even saw women's labor power as vital to the workers' movement overall.[452] By 1910 women made up the majority of factory workers in textiles and tobacco, and their numbers were growing quickly in other industries such as consumables and metalwork.[453] For many German companies, hiring more women became necessary to compete with the low prices of foreign manufacturers. Yet, in Dresden's tobacco industry, post-1900, it quickly became apparent that this model of exploitation had its limits.

In 1903 a record number of new members joined Germany's Social Democratic Party (SPD). Women were not allowed to officially join the party until 1908 due to laws prohibiting their political organization, but in 1902 it became possible for women to take part in party meetings as *Zuhörerinnen* (listeners), if sitting in a separate room from the main discussion.[454] The SPD, of which August Bebel was an important leader (the same sociologist who had written about the moral implication of women's factory work in the 1880s), was integral to the fight for women's equality as well as the collective organizing of German workers. Bebel and the party's other leaders closely followed labor developments across Europe, paying particular attention to the creation of the soviets in Russia, the rail workers' general strike, and the granting of universal suffrage, as well as the 1905 suffrage rallies, which drew over a million participants in Austria-Hungary.[455] A survey of the *Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung* from 1904-06 demonstrates the intensity and variety of labor movements taking place across Germany and Europe during this period.[456]

Despite a "powerful upsurge (*mächtige Auffschwung*)"[457] of union activity, reports from union meetings reveal the persistent difficulties women faced in being taken seriously as labor organizers. One example comes from the Metalworkers Union in Berlin

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[452] "Die Frauenagitation," *Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung* n. 118 (24. Mai): 5.
[453] Huttenlocher, *Menschen in der Fabrik*).
[454] "Frauen und Gleischstellungspolitik," *Geschichtswerkstatt SPD*, https://www.spd-geschichtswerkstatt.de/wiki/Frauen-_und_Gleichstellungspolitik (accessed March 8, 2025).
[455] Nonn, "Putting Radicalism to the Test," 185-187.
[456] Importantly the *Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung*, despite its name was "the voice of the party leadership for the Social Democrats of Dresden and eastern Saxony, not of their rank and file," Nonn, "Putting Radicalism to the Test," 189. Despite this, due to a lack of accessible sources giving voice to the rank and file members, the *Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung* is my primary source for insight into the 1905 Cigarette Worker strike in Dresden.
[457] "Das Gewerkschaftsjahr 1904" *Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung* n. 135 (June 10, 1905): 11.

(*Metallarbeiterverband*), a branch of Germany's largest trade union. Between 1904 and 1905, female membership rose dramatically from 200 to 3,500 members, a surge credited to the "Stuttgart Resolution," which called for unions across Germany to support women in taking leadership positions. Yet, when no such leadership positions materialized a year later, 2,000 women left the union. At the Fifth Conference of the German Labor Unions in Cologne, a female speaker from the Berlin *Metallarbeiterverband* directly confronted union leadership's failure to implement its promises. She pointed out that, in decisions regarding women's rights and roles in the movement, clauses supporting equitable contributions and public mobilization meetings were consistently removed by a large majority.[458]

A male speaker at the conference put the issue even more bluntly: "We in the German trade union movement really don't pay much attention to women. (Lively agreement.)"[459] Situations like this, where women joined unions in initial solidarity but later became frustrated and disillusioned by their lack of influence, were common across industries. The membership statistics of the Central German Workers' Union provide another example. In 1903, 12,448 women joined, but in 1904, only 7,938 new female members enrolled. The official report cited "few satisfactory advancements for women" in German unions as the primary reason for this decline, revealing the ongoing disconnect between rhetoric and reality in women's labor organizing. Thousands of women were leaving German trade unions simultaneous to their unprecedented growth as well as the unprecedented amount of women entering the workforce.[460]

The 1905 Congress in Cologne underscored this ongoing tension, as delegates debated how women should participate in the movement. Should they pay the same union dues as men, even though they earned significantly lower wages? Should unions actively promote women to *Gewerkschaftsbeamte* (union officials)?[461] On one point, at least, most in attendance could agree: women's work (*der Frauenarbeit*) was a critical issue for the larger labor movement. *Zigarettenarbeiterinnen* were specifically mentioned as a large and influential labor force with the potential for major impact, if properly organized. As one delegate put it, "[...] One cannot be

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[458] "Der 5. Kongreß der Gewerkschaffen Deutschlands Köln a. Rh. 22. Mai," *Sächsischer Arbeiter-Zeitung* n. 118 (May 24, 1905): 5.
[459] "Wir in der deutschen Gewerkschaftsbewegung nehmen wirklich keine allzugroße Rücksicht auf die Frauen. (Lebhafte Zustimmung.)," "Der 5. Kongreß," 5.
[460] "Das Gewerkschaftsjahr 1904," 11.
[461] "Der 5. Kongreß," 5.

careful enough to ensure that nothing is neglected in the organization of women."[462] Yet another decision at the conference demonstrated how difficult it was for women to be taken seriously as independent labor organizers. On May 22, 1905, a proposal was passed declaring that women and girls working in the tobacco industry should be encouraged to organize – but through their husbands and fathers.[463] This proposal is revealing in two ways. First, it suggests that union leaders believed male family members had control over women's economic and political decisions, reinforcing the idea that women needed male approval to participate in labor organizing. Second, it highlights how union organizers, who were overwhelmingly men, failed to see women as autonomous political actors, instead assuming that their labor activism could be mediated through male relatives. Even as working-class women took on greater roles in factory labor, their political agency remained contested, not only by factory owners but by the very unions meant to represent them.

Perhaps gaining wind of an organizing action and also due to cost cutting measures seen as necessary to compete against American and Egyptian tobacco companies, the Association of Dresden Manufacturers (*Dresdner Fabrikanten-Vereinigung*) made an announcement on May 25, 1905 mandating that any worker who had recently joined the Tobacco Workers' Union declare their intent to leave the union under threat of dismissal.[464] This came only one or two days after the Cologne Conference and three weeks since tobacco workers in Dresden had attempted to negotiate a new contract for higher wages. As of May 23, the Yenidze company had agreed to these initial workers' wage demands, along with fourteen other tobacco companies in Dresden. By May 25, the Yenidze, along with twenty-four other tobacco factories,[465] had

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[462] "könne man nicht sorgfältig genug darauf achten, daß in der Organisierung der Frauen nichts versäumt werde." "Der 5. Kongress," 5.
[463] "[...] im übrigen wird die Resolution wie der Antrag der Tabakarbeiter über die Organisation der Frauen durch ihre Männer und Väter angenommen." "Der 5. Kongress," 5.
[464] "Die endes unterzeichneten Fabriken geben hiermit bekannt, daß sie sich durch daß Verhalten der dem Tabakarbeiter-Verband angehörenden Arbeiter und Arbeiterinnen gegenüber den arbeitswilligen Personen der Zigarettenindustrie gezwungen sehen, sämtlichen Arbeitern und Arbeiterinnen, die dem Verbande angehören und sich nicht bereit erklären, aus demselben bis 27. Mai 1905 auszutreten, an jenem Tage aufzukündigen." "Gewerkschafts = und Parteigenossen!" *Die Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung* n. 119 (25. Mai 1905): 4. Although this declaration included both men and women who had joined the union, and both men and women went on strike to fight it, the strikes are characterized both by primary and secondary sources as a women's labor movement.
[465] "Zur Lage der Zigarettenarbeiterinnen in Dresden" *Die Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung* nr. 138 (June 15, 1905): 2.

rescinded this decision, joining the *Dresdner Fabrikanten-Vereinigung* in calling for workers to leave their union by May 27, 1905 or be terminated.[466] Shortly thereafter workers who refused were "locked out (*Ausgesperrt*)" of their factories. Groups of these locked out workers began to gather on the sidewalks outside of factory doors during working hours. They were careful not to behave in a way that would categorize their activities as a strike as activism outdoors was considered illegal in Saxony due to restrictive laws of assembly.[467]

The use of lockouts (*Aussperrung*) as a tactic to suppress labor activism was not just a legal or economic maneuver, it was also a spatial form of control. Factory owners in the early twentieth century increasingly used architecture to control workers' access to production sites, reinforcing the idea that industrial spaces were structured as much around exclusion as they were around labor itself. Similar tactics would later become central to industrial management in American factories, including at Ford Motor Company, where restricted entry points and security-controlled gates were used to suppress labor activism in the 1910s and 1920s.[468] Given the Yenidze company's participation in the 1905 lockouts, it is likely that concerns over labor unrest were already shaping how Zietz and his architect, Martin Hammitzsch, would later approach the interior organization of the 1909 factory.

Throughout June, reports emerged of police and public "brutality" against strikers, many of whom were described as merely "peacefully pacing" on sidewalks in front of factories.[469] Individual Dresden businessmen were named in the press, including Emil Dreßler, a printer, and Tastrau, a produce dealer, who hurled insults at striking workers, calling them "lazy dogs" and "scum that belongs in prison."[470] In addition, reports documented "harassment, insults, and physical altercations" against strikers by factory owners, managers, and workers who refused to

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[466] "Gewerkschafts = und Parteigenossen!," 4.
[467] Marvin Krug "Reports of a Cop: Civil Liberties and Associational Life in Leipzig during the Second Empire," in James Retallack, ed., *Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830-1933* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2000), 282.
[468] The method of the lockout was also used at Ford's British plant at Trafford Park in Manchester in 1913. Henry Friedman and Sander Meredeen, *The Dynamics of Industrial Conflict: Lessons from Ford* (Taylor & Francis, 2024).
[469] "Zum Austande der Zigarettenarbeiterinnen" *Die Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung* nr. 134 (June 9, 2025): 7.
[470] "Die Polizei im "Kämpfe" mit den Zigarettenarbeiterinnen," *Die Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung* nr. 132 (June 7, 2025): 6.

join the strike.[471] Women were called "sluts," pushed and shoved off the sidewalk, threatened with physical violence, and spit on from factory windows above. One strike report declared: "The hatred and brutality of the cigarette factory owners knows no bounds. This is how they treat the women fighting for their rightful cause."[472] Arrests increased throughout June, yet despite escalating repression from both the industry and local community, 3,002 women and 176 men continued to strike.

On June 4, cigarette workers in Berlin decided to strike in solidarity with their locked-out colleagues in Dresden.[473] Two days later, on June 6, the German Tobacco Workers Union officially called for a citywide strike of all *Zigarettenarbeiterinnen* in Dresden whose employers continued to threaten dismissal for union membership. By this point, only four companies, including Casanova, Kasaki, Kosmos, and Körner und Apfelstädt, had reversed their anti-union stance. Official party declarations by the SPD further reinforced the urgency of the strike, placing pressure on male union members to take action. In a public statement, the party declared:

Union members who do not prevent their wives and daughters from working for manufacturers involved in depriving their workers of the right to unionize will be judged by their fellow union members just as if they themselves were acting as strikebreakers.[474]

This statement illustrates both the lack of political agency many women workers experienced and the extent to which men in the union were still positioned as decision-makers over their female relatives. At the same time, however, it also reflects an attempt to convince male unionists of the seriousness of the *Zigarettenarbeiterinnen*'s labor action and to secure wider solidarity for the strike. On June 15, the Central Commission of Trade Unions in Germany called for a nationwide boycott of tobacco products produced in Dresden.[475] In addition to continued strike participation, considerable donations were sent from other unions throughout

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[471] "Zum Austande der Zigarettenarbeiterinnen," 7.
[472] "Zum Austande der Zigarettenarbeiterinnen," 7.
[473] "Streik Der Zigarettenarbeiterinnen - Stadtwiki Dresden," accessed August 23, 2023, https://www.stadtwikidd.de/wiki/Streik_der_Zigarettenarbeiterinnen.
[474] "Insbesondere werden Gewerkschaftsmitglieder, die es nicht verhinden, dass ihre Frauen und Töchter arbeiten für Fabrikanten, die an dem Koalitionsrechtsraub ihrer Arbeiter und Arbeiterinnen beteiligt sind, liefern, von ihren Gewerkschaftsgenossen genau so beurteilt werden, als gäben sie sich selbst zu Streitbrechern her." "Gewerkschaften! Gewerkschaftsgenossen!," 4.
[475] "Zur Lage der Zigarettenarbeiterinnen in Dresden," 2.

Germany to support the *Zigarettenarbeiterinnen*, sustaining the strike despite intense repression.[476]

As the strike continued through June, workers' reflections on their reasons for striking expanded beyond the right to unionize, denied to them in late May, to broader concerns about economic survival, working conditions, and industrial transformation. In addition to low wages, workers increasingly protested the unsustainable conditions created by mechanization and the shift from home-based labor to factory work. Marie Wadwiß, a striking *Zigarettenarbeiterin*, articulated these frustrations in an article published in *Die Gleichheit* (*Equality*), a feminist newspaper for working women. She described the strike as a fight for "the urgent need to pursue a better quality of life,"[477] arguing that women were caught in a precarious position due to rapid technological advances and factory owners' greed.

By May 1905, the latest cigarette-rolling machines could produce upwards of 90,000 cigarettes per day, radically increasing output and reshaping the industry. Large manufacturers regularly purchased the newest machines, while older models became more affordable for midsize companies, accelerating the shift from home-based production to centralized factory work. While this transition could have improved wages and stabilized employment, Wadwiß argued that it instead exacerbated worker exploitation.

> Thus, home-based work in the form of 'shell-rolling' (cigarette wrapper preparation) [...] supplemented factory work after hours. Women, in particular, are ruthlessly exploited in both factory and home-based labor [...] Workers who wish to earn more than a pittance must toil 12 to 16 hours a day. The factory workday is officially nine hours, yet this is extended by additional tasks at home [...] To make a decent amount, the work often stretches deep into the night, sacrificing health, family, and marriage. Just like those who work from home, female factory workers in the cigarette industry are wage slaves in every sense.[478]

Wadwiß emphasized that the continued success and expansion of Dresden's tobacco industry was made possible by the extremely low wages of its predominantly female workforce. Cigarette workers in Dresden earned between 9 and 15 Marks per week, about one Mark lower than in other cities. She described how this exploitation had reached a breaking point, with

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[476] "Zur Lage der Zigarettenarbeiterinnen in Dresden," 2.
[477] "das zwingende Bedürfnis, nach einer besseren Gestaltung ihrer Existenz zu streben." "Zur Lage der Zigarettenarbeiterinnen in Dresden," 2.
[478] "Zur Lage der Zigarettenarbeiterinnen in Dresden," 2.

Zigarettenarbeiterinnen fighting for "a better, less burdensome existence, for the strength and time to live as human beings."[479]

By late June, support for the striking workers had expanded beyond the labor movement. On June 22, Wadwiß spoke at a Public Women's Assembly at the Orpheum in Dresden, addressing the responsibilities of proletarian women and girls to stand in solidarity with the *Zigarettenarbeiterinnen*. The women in attendance collectively decided to boycott newspapers spreading anti-strike rhetoric and to provide direct aid to those on the picket lines, including food and material support.[480] The previous day, at an open assembly of all factory workers in Dresden, an attempt was made to mobilize broader support for the striking cigarette workers, but the reception was mixed. While some backed the *Zigarettenarbeiterinnen*, others hesitated, reflecting the lingering gendered divisions in the labor movement.[481]

By Thursday, June 29, only five additional companies had recognized workers' right to unionize, bringing the total to nine and still excluding the Yenidze company.[482] As the strike dragged on, tobacco companies escalated their threats, warning that they would relocate out of Dresden entirely if the city government did not intervene.[483] The same day as this last threat, the Yenidze and other factories began officially terminating the contracts of unionized *Zigarettenarbeiterinnen*.[484] By Monday morning, July 1, an agreement had been reached and the strike was over. Although workers had made considerable concessions, the *Dresdner Arbeiterverband* agreed to: 1) officially recognize the new union members 2) set a minimum price per hand-rolled cigarette across all tobacco companies in the city.[485] Despite these wins, the issue of low wages, raised six weeks earlier, before the issue of unionization came to the fore, remained unresolved. While the agreement was a significant step in formalizing women's role in labor organizing, the economic precarity of factory and home workers persisted.

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[479] "Zur Lage der Zigarettenarbeiterinnen in Dresden," 2.
[480] "Oeffentliche Frauenversammlung," *Die Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung* (June 30, 1905): 9.
[481] "Arbeiter! Gedenkt Der Ausgesperrten Zigaretten-Arbeiterinnen," *Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung* (June 21, 1905): 3.
[482] "Zum Ausstand in der Zigaretten-Industrie," nr.? (June 29, 1905): 4.
[483] "Zum Ausstand in der Zigaretten-Industrie," nr.? (June 29, 1905): 4, 7.
[484] "Streik Der Zigarettenarbeiterinnen - Stadtwiki Dresden," accessed August 23, 2023, https://www.stadtwikidd.de/wiki/Streik_der_Zigarettenarbeiterinnen.
[485] "Der Zigarettenarbeiterinnen-Streik beendet!" *Die Sächsische Arbeiter-Zeitung* nr.? (July 3, 1905): 1.

The 1905 strike had revealed both the strength of organized female workers and the deep resistance of factory owners to structural change. Yet, just a year later, new economic pressures, not labor reforms, would force the industry to undergo its most radical transformation. In 1906, new tax regulations mandated that all tobacco production in Dresden be centralized. This meant that rolling cigarettes at home was no longer allowed and each company needed to concentrate in one factory building rather than several throughout the city center. These measures were primarily aimed at reducing competition from Egyptian cigarette imports and restricting the increasing influence of American firms purchasing German tobacco companies.[486] For Hugo Zietz and the Yenidze company, this shift was both a challenge and an opportunity. Previously, Yenidze had operated multiple medium-sized production sites in Dresden, with most cigarette rolling still done from home. The new regulations meant that Zietz had to consolidate all production into a single factory and provide an adequate space for thousands of workers. The sheer scale required to house such an operation ensured that Zietz's new factory would be monumental, attesting to the Yenidze company's dominance in the industry.

With the decision to build a centralized factory, Zietz and Hammitzsch had to carefully balance competing demands. The new facility needed to comply with the 1906 regulations, reinforce Yenidze's brand identity, and address the labor tensions exposed by the 1905 strike. The new factory, positioned directly along a major railway line, was designed to function as an advertisement. With its domed, mosque-like silhouette, it commanded attention both from passing travelers as well as in Yenidze's expanding print campaigns. Whereas the exterior projected an image of spectacle and stability, the factory's interior reflected a careful response to concerns over labor unrest and worker management. How these spaces were structured, both for production and for worker welfare, were shaped by a growing awareness of how architecture

[486] In 1906 Dresden became the main hub for oriental tobacco trade in Europe. Cigarette manufacturers operated in the city, but also companies throughout Germany, Europe, and the United States would buy their raw tobacco leaves in Dresden. The appetite for oriental tobacco in Germany was so large that during this time Germany was also the largest importer of Egyptian/ Turkish cigarettes. As American companies began buying up Egyptian tobacco manufacturers, they placed high tariffs on these imports to Germany, causing German firms to seek solutions to displace these foreign companies. Zabala, "State Expansion," 38-39. "Due to a tobacco tax law passed in 1906 which restricted operational planning from decentralized company grounds, Zietz was forced to simplify operations by bringing the entirety of the company under one roof." Shaikh, "The Yenidze Oriental Tobacco and Cigarette Factory," 57.

could be used not only to streamline efficiency but also as a mode of permanent advertisement and to regulate the workforce.

Tobacco Advertising

As continues to be the case today, consumers who live outside of regions where tobacco is a large industry have little idea of where tobacco products come from.[487] Knowledge about tobacco's origins for the typical German consumer instead largely came from advertising. As was the case across the international tobacco market, foreign bodies, and in particular women's bodies, played a significant role in this regard. Racialized brand figures including that of an imagined harem woman were commonly seen on posters, product packaging, company letterhead, photographs, in film, and more. The Yenidze company participated in this use of the exotic harem woman's body in its advertising, especially in the years before the 1909 factory was built.

Tobacco became a global commodity in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries through European colonization, spreading from the Americas to Europe, the Ottoman Empire, and Asia. By the eighteenth century, Ottoman regions such as Macedonia, Thrace, and Anatolia emerged as key sources of small-leaf, aromatic varieties known as oriental or Turkish tobacco. In the nineteenth century, a "second globalization" transformed consumption: cigarettes joined cigars and pipes as mass products, and oriental tobacco strains became indispensable for international blends. American and British firms dominated through mechanization and marketing, while Ottoman Greek merchants developed prosperous enterprises in Northern Africa, the Mediterranean, the Balkans, and Central Europe. By 1900, Germany had the largest cigarette industry in continental Europe, relying heavily on imports of oriental tobacco. Zietz, along with many other tobacco entrepreneurs in Dresden, many of them of Ottoman Greek origin, used orientalist branding and advertising to secure market share in a fiercely competitive global industry.

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[487] Most turn-of-the-century consumers would probably not have thought much about histories of slave labor and imperialist extraction behind their cigars and cigarettes or developing global infrastructures, industrial competition, and political maneuvers related to tobacco, not to mention the *Zigareteenarbeiterinnen* whose bodies were intimately linked to their production.

In 1886, when Hugo Zietz first started his cigarette company, the new fields of marketing and illustrated advertising for consumer products were in their infancy as was the German market for cigarettes. Zietz's company would grow alongside these fields and profit tremendously from their development. The development of the "brand name" as a marketing concept became especially important for establishing the quality of a company's tobacco product as the industry rapidly expanded and competition increased. Max Rieck (1857-1932), author and owner of the internationally successful *Hansa-Cacao- und Chocoladenfabrik* (Hansa Cocoa and Chocolate Factory) in Hamburg, wrote in 1897 about the increasing importance of a knowledge of branding (*Warenkenntnis*) not only for consumers and producers, but for shop owners as well.

> What used to be required by all merchants as a fundamental condition, a thorough knowledge of goods, is now sought in vain in 95% of cases. Knowledge of 'brands' has taken the place of knowledge of goods, and every child can acquire it in a few hours if necessary. Knowledge of goods, on the other hand, could only be learned empirically.[488]

Whereas *Kaufleute* in the past had chosen items to stock in their shops based on quality, through many years of experience comparing various products, by the end of the nineteenth century, due to the rise of advertising, even trained experts were picking their products based on recognizable brand names.

Zietz's choice for the name of his company, Yenidze, is evidence of the instructive nature of the brand name. Yenidze is a play on the name of a real town, Yenice-i Vardar. Today this is the Greek city of Giannitsa in the region of Pella, but this area was a territory of the Ottoman Empire until after the Balkan Wars (1912-1913). The Germanized version of the town's name would have been easier for consumers to pronounce, but it also conveniently sounded similar to Zietz. The raw tobacco sourced for Yenidze cigarettes, a variant officially called Oriental Tobacco, was sourced from Yenice-i Vardar as well as other producers in Xanthi, Thessaloniki, Smyrna, and Samsun.[489] This area in the Eastern Mediterranean was the largest exporter of

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[488] Max Rieck, *Deutscher Kaiser und Deutsches Volksvermögen* (Leipzig: Freund, 1897), 42. Cited in Björn Weyand, *Poetik der Marke: Konsumkultur und literarische Verfahren 1900-2000* (Walter de Gruyter, 2013), 57.

[489] "Werbematerial Yenidze," 1925–26, no. 10722, Sächsische Gesandtschaft für Bayern, Munich, Stadtarchiv Dresden, Saxony, Germany. In addition to tobacco these areas also produced fruit, cotton, grains, and sugar beets for export to European countries. Harald Assaël, *Der Orienttabak: Seine Eigenschaften, seine Behandlung und die Geschichte des Orienttabakhandels* (Geneva: Roulet, 1972), 25-

oriental tobacco, known for its mild taste, low nicotine content, and high fat, sugar, and resin content. This variety, although not consumed in large quantities today, was the most consumed type in Germany until the Second World War.[490] Zietz's naming of the company 'Yenidze' therefore communicates the foreignness of the product as well as quality and authenticity in its direct reference to the center of production of oriental tobacco.

A good brand name was only half of the battle. Success hinged on getting that brand name in front of as many eyes as possible. Repetition proved successful in convincing consumers that, if they saw a name everywhere, it must be a quality product. By the 1890s the ability to print posters, stamps, and magazine advertisements that combined brand names with eye-catching illustrations became much more cost effective. In the case of cigar and cigarette advertisements, although illustrations were commonplace in advertisements around 1900, the brand name often remained the only element distinguishing one advertisement from the next.

We can see this in two examples of cigarette advertisements from the 1890s (Figures 3.26-3.27). Especially in the case of early *Genußmittel* (luxury commodities) advertisements, businesses often relied on racialized stereotypes to market their products. Both examples center the figure of the harem woman (also known in German as the *Orientalin*). The first, a Yenidze advertisement, depicts this figure atop a donkey led by a small, dark-skinned figure. Looking straight out at the viewer, the woman gestures to a satchel with her left hand from which cigarette boxes overflow in our direction. Drawing from precedent in orientalist painting, the illustrator has recast the odalisque as cigarette saleswoman. Likely unintentional, the advertisement also playfully gestures to contemporary transcultural exchange between European and Turkish women's fashions. The peacock feathered parasol she holds was in fact a European

27; Derya Gultekin Karakas, "Market-Oriented Transformation of Tobacco Sector in Turkey," *Turkish Thoracic Journal/Türk Toraks Dergisi* 15, no. 2 (2014): 75. In the beginning it is likely that Zietz did not manufacture most of the cigarettes he sold. If he did acquire raw material it was most likely through Ottoman Greek merchants based in Dresden who connected factory owners like Zietz to cigarette factories in Egypt and/or agricultural families in small villages of the Balkans. Oriental tobacco was only overcome after WWII due to the flooding of the market with American cigarettes.

[490] Assaël, *Der Orienttabak*, 25-27. Gültekin Karakaş, "Market-Oriented Transformation," 75.

trend of the last half of the nineteenth century which became popular around 1900 for wealthy women in Istanbul to carry (Figure 3.28).[491]

Without the text in the upper lefthand corner denoting this image as advertising for the "Manufacture Orientale Yenidze," this generalized image of a harem woman could easily be switched out with that of any other tobacco company. A poster from the Kosmos Cigarette Factory from around the same period provides a comparison. Although the two women in these posters are engaged in very different activities, one sits atop a donkey while the other engages in a provocative dance, they are both recognizable to a German tobacco consumer as versions of harem women. Such ads were drawing both on art historical precedent as well as psychological knowledge of the period. Including human figures in advertisements quickly proved very effective.[492] These figures, sometimes called trade characters, had the "ability to form a bond between the product, the package, and the advertising."[493] Additionally trade characters could "lend emotional appeal to the brand by personifying the product [transferring] its own cultural meaning to what can be an otherwise meaningless product."[494]

By 1897 the Yenidze company doubled down on their use of brand names through the creation of sub-brand names to denote each new tobacco product which in turn was often connected to a specific trade character or range of trade characters that were meant to visually target a specific demographic. The first and most consistently successful of these sub-brands was the Salem Aleikum Cigarette.[495] Over time the brand characters associated with this sub-brand would change, but until the First World war marketing materials suggest that the target audience remained, as it had been with cigars, the cultured, white German male. This can be observed through two stamps designed to advertise Salem Aleikum Cigarettes (Figures 3.29-3.30).

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[491] Rima Chahine, "Das orientalische Plakat Westeuropas, 1880-1914" (Dissertation, Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg, 2013), 148.
[492] Isabell Cserno, "Race and Mass Consumption in Consumer Culture: National Trademark Advertising Campaigns in the United States and Germany, 1890–1930" (Ph.D., Maryland, University of Maryland, College Park, 2008).19, 38.
[493] Barbara J. Phillips, "Defining Trade Characters and Their Role In American Popular Culture," *Journal of Popular Culture* 29, no. 4 (1996): 147.
[494] Phillips, "Defining Trade Characters," 147.
[495] Sebastian Blohm, *100 Jahre Reemtsma: 100 Jahre deutsche Industriegeschichte; 1910-2010* (Hamburg: Reemtsma Cigarettenfabriken, 2010), 7.

In the first, the harem woman appears yet again, this time sitting precariously atop a box of Salem Aleikum Cigarettes. Striking a pose and gazing directly at the viewer, she moves her veil to the side, presumably hinting that she is in the process of undressing. Her figure is more embedded in the text of this advertisement, underneath the brand name and between the new slogan "Etwas…für Sie!" (Something…for you!) suggesting that it is not only cigarettes to be had with this purchase. Notably, the harem women characters discussed in advertisements thus far are put to work selling boxes of cigarettes, yet do not smoke themselves. In Figure 3.30 we see another Salem Aleikum advertisement, yet here the intended consumer is pictured. This well dressed man, in a suit, coat with fur collar, and top hat, does not look straight at the viewer, but instead down and to the side. The slogan "Etwas für Sie!" descends in a stepped fashion leading the eye to where the figure lights his cigarette. Instead of a full body depiction, this one is zoomed in to a fully covered and well dressed man of means. We (the viewer) are supposed to feel that, if we smoke Salem Aleikum brand cigarettes, we can be this person. The differences in depiction between the women in these advertisements and male figure are clear in their meaning. Yet, without text, these illustrations could be selling any brand of cigarette. It is the repetitive nature of the brand name's appearance in various forms of advertising, in newspapers, in magazines, on posters, and stamps, which contributed to the Salem brand becoming the most popular for the company.

The Mosque as Architectural Advertisement

The design of the Yenidze factory's facade functions in much the same way as these early print advertisements. Imitating the juxtaposition of the brand name, or text, with exotic imagery, the facade ensures immediacy in the communication of its message, especially for those passing quickly by on the train. The factory, functioning as a three-dimensional advertising image for the Salem Aleikum cigarette brand after its construction in 1907, effectively replaced the figure of the harem woman with the mosque (Figures 3.31-3.34). Just as a singular harem has never existed, orientalist production also constructs the imaginary of the mosque as a repeated architectural type that, similarly to the harem, acts as a synecdoche for an Islamic orient.

Within orientalist visual production, similarly to the ways in which spatial images of the harem are defined by a certain set of furniture, objects, other interior decor such as wall treatments, and, of course, the body of the harem woman, spatial images of mosque architecture

are also organized around a set of recognizable, exterior features. Although the harem as space is defined by the harem woman as its inhabitant, the mosque functions almost entirely in its exteriority and as a means to identify the orient as setting. This can be observed in an 1896 poster for Vautier Frères & Co. Grandson cigarettes, a French company, wherein an imaginary landscape including a mosque and the Giza pyramids are used to denote the orient as the setting outside of a harem's windows (Figure 3.35). The only features needed to make the mosque recognizable as such are a dome and minaret. The Yenidze factory's design likewise accentuates these features as pure exterior, surface, and signifier.

Representations of mosques did not appear often in Euro-American print advertisements for tobacco products in the nineteenth century. They are sometimes featured in the background, as seen in the Vautier Frères & Co. poster, but rarely take central focus. That said, three-dimensional, ephemeral versions of mosques (and Islamic architecture more generally) were employed regularly at local and international fairs to market a diverse set of commodities ranging from tobacco to sugar, soap, coffee, spices, and more.[496] The Yenidze factory resembles the architecture at regional, international, and World's fairs, especially in that the dome and minarets function primarily to denote 'Islam' and 'orient' to a European consumer audience. The shell of the mosque exterior is used to sell consumer products and, in the case of the fairs, to create an oriental atmosphere for shows and events. The Yenidze, as popular architecture, takes fair architecture one step further, as a permanent structure, and in retaining no relation to a mosque's cultural significance or relevance to religious tradition.

Mosque-Like Aspects of the Factory

The mosque-like features of the factory, those aspects which contribute to the nickname *Tabakmoschee*, consist of two glass domes, nine towers or minarets, an impressive variety of arched windows, large entrance portals, and a series of decorative ornamentation. The domes are

[496] Çelik argues two points in her book: 1) "The placement of Islamic pavilions and the choice of their architectural styles were, for colonial governments, a means of mapping a western-defined world order and creating a picture of Islamic cultures as timeless, irrational, and underdeveloped." 2) "some of these same buildings, particularly those sponsored by Muslim rulers, can also be seen as an indigenous attempt to project a contemporary image of Islamic civilization, one that mediates between technological modernization and preservation of historical tradition." For more information on the use of Islamic architecture at World's Fairs such as The Alhambra Court at the Crystal Palace (1854) and Carl von Diebitsch's Moorish Kiosk from 1867 Paris Exposition see Çelik, *Displaying the Orient,* 2.

made of green, red, blue, and gold translucent glass supported by a steel frame. The largest has a span of twenty meters.[497] Domes are significant elements in many mosques, where they can symbolize the connection between the earthly and the divine and convey a sense of spatial vastness. Located over the central prayer hall, they are often the focal point of mosque architecture, but this is not always the case. Domes enhance acoustics within the interior, are useful for light and air circulation, and create the visual and spatial ambiance that shape a mosque's sacred atmosphere. Domes are also displays of technological ingenuity as an engineering feat that allows for large open spaces without supporting pillars, creating a sense of spaciousness and openness. Lastly, domes are also of historical significance, linking the designs of mosques to the cultural and architectural heritage of past Islamic civilizations.

Of the few architectural historians who have contextualized the factory within world architecture, Nielsen and [Reference the German author here who published the article before Nielsen.] have focused on how the largest dome of the Yenidze resembles that of the Khayr Bek and Sultan al-Ashraf Qaytbay funerary complexes in Cairo (Figures 3.36-3.39).[498] Yet their similarities lie only in the exterior form. It is severed from any technical, religious, or cultural meaning, and simply signifies "mosque" to a viewer outside of the building. The Yenidze dome's function, at least the glass portion, lies almost entirely in its exterior appearance to potential customers. It does not open onto a larger space beneath. The play of light afforded by the colored glass is experienced inwardly within a small room located directly underneath the dome while electric illumination from within observed from afar and at night provides the primary element of spectacle (Figures 3.40-3.41). The golden crown that can be seen jutting out of the very tip of the dome also serves the double purpose of signifying "mosque" while acting as an advertising medium. While appearing to be a crescent finial, a metal rod or spike that is a common feature of mosque domes, the golden object is literally a symbolic object awarded to Zietz, letting consumers know that the Yenidze company was a supplier to the Saxon royal court (*sächsischer Hoflieferant*).[499] This was a high honor and title given to certain businesses authorized to provide goods and services to the royal court. The golden sign, placed at the

[497] "Werbematerial Yenidze."
[498] Lermer, "Von Kairo nach Dresden," 114.
[499] "Yenidze | Dresden," accessed May 12, 2023, https://www.yenidze.eu/en/#.ZF4P0-xBw-Q.

highest point on the building, would have been known to fellow merchants and some consumers as signifying prestige and quality.[500]

Out of the nine towers rising from the factory only one is functional while the remaining eight are solely decorative. A minaret is a tall, slender tower whose primary function is related to Islamic religious practices and community life. It is both a symbol of the presence of Islam in a particular area as well as the platform from which the call to prayer (Adhan) is made.[501] The largest minaret-like tower incorporated into the Yenidze factory functions to disguise the chimney. In its camouflaging of factory production within, it redirects attention by standing out. Located slightly off-center and attached to the front of the main building, the tower's pink and white stripes distinguish it from the rest of the facade. It is topped with a tear or lantern shaped finial similar to some minaret designs in Mamluk architecture, but constructed with what seems to be a moldable wire-like material. The nine minaret-like towers together work to create vertical thrust to the building as well as contribute to the asymmetrical or unevenness of the building's exterior. Causing a bit of outrage at the time of construction, the Yenidze minarets pierced Dresden's skyline, competing with the nearby towers of local churches such as the *Kreuzkirche* and *Dreikönigskirche*. Maybe bring it back to fair architecture here in the last sentence with how the public reacted to minarets?

Fascination with the Neo-Mamluk Style in Europe and at World's Fairs

More specifically than denoting "mosque" to a general public, these facets of the Yenidze's exterior would be recognizable to a certain educated and internationally oriented slice of society as corresponding to what is known as the Neo-Mamluk or Mamluk revival style.[502]

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[500] "Liste sächsischer Hoflieferanten," in *Wikipedia*, May 25, 2023, https://de.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Liste_s%C3%A4chsischer_Hoflieferanten&oldid=234022855#cite_note-Adr-Dre-1917-5.

[501] Robert Hillenbrand, "III. The Minaret," in *Islamic Architecture: Form, Function and Meaning* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994), 129–72.

[502] The Mamluks were enslaved military recruits, largely from the Black Sea and Caucasus regions, who rose to become the ruling elite of Egypt and Syria and established a powerful sultanate that lasted from 1250 to 1517. As foreign rulers who never fully assimilated into local society, they used architecture in Cairo as a primary means of projecting political authority, dynastic legitimacy, and religious prestige. In the nineteenth century, "Mamluk" came to function in European and Egyptian design discourse as a broad stylistic label for Cairo's pre-Ottoman architecture, shaping what Mercedes Volait has described as an

Championed by both European and Egyptian architects and leaders, this was a style that combined stylistic elements of historic Mamluk architecture with the principles of an emerging European modernism.[503] The characteristics of historic Mamluk architecture that are often found in Neo-Mamluk styles include alternating layers of colored stone or *ablaq*, polychrome stone finish, "emphasis on verticality...achieved through attenuated portals, tall minarets and high and slender domes," creative floor plans and volumes that both adapt to and "dominate" urban sites through the monumentality and visually striking nature of building exteriors that stand out in the city (Figures 3.42-3.43).[504] Two key fifteenth century structures which are referenced in relation to the Yenidze's exterior are the funerary complexes of the Mamluk sultans Qaytbay and Khayrbak. Unlike the Yenidze, these were not singular structures, but multifunctional complexes that included mausoleums, mosques, and madrasas (schools) that were intended to secure prayers and public services for centuries after their patrons' deaths.[505] The design of their domes and minarets, in particular, resemble those of the Yenidze factory. They also feature alternating stone bands, richly carved surfaces, and the complexes were placed strategically within the city of Cairo for maximum visibility. The funerary complexes were originally designed to evoke spectacle, reputation, and political messaging, not so unlike what we see with the Yenidze.

After Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798, European architects, archaeologists, and scholars such as Pascal Coste, Girault de Prangey, Ambroise Baudry, James Wild, John Frederick Lewis, Frantisek Schmoranz, Prisse de'Avennes, Friedrich Saare, Ernst Herzfeld, Ludwig Deutsch, Carl von Diebitsch, and many more traveled to Egypt and became fascinated with the Islamic architecture of Cairo. In the 1840s Prangey produced a gigantic work of 800 daguerreotypes depicting Cairo's skyline, mosques, and minarets.[506] Lewis and Wild sketched

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"Islamic revival on Mamluk terms" that drew selectively on the city's medieval monuments rather than on an undifferentiated idea of Islamic style. Mercedes Volait, "Islamic Revivial on Mamluk Terms: the Impact of Historical Cairo on 19th-century Design," *SGMOIK Bulletin* 44 (2017), 31-39; Nielsen, *Smoke and Mirrors*, 35.

[503] Mercedes Volait, "Appropriating Orientalism? Saber Sabri's Mamluk Revivals in Late-Nineteenth-Century Cairo," in Doris Behrens-Abouseif and Stephen Vernoit, eds., *Islamic Art in the 19th Century: Tradition, Innovation, and Eclecticism* (Brill, 2006), 131-134.

[504] Nasser Rabbat, *Mamluk History Through Architecture: Monuments, Culture and Politics in Medieval Egypt and Syria* (I. B. Tauris & Company, Limited, 2010), 234-235.

[505] Rabbat, *Mamluk History*, 112, 118, 120, 132-136.

[506] Girault de Prangey, *Essai Sur l'architecture Des Arabes et Des Mores, En Espagne, En Sicile, et En Barbarie* (A. Hauser etc., 1841).

and produced watercolors of the city's domestic architecture.[507] Baudry was recognized by the Khedive Isma'il Pasha as a key specialist in Neo-Mamluk styles and subsequently produced designs for structures in both Egypt and France. Another important architect who worked closely with the Khedive and his circles was the Czech architect Frantisek Schmoranz who would later become director of the School of Applied Arts in Prague. Whereas the Neo-Mamluk style that was popular early on was related to architectural reuse and creative preservation, by the late nineteenth century it became attached to ideas about national identity.[508]

The Vienna *Weltaustellung* (World's Fair) of 1873 and Berlin *Gewerbeaustellung* (Trade Fair) of 1896 are particularly important for understanding where Hammitzsch and Zietz drew their references in Yenidze's design. The Czech architect Schmoranz, with the help of the German Egyptologist Heinrich Brugsch, designed the Egyptian pavilion for the Vienna fair (Figures 3.44-3.45). The pavilion, financed by Isma'il Pasha of Egypt, included the first ever reproduction of Qaytbay's funerary complex in Europe, complete with minaret, as well as forms derived from the mausoleum minarets of Salar and Sanja al-Jawli's funerary complexes. The pavilion's elements were widely considered to closely resemble the originals and to be an outstanding success. Schmoranz received multiple awards for his design.[509] The elongated dome, with its bands of stone ornament and arched windows, atop a base consisting of a three-dimensional triangular geometric design, corresponds very closely to the Yenidze's dome as does the alternating colored bands throughout the facade. After the Vienna fair, Neo-Mamluk architecture, and in particular the Qaytbay complex, would become regular staples at European and American international fairs.[510]

A later reproduction of the Qaytbay complex at the Berlin *Gewerbeausstelung* of 1896, held in parallel with the *Deutsche Kolonial-Ausstellung* (German Colonial Exhibition), was more likely to have been experienced directly by Hammitzsch and Zietz as well as potential customers

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[507] Abraham Thomas, "James Wild, Cairo and the South Kensington Museum," in *Le Caire Dessiné et Photographié Au XIXe Siècle*, ed. Mercedes Volait (Publications de l'Institut national d'histoire de l'art, 2013); Emily M. Weeks, *Cultures Crossed: John Frederick Lewis and the Art of Orientalism* (Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2014).
[508] Volait, "Islamic Revival," 31-39.
[509] Also notable is that the Prussian pavilion for the Exposition Universelle of 1867 was done in a "moorish style." Nielsen, *Smoke and Mirrors*, 51-53.
[510] Nielsen, *Smoke and Mirrors*, 54-56.

who would see the Yenidze in Dresden. This version was integrated into a much larger attraction titled "Kairo" (Figure 3.46)[511] Contemporary commentators remarked on the "faithful" recreations of the Qaytbay complex, el Muayyad mosque, and Bab Zuwayla gate (it is the impression of authenticity that matters here rather than investigating if this was actually true). In Berlin the Qaytbay reproduction was designed by the architect Gabriel Wohlgemuth who was assisted by Moritz Lehmann, a painter of theater backdrops. Much more immersive, the Egyptian section of the Berlin fair could be accessed by paying an additional fee, which more than two million visitors did. Ethnographic performers participated in the attraction and the mosque is said to have "functioned as an authentic religious venue for Friday prayers." Nevertheless, in addition to these prayer spaces, within the mosque was also a market, a theater, and a cafe.[512] It is likely that most customers who saw the Yenidze factory in person or through print advertising and packaging, would be reminded of "Kairo" at the Berlin fair in 1896 rather than the factory calling to mind historic Cairene funerary complexes.

Conflations of Harem and Mosque in World's Fair Commercialism

The ways in which the Yenidze factory uses references to Mamluk mosque architecture to create a wrapping or packaging for an exotic product corresponds to similar uses of mosque as architectural advertisement at these international fairs. Outside of Germany, the *Rue du Caire* at the l'Exposition Universelle in 1889 in Paris was widely covered in the European and American press, largely to great acclaim. Timothy Mitchell and Zeynep Çelik have documented the varied feelings of Egyptian visitors to this exhibition that was supposedly intended to represent them. As Mitchell writes, one Egyptian delegation, on their way to the Eighth International Congress of Orientalists in Stockholm, made a stop at the exhibition in Paris and were surprised to discover that, "the mosque…like the rest of the street…had been erected as what the Europeans called a

[511] The 1896 Gewerbeausstellung was the largest ever exhibition in Germany with 4,000 exhibits and taking up a space of over 1 million square meters. It was only surpassed in size in 2000 by a fair in Hanover. Nielsen, *Smoke and Mirrors*, 60; Alexander C. T. Geppert, "Berlin 1896: Wilhelm II, Georg Simmel and the Berliner Gewerbeausstellung," in *Fleeting Cities: Imperial Expositions in Fin-de-Siècle Europe*, ed. Alexander C. T. Geppert (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2013), 48-51.
[512] Nielsen, *Smoke and Mirrors*, 57-59; Geppert, "Berlin 1896," 48-51.

facade."[513] Whereas the exterior might appear as a mosque, even reproducing certain details from the Qaytbay mosque, the inside functioned as a coffee house where various performances, including belly dancing and whirling dervishes, could be experienced.

Similarly, the mosque of the Midway at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 became one of the most photographed aspects of the entire fair. Located in the center of the commercial and entertainment focused section at the entrance to the fair, "The high dome and minaret made the mosque one of the symbols of the Midway,"[514] largely through its silhouette against the ephemeral skyline of the White City (Figure 3.47). Although not a mosque, the Damascus Palace located nearby is worth mentioning due the large entrance portal and striped facade which make it visually similar to the Yenidze although on a smaller scale (Figure 3.48). The "palace" interior consisted of a single room with a "wide divan all around, and in its marble-paved vestibule was an octagonal fountain" where once a day an "Oriental wedding ceremony" was performed.[515] In these three examples of world's fair architecture the architectural type of the mosque overlaps and is, especially in the Paris example, conflated with the interior space of the harem. Activities such as belly dancing and drinking coffee were associated with the harem and locating them inside of a building with the appearance of a religious structure must have been strange and offensive.

As discussed in Chapter 2, universal exhibitions and world's fairs did not only work to display western understandings of power, knowledge, modernity, and progress, or as "windows onto the foreign," they were importantly also "places of pilgrimage to the commodity fetish."[516] Architecture played an enormous role in attracting customers and displays representing Egyptian, Ottoman Turkish, Syrian, Persian, and other 'oriental' cultures were a major draw. They not only 'represented' an exotic place and the people living there, the Turkish section of many fairs, for example, would have a bazaar, a theater, and various items or experiences for sale such as

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[513] This visit to the Paris exhibit by the Egyptian delegation is discussed in two slightly different ways in Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt,* 1; Çelik, *Displaying the Orient*, 77-78. Mitchell focuses on the negative reactions of Egyptians to their representation in Europe whereas Çelik gives a broader look at the fair as well as a spectrum of reactions from Europeans and Egyptians in attendance.
[514] Çelik, *Displaying the Orient*, 85.
[515] Çelik, *Displaying the Orient*, 87.
[516] Walter Benjamin, "Paris, The Capital of the Nineteenth Century" in *The Arcades Project* (Cambridge and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 7. Cited in relation to world's fairs in Bravard and Rogers, *Women in International and Universal Exhibitions,* 2, 14.

carpets and camel riding, etc. Proven to be especially successful were the inclusion of references or even small pieces of 'authentic' buildings and places, from cities like Cairo and Damascus. In contemporary coverage of the fairs, the smells and tastes of coffee and tobacco were huge aspects of the experience of Cairo street exhibitions. Until 1905 Germany was the largest importer of Egyptian cigarettes and other tobacco products. It is no wonder then, that Zietz would choose to design his factory advertisement in the Neo-Mamluk style. After 1905, due to import tariffs and lowered taxes for German produced cigarettes, cigarettes produced in Dresden began to take over the market.[517] The Yenidze can be seen to represent this transfer of market power.

Fair architecture also acquired meaning through their circulation in print. While many did travel to Berlin and some from Germany to Vienna, Paris, Chicago, London, or Amsterdam for the fairs, most people living in Germany would not have seen these architectures firsthand. Instead, the *Rue du Caire* of the 1889 *Exposition Universelle* and the Turkish Bazaar at the Chicago Columbian Exposition in 1893 existed for everyday consumers through extensive media coverage, including textual description, engraved illustrations, and later photographs, in German magazines.[518] These reports were likely printed in newspapers alongside advertisements for *Genußmittel* that utilize orientalist aesthetics such as the tobacco advertisements described above. The Yenidze's references to mosque architecture, and even the conflation of the mosque with harem references, are very clever in this way, evoking the orient in a general sense on the one hand, but also creating associations between Yenidze cigarettes and the fun, exotic entertainments of world's fairs.

Other Permanent Orientalist Structures in Europe

Although many elements of the Yenidze's facade can be traced to inspiration from Islamic architecture and its reproduction at world's fairs, there are elements that point to the factory design also following a lineage of precedents in European and specifically German architecture. In England, for example, the Alhambra Theatre (1854) and Royal Pavilion in

[517] Nielsen*, Smoke and Mirrors,* 57, 59.
[518] "Leipzig's *Illustrierte Zeitung*, for instance, devoted a great deal of space to engraved illustrations from Amsterdam's International Colonial Exhibition of 1883." For an in depth analysis of the representation of World's Fairs in various German illustrated magazines see Ciarlo, *Advertising Empire*, 137–138.

Brighton (1815-1823) stand out as monumental precursors (Figures 3.49-3.50). The Temple Mill in Leeds (1838-40) designed by Ignatius Bonomi is a factory that was also done in an Egyptian style, yet modelled on the ancient temple of Edfu rather than historical Mamluk architecture (Figure 3.51). Similarly to the Yenidze's "minarets," which served to disguise a smokestack, the Temple Mill's columns, made of iron, were functional in that they aided in the draining of water from the roof.[519] Philippe Suchard's belvedere inspired by a mosque, designed by Louis-Daniel Perrier in 1864-65, also stands out as an important precursor due to its use of mosque architecture as advertisement (Figure 3.52). Located atop Suchard's residence in Neuchatel, Switzerland, Nadia Radwan argues that the mosque in miniature is not only reflective of Suchard's travels or a fantasy of the orient, but also a symbol referring to Suchard's chocolate business.[520]

The Yenidze's distinctive pink and white striped masonry, while utilizing the *ablaq* technique as seen in Neo-Mamluk architecture, can also be seen in the striped facade of the Potsdam *Dampfmaschinenhaus* (steam engine building, Figure 3.53) and the *Neue-Synagogue* in Berlin (Figure 3.54). The Yenidze's smaller decorative elements can be seen only from close range. Foiled and colored tiles, arabesque and vegetal panels, and the dome's glasswork recall Islamic architectural traditions, though here they are reinterpreted through the lens of *Jugendstil*. There seems to have been an effort to not repeat ornamental motifs adding to an asymmetrical and busy aesthetic. This hybrid and amalgamative production is, of course, a hallmark of orientalist architecture, interiors, and art making, that was also drawn upon by photographers, illustrators, and graphic designers producing advertisements for *Genußmittel*. But the combination of historic Cairene architecture with modern European elements was also part of the Neo-Mamluk architectural style. Hammitzsch and Zietz, with their design of the Yenidze, successfully translate this strategy to the medium of industrial architecture.

Jewish Identification with Moorish Architecture in Germany

Along with commercial incentives for designing a tobacco factory "in the style of a mosque," Zietz might have also felt a personal or cultural connection to Moorish or Neo-

[519] Nikolaus Pevsner, *A History of Building Types* (Princeton, 1976).
[520] Nadia Radwan, "Le Minaret Suchard, Entre Savoir-Faire Local et Fantaisie Orientaliste," *SGMOIK Bulletin* 44 (2017): 26-30.

Mamluk styles. Additionally, Zietz might have seen the design of the factory as an opportunity to connect on a personal level with workers and business partners in Germany and abroad. Ivan Kalmar has written convincingly about "an architectural phenomenon that began in Germany in the 1830s and was popular throughout much of Jewry until about the outbreak of World War I." The phenomenon was an attraction to "moorish style" architecture for synagogues and temples.[521] In fact, Zietz would not have had to travel far to be exposed to such a synagogue. The interior of Dresden's own temple, designed by Gottfried Semper between 1830-1840, was done in a highly ornamental, orientalist style (Figure 3.55-3.57).[522]

Otto Simonson, a German-Jewish architect who designed the *Große Gemeindesynagoge* in Leipzig (1854-55), also done in an orientalist style, remarked,

> The Moorish style seems to me the most characteristic. Jewry hangs on with indestructible piety to its heritage, customs, and usages. The organization of its religious practice and, in short, its entire existence lives in reminiscences on its motherland, the Orient.[523]

A debate within Jewish communities in the nineteenth century, some believed orientalist styles for synagogues and temples to physically represent Jewish heritage as it was integrated into German cities. Some believed this style reflected the architecture of the Temple of Solomon. Having no existing detailed account of the temple, which would have been located in Jerusalem, architects such as Ludwig Förster, who designed the Vienna-Leopoldstadt synagogue (1853-58), argued that,

> In my humble opinion, the right way, given the circumstances [of no account of the Temple of Solomon], is to choose, when building an Israelite Temple, those architectural

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[521] Kalmar, "Moorish Style," 69.
[522] What Semper called a "Maurish-Byzantinischen Bau- und Schmuckform" Kalmar, "Moorish Style," 77. "Hier ist nicht mehr nur ein orientalisches Element wie z.B. der Hufeisenbogen mit übrigen mittelalterlichen Formen verknüpft, vielmehr sind architektonische Glieder, Dekoration und Gerätschaften islamischer Kunst entnommen oder ihr nachempfunden und zu einer neuen Einheit verbunden. So ist die Synagoge zu Dresden das früheste Beispiel für einen gänzlich im orientalischen Stil gestalteten Innenraum einer Synagoge."Hannelore Künzl, *Islamische Stilelemente im Synagogenbau des 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts*, Peter Lang, 1984, 161–162.
[523] Otto Simonson, "Der Neue Tempel in Leipzig," *Architektonisches Album* (Berlin) 2 (1858): 3. Cited and translated in Kalmar, "Moorish Style," 77.

> forms that have been used by Oriental ethnic groups that are related to the Israelite people, and in particular the Arabs.[524]

Others, most notably the Jewish community in Kassel, were against using orientalist styles in synagogues, arguing that its use would only emphasize Jewish communities in Germany as foreign or other.[525]

Kalmar convincingly shows that orientalist styles for synagogues were also connected to Freemasonry and hopes for Jewish-German understanding and equality. Freemasonry, a network of fraternal groups that trace their origins to medieval stonemasons, ascribe to both Deist beliefs and notions of a mystic, ancient East. Freemasonry was prevalent in early twentieth-century German cities. Given their affinity for *Kabbalah* (an early modern tradition of Jewish mysticism) and "the East" as the source of powerful wisdom and light, many Freemason groups in Germany opened "the doors of their lodges to the Jews" and "Masonic lodges became, in the late eighteenth century, the first social forum in which Jews and gentiles could meet as equals."[526] The popularity of Freemasonry in the nineteenth and early twentieth centururies "was probably directly responsible for the Moorish-style temple."[527] By the 1870s Moorish style synagogues could be found in Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the United States with an "avalanche" of them being built between the 1860s and 1880s.[528]

The connection between the Zietz's choice in style for the Yenidze and Freemasonry becomes clear when considering it in relation to the architecture of Masonic temples and the specific language used for the Yenidze's signage. Take, for example, the Murat Shrine Temple built in Indianapolis in the same year as the Yenidze (Figure 3.58). The temple was commissioned by the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, an affiliate Shriner group to the Freemasons, and designed by Oscar D. Bohlen, son of Diedrich A. Bohlen, a German born architect who immigrated to the United States around 1851. Although details of the buildings differ, the Murat Temple is similar to the Yenidze in its emphasis on monumentality, striped masonry, and centrality of the minaret as the buildings' focal point.

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[524] Ludwig Förster, "Das Israelitische Bethaus in Der Wiener Vorstadt Leopoldstadt," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1859, 14. Cited and translated in Kalmar, "Moorish Style," 79.
[525] Kalmar, "Moorish Style," 79-80.
[526] Kalmar, "Moorish Style," 80.
[527] Kalmar, "Moorish Style," 81.
[528] Kalmar, "Moorish Style," 84.

Additionally, the phrase 'Salem aleikum,' visible atop the Yenidze in neon green signage and used as the name of the company's most successful cigarette brand, appears in Masonic-affiliated explanatory literature, where it is framed as a symbolic greeting.[529] Perhaps, rather than a "Germanized" version of the Arabic greeting, it might very well be the Freemasons' spelling. Advertisements depicting the Yenidze's dome allow for further speculation as to potential hopes on the part of Zietz and and other Freemasons for German-Jewish understanding. Take for example a full page newspaper ad depicting the factory dome as golden and glowing. The main text of the ad declares, "*Zwei Welten- eine Name: Yenidze. Orient und Okzident sind nicht mehr zu trennen!* (Two Worlds, One Name: Yenidze. Orient and Occident can no longer be separated!)." Although there is no concrete evidence that Zietz or Hammitzsch were associated with the Freemasons or inspired by synagogue architecture, what is known about Freemason membership in other German cities such as Frankfurt and the visual evidence leave room for the possibility that these connections were influential to the Yenidze's exterior design.

Drawing together the theatrical vocabularies of international exhibitions, the orientalist aesthetics of synagogues, industrial architecture, *Jugendstil* surface treatments, and developing visual languages of advertising, the Yenidze's exterior functions as a highly effective architectural wrapper. Its dome, minarets, striped masonry, and ornamental profusion operate as signs of an imagined Islamic "East," detached from religious practice yet saturated with commercial meaning. This strategy echoes the use of Islamic architecture at the world's fairs, where mosque façades frequently enclosed harem-adjacent spectacles, coffeehouses, staged wedding ceremonies, and other forms of gendered performance. The Yenidze participates in this same conflation of sacred and gendered space. At the same time, the Yenidze does allude to a sort of genuine motivation for connection between the orient and the occident through international business deals, diplomatic connections between national tobacco industries, and reference to historical architecture that might have resonated with Greek and Ottoman workers who would have worked at the Yenidze and lived in Dresden.[530]

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[529] Phylaxis Society. *Masonic Greeting*. Accessed September 22, 2025. https://thephylaxissociety.com/images/Documents/masonicGreeting.pdf.

[530] What leads me to assume that Ottoman diplomats and Ottoman Greek workers in Dresden might have identified in some way with the Yenidze factory comes from the 1916 record of the Bulgarian

Behind this spectacular wrapper, however, lay a very different world. Inside the Yenidze worked hundreds of women whose labor was shaped by forms of surveillance, gendered hierarchy, and bodily regulation. The building's exterior fantasy of exoticized enclosure found its echo in the organization of the factory floor, where women's movements, gestures, and comportment were closely managed in ways that resonated, uneasily, with nineteenth-century imaginaries of the harem as a space defined by restricted visibility and eroticized containment. In this sense, the Yenidze's façade does not merely disguise industrial production; it externalizes and aestheticizes a spatial image that was also being reproduced inside, where female workers became the modern industrial counterparts to the harem women imagined in the building's architectural skin.

The Yenidze Factory Interior and Lingering Remnants of the Harem's Spatial Image

The rows of arches framing the hundreds of windows on the Yenidze's facade suggest a space beyond that is unknowable to a casual observer. Those on trains passing through Dresden would have perceived the factory as an advertisement for cigarettes, akin to a flat, monumental billboard. For passersby it would have been difficult to imagine what or who lay on the other side of those arched windows. Advertisements and packaging for cigarettes did provide some hints. For example, a Dimitrino & Co. cigarette tin (ca. 1910) portrays a harem woman who lounges, cigarette in hand, looking out onto an imagined version of Cairo (Figure 3.59). She gazes through a set of four repeating trefoil arches held aloft by three decorative columns. The arches work to frame both the objects in the space — the woman, table, book, low seat, and fan —as well as the landscape beyond. This consumer imaginary of the harem, as well as the smoking woman, gazing out at the landscape, can be evocatively juxtaposed with a photograph

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delegation's visit as well as the way the building is discussed in current day Turkish tourism publications. Observers, including diplomatic visitors in the early twentieth century and more recent popular accounts, have read the Yenidze as a "Turkish" building or even as the first example of Turkish architecture in Germany. These retrospective identifications underscore how successful the building's semiotics were, even if they reflect revisionist or anachronistic interpretations of Dresden's Ottoman Greek tobacco merchants as proto–"guest workers." What matters here is not the accuracy of these claims but the building's capacity to generate and sustain such associations. Need the link from the Berlin Program feedback here. Lißke, "Errinerungsblatt"; Akgün Bilgin, "1907 yılında Almanya'ya gelen ilk Türk işçileri," *Panorama News*, December 23, 2018 (Turkish language article recounting narratives about Ottoman tobacco experts and Turkish workers in Dresden), accessed January 16, 2026, https://panorama-news.de/yazarlar/akgun-bilgin/1907-yilinda-almanyaya-gelen-ilk-turk-iscileri/.

of *Zigarettenarbeiterinnen* working inside the Yenidze factory (Figure 3.10). While the harem woman on the tin promotes the fantasy of smoking as exotic and desirable, this photograph of the Yenidze interior promotes a different fantasy: that of a safe, modern, and efficient workplace.

Unlike the singular, imaginary harem woman, lounging and smoking in her opulent living space, the factory workers in Figure 3.10 do not gaze out of the arched windows. Instead, two rows of women, indistinguishable from one another due to their matching uniforms, stand at individual stations, focused intently on their work. A lone male figure stands to the right hand side, surveilling the task at hand. Unlike the assortment of objects scattered around the harem woman's divan on the cigarette tin, the machines in the photograph create geometrical shapes and straight lines, repeated at regular intervals, portraying a sense of calm orderliness. The interior of the factory is sparse and largely unornamented. Although these are two very different images depicting two different relationships between the female figure and cigarettes around 1900, both are advertisements. Whereas the imaginary harem woman sells an image of cigarettes related to luxury, desire, and the erotic, the photograph of Yenidze workers sells the image of the factory as high tech, organized, clean, and a respectable space for women to work.

Although neither the report nor the documentary films feature the voices of individual workers, and aim to portray factory labor in a positive light, the images do provide insight into workplace conditions. Notably, workers in these marketing photographs are never shown smoking cigarettes themselves, although the report does indicate that the factory featured a rooftop smoking area.[531] This omission was strategic. These advertisements upheld a respectable image of the company, distancing its workforce from both moral scrutiny and the realities of factory labor. The company's promotional materials also concealed the health risks of the job, particularly the effects of direct skin contact with raw tobacco. Although many women working in the Yenidze factory likely smoked, it remained an activity considered unbecoming of women in public. The decision to exclude images of workers smoking was likely meant to appeal to the company's target audience that, before the First World War, consisted primarily male customers and investors. The 1926 documentary film similarly avoids showing women smoking, but it does depict them sorting leaves and rolling cigarettes without gloves (Figure 4.8). Despite the company's emphasis on workplace hygiene, direct and prolonged contact with tobacco posed

[531] Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt*, 3.

serious health hazards. While the risks may not have been widely known at the time, continuous exposure could lead to withdrawal symptoms such as headaches and dizziness, and in more severe cases, nicotine poisoning and early death.[532] These realities contrasted with the purported aims of the welfare spaces included in the factory's interior, those areas on which both the Bulgarian report and the 1926 film placed the majority of their focus.

The Yenidze's *Wohlfahrtseinrichtungen* (Welfare Spaces)

In the first decade of the twentieth century, the Yenidze company, like other manufacturing facilities in Germany, found it necessary to respond to public perception through their branding and publicity. In line with innovations in factory design generally in the same period, Hammitzsch and Zietz included so-called *Wohlfahrtseinrichtungen* (welfare spaces) in the new factory. These were spaces whose function was to contribute to employees' physical and mental well being. A good number of companies were implementing such spaces as well as more intangible welfare initiatives into new factory designs. These efforts were lauded in contemporary discourse in that they were seen to be addressing issues made widely known by social reformers regarding workers' health, safety, and even living conditions outside of the workplace. The Yenidze's welfare spaces were heavily promoted in company publicity after 1909 as part of its brand. These spaces were effective in making the company and its owner appear progressive while also working to temper potential unrest. This aspect of the factory's design was not just about improving conditions for workers, although they did do that. A reaction to the 1905 cigarette worker strike, the Yenidze's welfare spaces reflect both worker demands as well as the company's fear of future displays of the Dresden *Zigarettenarbeiterinnen*'s labor power.

Such welfare spaces were not unique to the Yenidze. These efforts were a larger industrial strategy to attract and pacify laborers. Companies such as Pelikan, Bahlsen, Continental, and Appel (all companies in the food and beverage industry employing mostly women) also built new factories in the first decade of the twentieth century and devoted significant space in their facilities to *Wohlfahrtseinrichtungen*. The Pelikan factory, for example, had wash rooms installed already in 1900 and encouraged workers to bathe once a week during

[532]Bankuti, "Die Geschichte des Tabakanbaus in Hockenheim," 49.

their shift. Continental had coffee stations set up directly at individual work stations and provided the coffee for free. Companies also offered food in their cafeterias at discounted prices for workers. Bahlsen provided a *Nähstube* (sewing station) and sewing classes to provide women the means to repair and sew their own clothes. Appell was well known for employing a *Sozialfürsorgerin* (social worker or welfare worker) and having a social welfare office where workers could go for consultation regarding illness, money management, and other personal or familial issues.[533]

Providing for workers in terms of regular hygiene, food, financial management consulting, and more was in part an answer to the criticisms of social reformers like Thuns and Altmann-Gottheim. Factory work had attracted masses of people looking for work to cities and one result of this was a critical homelessness problem amongst the demographic of women who were most likely to work in factories. Providing washrooms, cafeterias, coffee, and clean places to rest could have very well improved quality of life for workers in cigarette factories despite the significant health hazards that remained (by today's standards). At the same time, providing such spaces ultimately needed to benefit the company in terms of worker retention, health, and maintaining morale. The inclusion of amenities such as sewing classes and social workers not only reinforced worker loyalty but also extended the factory's influence beyond the workplace, shaping workers' personal habits and daily routines to ensure their continued productivity and dependence on the company.[534]

The placement of the *Ruhesaal* in the Yenidze's dome is particularly evocative within this context of discipline and control. Installed within the decorative focal point of the building, the elongated dome, this designated space where workers could allegedly take breaks, more than any other part of the Yenidze, suggest the spectre of the harem's spatial image (Figure 3.22). Like the other photographs of the welfare spaces included in the Bulgarian report, the Ruhesaal is devoid of people. This could suggest that everyone is hard at work or perhaps that these spaces were typically areas where only women were allowed. As the delegation arrived to tour the space

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[533] Huttenlocher, *Menschen in der Fabrik*, 83-86.
[534] For more on such tactics at this moment in the history of industrial architecture see Daniel Nelson, *Managers and Workers Origins of the Twentieth-Century Factory System in the United States, 1880–1920* (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1995); Gillian Darley, *Factory*, Objekt Series (London: Reaktion, 2003); William Littmann, "Designing Obedience: The Architecture and Landscape of Welfare Capitalism, 1880–1930," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 53 (April 1998): 88–114.

they were thus emptied. In the *Ruhesaal*, lounge chairs and benches are arranged along the rounded wall beneath a row of windows. The space is largely empty and, although the rounded walls let us know that this space is within the dome, the glass top has been cut off. Although it is difficult to verify as there is no visual evidence, Nielsen remarks that "restrooms were noted as having been directly under the dome, which was infilled with simmering ruby red and emerald green glazing."[535] The placement of the *Ruhesaal*, a facet of the factory that encouraged a potentially volatile mass of women laborers to rest, within the decorative focal point of the dome, is a particularly poignant coincidence.

Lingering Remnants of the Harem's Spatial Image

After 1909 the Yenidze company's advertising and publicity aimed to distance the factory's interior spaces from controversial discourse regarding women and factory work. Yet the factory's overt and flamboyant orientalist exterior removes the possibility of completely severing the women working within from earlier characterizations of factory interiors as harem-like. Rather than dampening the company's success, this parallelism played into the German public's conflictual embrace and distancing of the harem's 'Other.' A photograph of the packing room, quite unintentionally, evokes associations between the factory interior and the harem's spatial image (Figure 3.14).

In this photograph, women in white bonnets pack cigarettes for shipping overseen by men in white coats standing towards the back of the room, posing for the photograph. Within the arched, cellar-like space, a mural extends across the wall on the left, depicting a fantastical interpretation of a place called 'Yenidze.' There are no windows in this room with the mural simulating an expansive view onto a generic, oriental landscape. As if to emphasize this idea, that the factory and its workers are indeed as much in an imaginary Yenidze as they are in Dresden, a model of the factory has been placed in front of the mural. The pink and white stripes from the factory's facade make their way into the interior here, decorating the outside of a small office space next to the mural. To the left of the miniature factory appears to be a display of the tobacco manufacturing process, potentially intended to be an informative display for visitors. The staging of this room works to emphasize the role that the factory, and its workers, play as an

[535] *Smoke and Mirrors*, 15. Nielson references an author with the name Kunze from 2000 but I have not been able to locate this source.

intermediary in bringing tobacco, a raw material intimately associated with the orient and the harem, into the everyday lives of Germans. This message is emphasized in print advertisements for the company that exclaim, with the building of the Yenidze factory "*Orient und Okzident sind nicht mehr zu trennen!* (Orient and Occident can no longer be separated!)" (Figure 3.34).

The more overt references to orientalist aesthetics in the factory's interior are concentrated in areas that would have been seen by visitors. The entrance hall, meeting rooms, and Zietz's offices in particular feature such decor (Figures 3.16-3.17). Zietz's offices and meeting rooms recall nineteenth century wealthy domestic interiors with large oriental carpets, palm plants, and drawings of Islamic architecture, archeological artifacts, and landscapes hung on the walls. Most striking are the wooden panels, *Holzvertäfelung* (wainscoting) in German, yet here reminiscent of Dado paneling in Islamic interior architecture. The repeated forms of trefoil arches recall the rows of arches on the exterior of the factory. Despite the intended distancing of the factory's modern and technologically advanced interior from a space of exploitation and sexual abandon as described by Bebel and Thuns, the orientalist aesthetic of the building exterior makes the complete rupture of this association impossible. Zietz's offices in particular recall Engel's characterization of the factory as the owner's "harem."

The Yenidze's Legacy

The documentary film, *Ein Besuch bei der Orientalischen Tabak- und Zigarettenfabrik 'Yenidze'* (A Visit to the Oriental Cigarette Factory Yenidze), from 1926 was likely part of a strategic re-emphasis of the Yenidze brand identity after the company's sale to the Reemtsma-Jasmatzi-Gruppe in 1925.[536] Around 1920 the Reemtsma company had begun buying tobacco directly from Mediterranean farms, bypassing the Ottoman Greek merchants who acted as middlemen operating in Germany. Through this, Reemtsma quickly grew to the biggest tobacco company operating in Germany. By 1929 the Reemtsma GmbH owned half of the cigarette market and by 1935, 60 percent. This was part of an arms race with the American Tobacco Company who largely bought out the remaining forty percent of the German tobacco market.[537]

[536] Blohm, *100 Jahre Reemtsma*, 7.
[537] Zabala, "State Expansion," 1-4,127.

The sale of the Yenidze company likely had to do with Hugo Zietz's struggles with his health. Suffering from palsy, Zietz died on September 3, 1927. His wife, Hedwig Zietz, and two sons survived him. One son passed away in Germany in 1934 while Hedwig and the other son, Willy, moved to Switzerland and then the United States in an effort to flee persecution for their Jewish heritage.[538] On May 12, 1945 the architect, Martin Hammitzsch, died by suicide in the national forest Oberwiesenthal.[539]

Further research is needed into the Ottoman Greek community that built and sustained Dresden's tobacco industry in the last decades of the nineteenth century. The same is true for the architecture and infrastructure of tobacco production internationally of which there is surprisingly little to no study of within architectural history. This would necessarily include the industry's exploitation of women and children. These groups continue to make up the majority of workers in the global tobacco industry today. Seven in ten workers on tobacco farms are women and the World Health Organization estimates that 1.3 million children under the age of fourteen work in tobacco production worldwide. Tobacco production has also moved to the global south with China, Brazil, and India, currently being the three largest producers of tobacco in the world.[540] The Yenidze must therefore be understood not only as an architectural landmark but also as part of a broader industrial history marked by coercion and exploitation. This becomes especially clear in the case of the Reemtsma company, which still operates today out of Hamburg. The company profited greatly from the Nazi regime, not least through the use of over 28,000 forced laborers in Crimea after the Wehrmacht's takeover in 1941.[541] There is also evidence that the company housed prisoners in transit to various concentration camps within its

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[538] Nielsen, *Smoke and Mirrors*, 16. "Estate of Hedwig Zietz."
[539] Stephan Luther, "Biografie von Martin Hammitzsch (1878-1945)," in *Sächsische Biografien* (Institut für Sächsische Geschichte und Volkskunde, 2005), https://saebi.isgv.de/biografie/Martin_Hammitzsch_(1878-1945).
[540] World Health Organization Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, *How Does Tobacco Impact Women and Children?*, accessed January 16, 2026, https://www.emro.who.int/tfi-campaigns/2017/how-does-tobacco-impact-women-and-children.html
[541] Nils Klawitter, "Reemtsmas Zwangsarbeiter," Geschichte, *Der Spiegel*, August 23, 2011, https://www.spiegel.de/geschichte/reemtsmas-zwangsarbeiter-a-947310.html. Accessed September 12, 2025.

Dresden factories.[542] While there is no evidence of forced labor, direct war production, or housing of such prisoners within the Yenidze, the building remained part of the Reemtsma industrial network during this period.

Following the Second World War, and the bombing of Dresden in 1945, the south wing of the Yenidze was destroyed and there was serious damage done to the dome. Despite this, it was one of the few monumental buildings in the city to survive. Unlike the Frauenkirche, Semperoper, and Zwinger, the Yenidze remained largely outside the symbolic memory politics of the city at the time, the damaged areas were cleared, the dome left partially destroyed, and the remaining usable interiors utilized as a storage facility for raw tobacco under the VEB Importtak, later Tabakkontor, to supply state-owned cigarette factories across the German Democratic Republic. No major restoration was undertaken until after reunification when the building was sold to a private real estate fund. None of the interiors were restored, but the exterior was rebuilt according to Hammitzsch's original plans. This included a new dome with 860 m² of colored glass. Hugo Zietz's name was not restored to the facade and the neon sign "Salem Aleikum" was also not replaced. Instead there is little evidence left that this building was once a cigarette factory. After being sold to the Israeli billionaire Adi Keizman in 2007, the building was again sold in 2014 to a real estate company in Berlin, the CEO of which, Enver Büyükarslan focuses on buying unique properties in central locations that have what he calls "particular histories."[543] Recent exhibitions at the Dresden Stadtmuseum and Hygiene Museum incorporate the Yenidze in an attempt to deal with the building as well as tobacco's complicated legacy in the city.[544] In

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[542] Hans Brenner and Eric Schroeder, "Dresden (Bernsdorf & Co.)," in *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos: Flossenbürg Subcamp*, ed. A. Lohse and O. Parken, trans. Eric Schroeder (Washington, DC: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2025), doi:10.1353/document.1674.

[543] EB GROUP / Yenidze.eu, "Neuer Eigentümer für die Yenidze," *Yenidze* (blog), February 12, 2014, https://www.yenidze.eu/category/dresden/page/5/

[544] Recent exhibitions that included discussion of the Yenidze include *Tabakrausch an der Elbe. Geschichten zwischen Orient und Okzident*, Stadtmuseum Dresden in Kooperation mit dem Industriemuseum Chemnitz, Dresden and Chemnitz, April 8–December 30, 2022; Susanne Wernsing et al., eds., *Rassismus: Die Erfindung von Menschenrassen*, Deutsches Hygiene-Museum (Wallstein Verlag, 2018); After German reunification, the Yenidze was sold to the Berlin-based investor group Euwo Immobilienfonds GmbH in 1991 and restored for office use (1994–97). It was acquired by Israeli investor Adi Keizman in 2007, and in 2014 the property was sold to the EB GROUP/EB Immobilienmanagement GmbH under Enver Büyükarslan, which continues to manage it as an office and event venue. "Türkischer

July of 2025 the very last cigarette was manufactured in Dresden bringing an end to the city's relationship with the product. The f6 Cigarettenfabrik Dresden GmbH had been the last working factory in the city, housed in what was originally the Jasmatzi factory built in 1900.

Conclusion

Much of what has been discussed in this chapter is not unique to the Yenidze when taken in isolation. Yet the convergence of the building's orientalist outer skin enveloping a modern factory space occupied primarily by women laborers manufacturing tobacco products in early twentieth century Germany offers a particularly sharp lens through which to examine how the harem's spatial image appears even in the architecture of modern industry. The Yenidze also demonstrates how popular architecture is shaped not only by consumer culture, but also by labor relations, state regulation, global commodity flows, and, in the case of early twentieth century Germany, by the politics of women rapidly entering the industrial workforce.

Like the metonymic spatial image of the harem, the factory's exterior is an image of an image. Its neo-Mamluk forms did not reference Cairene funerary monuments directly, but rather how they had already been mediated through fair architecture. Also drawing from a significant genealogy of orientalist architecture in Europe and the United States, the factory operated not only as an architectural advertisement, but also as a marker of shifting economic power, signaling Germany's growing dominance in the Oriental Tobacco trade. At the same time, the choice of exterior decoration might have accommodated more personal meanings for Zietz including his position within Jewish and Masonic networks that had long embraced moorish and Islamicate forms as symbols of alternative belonging. These overlapping registers underscore that orientalist production is never a single, stable statement or discourse, but a flexible visual language shaped by period, location, and individual identity and circumstance.

What ultimately gives the Yenidze its force as an example in this dissertation is how the exterior logic of orientalism structured the spaces within. It is telling that the few interior spaces into which the orientalist style of the exterior penetrates the building, the space within the dome, the main entrance, and Zietz's offices, are the most explicitly gendered areas of the factory.

Investor Übernimmt Yenidze," *Bild*, February 12, 2014; "Neuer Eigentümer für die Yenidze," Yenidze Official Website, February 12, 2014, accessed May 13, 2025. https://www.yenidze.eu/neuer-eigentuemer-fuer-die-yenidze/

Additionally, the apparent image of a mosque concealed implicit spatial relations inherent to the imaginary harem: an enclosed, feminized interior organized around visibility, discipline, and the management of bodies. If I was to assume the rhetoric of Marx, Thun, and Bebel, the factory could be imagined as a modernized harem in which female laborers were simultaneously productive, protected, and controlled. Yet the building also bears the imprint of labor struggle. The welfare facilities and spatial accommodations introduced after the 1905 strike reveal how workers' demands and collective action directly shaped the architecture, even as these amenities extended the company's paternalistic reach into workers' lives.

The following chapter moves from a site of production to one organized around consumption. The effects of the Yenidze as image and advertisement for mass audiences were indirect in that the factory remained something observed primarily from the outside. As will be demonstrated, the Moka Efti Cafe was an immersive, orientalist environment that turned the pleasures of the ephemeral international exhibition into everyday experience. If the Yenidze utilized lessons learned from world's fairs and other monumental orientalist architectures, the Moka Efti carried this strategy one step further by embedding them into Berlin's urban fabric and inviting a heterogeneous public to actively participate. This shift from monumental factory to interior leisure space also unfolds across the rupture of the First World War, which reshaped life, labor, and leisure for German publics and altered the social meanings attached to spaces of consumption and escape. While these transformations were shaped by profound social and demographic changes in the aftermath of the war, the chapter does not attempt to reconstruct the politics of the period in full. Instead, it traces how the spatial image of the harem was translated into an immersive leisure environment, one in which what had once been observed from the outside became something one moved through, lingered in, and enacted within the routines of everyday life.

Figures



Figure 3.1 Oriental Tobacco and Cigarette Factory Yenidze, Dresden, Martin Hammitzsch (architect), built 1908-1909. Photograph by Jörg Blobelt, 2007.

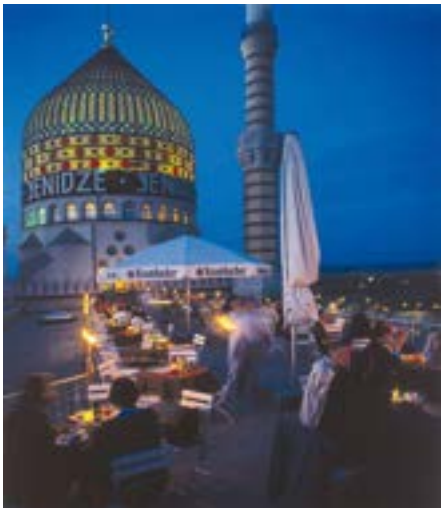

Figure 3.2 "Yenidze rooftop restaurant and terrace under the dome of the former Oriental Tobacco and Cigarette Factory," Dresden, Germany. Reproduced from https://www.kuppelrestaurant.de/



Figure 3.3 Oriental Tobacco and Cigarette Factory Yenidze, view from the southeast, Dresden, Martin Hammitzsch (architect), built 1908-1909. Photograph, ca. 1920–1930. Deutsches Dokumentationszentrum für Kunstgeschichte (Bildarchiv Foto Marburg), fm820219.

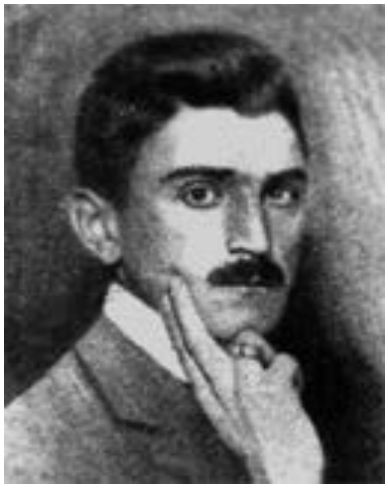

Figure 3.4 Unidentified artist, *Portrait of Martin Hammitzsch*, ca. 1911. Print after a photograph. Universitätsarchiv Chemnitz, Bestand 502/1775.

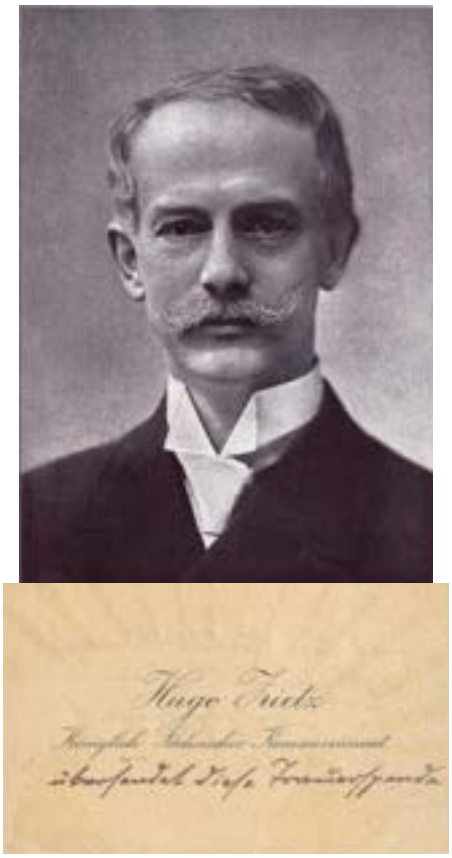

Figure 3.5 (a) "Kommerzienrat Hugo Zietz." Photograph. Reproduced in Georg Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt zum Besuch der Mitglieder der Bulgarischen Sobranje in Dresden und bei der Orientalischen Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik "Yenidze"* (Orientalische Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze, May 1916), 18.

(b) Visitenkarte des Sächsischen Kommerzienrates Hugo Zietz mit Beileidsbekundung (Business card of Hugo Zietz with condolensces), ca. 1927. Deutsches Historisches Museum, digital collection, DHMD 2010/253.



Figure 3.6 "A Prestigious Office Location" Yenidze interior, 2025. Dresden, Germany. Reproduced from Yenidze website: https://www.yenidze.eu/en/yenidze/office-facility/



Figure 3.7 Stripped-back offices of ostec GmbH, Yenidze, Dresden, Germany, 2025. Photograph by the author.



Figure 3.8 Christian Borchert, "[The Sorting Rooms on the Ground Floor]," scene from the documentary film *Ein Besuch bei der Orientalischen Tabak- und Zigarettenfabrik 'Yenidze,'* 1926. Deutsche Fotothek, 80487090.



Figure 3.9 "Tabakschneideraum mit Schleifstation und Staubsaugapparat," (Tobacco Cutting Room with Sharpening Station and Vacuuming Apparatus). Photograph. In Georg Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt zum Besuch der Mitglieder der Bulgarischen Sobranje in Dresden und bei der Orientalischen Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik "Yenidze"*, Orientalische Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze, May 1916, 8.



Figure 3.10 "Zentrale für maschinelle Herstellung von Zigarettenhülsen," (Central facility for the mechanical production of cigarette tubes). Photograph. In Georg Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt zum Besuch der Mitglieder der Bulgarischen Sobranje in Dresden und bei der Orientalischen Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik "Yenidze,"* Orientalische Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze, May 1916, 8.



Figure 3.11 Unidentified photographer. “Frauen beim Zigarettendrehen unter Aufsicht in eine Arbeitssaal m. über 200 Arbeitsplätzen,” (Women Rolling Cigarettes under Supervision in a Work Hall with Over 200 Work Stations), before 1945. Photograph. Deutsche Fotothek, SLUB Dresden, Obj. 80642130.



Figure 3.12 “Ein zweiter Handarbeitssaal,” (A second manual work room). Photograph. In Georg Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt zum Besuch der Mitglieder der Bulgarischen Sobranje in Dresden und bei der Orientalischen Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik “Yenidze,”* Orientalische Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze, May 1916, 9.



Figure 3.13 "Aus der Abteilung für Postversand," (Mailing Department). Photograph. In Georg Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt zum Besuch der Mitglieder der Bulgarischen Sobranje in Dresden und bei der Orientalischen Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik "Yenidze,"* Orientalische Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze, May 1916, 13.



Figure 3.14 Foto Bayer, "Verpackungssaal in der Yenidze," (Packing Room at the Yenidze Factory), before 1924. Postcard Collection of Holger Naumann.

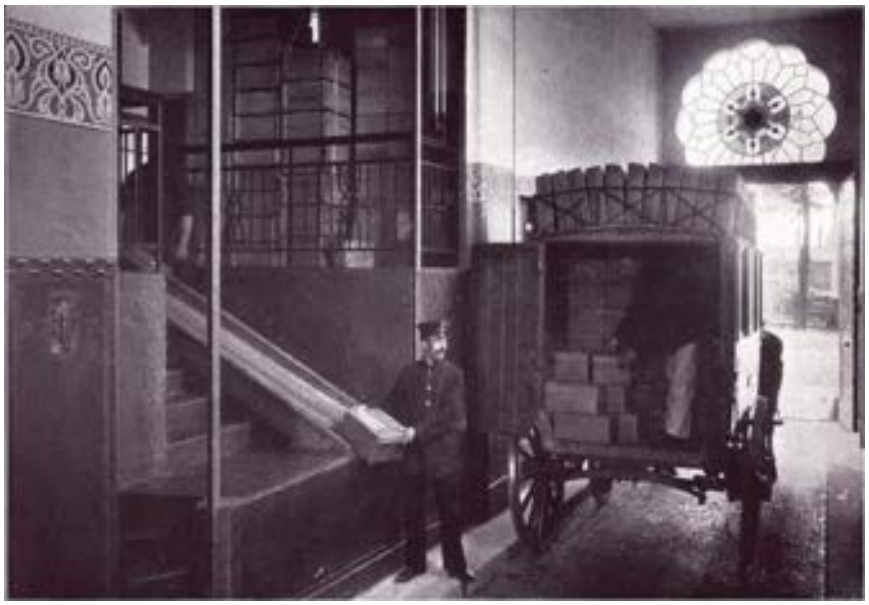

Figure 3.15 “Expedieren der Pakete durch Postbeamte," (Dispatching the packages by postal officials). Photograph. In Georg Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt zum Besuch der Mitglieder der Bulgarischen Sobranje in Dresden und bei der Orientalischen Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik “Yenidze,”* Orientalische Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze, May 1916, 14.



Figure 3.16 "Haupteinfahrt" (Main Entrance to the Yenidze Factory). Photograph. In Georg Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt zum Besuch der Mitglieder der Bulgarischen Sobranje in Dresden und bei der Orientalischen Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik “Yenidze,”* Orientalische Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze, May 1916, 21.



Figure 3.17 "Privatkontor (Arbeitszimmer des Firmeninhabers)" and "Ein Konferenzzimmer" (Hugo Zietz's Offices and Conference Room at the Yenidze Factory). Photograph. In Georg Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt zum Besuch der Mitglieder der Bulgarischen Sobranje in Dresden und bei der Orientalischen Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik "Yenidze,"* Orientalische Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze, May 1916, 17.



Figure 3.18 "Ein Teil eines Waschraumes und Verbindung nach den Toiletten," (Part of a Washroom with Connection to the Toilets at the Yenidze). Photograph. In Georg Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt zum Besuch der Mitglieder der Bulgarischen Sobranje in Dresden und bei der Orientalischen Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik "Yenidze,"* Orientalische Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze, May 1916, 14.

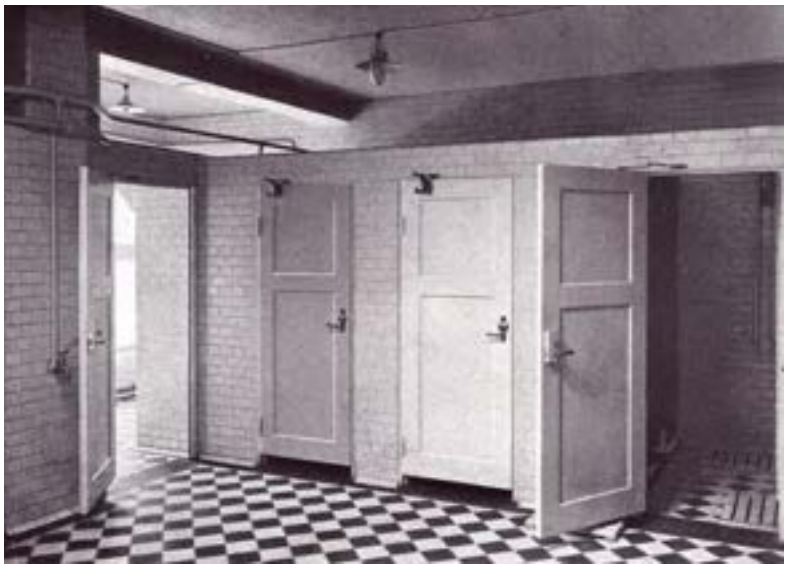

Figure 3.19 "Brause- und Wannenbäder zur unentgeltlichen Benutzung für das Personal," (Showers and Bathtubs for Free Use by Employees at the Yenidze). Photograph. In Georg Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt zum Besuch der Mitglieder der Bulgarischen Sobranje in Dresden und bei der Orientalischen Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik "Yenidze,"* Orientalische Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze, May 1916, 15.



Figure 3.20 "Unfallzimmer," (Nurse's Station at the Yenidze). Photograph. In Georg Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt zum Besuch der Mitglieder der Bulgarischen Sobranje in Dresden und bei der Orientalischen Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik "Yenidze,"* Orientalische Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze, May 1916, 15.



Figure 3.21 “Ein Teil des Speisesaales," (A Part of the Cafeteria). Photograph. In Georg Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt zum Besuch der Mitglieder der Bulgarischen Sobranje in Dresden und bei der Orientalischen Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik “Yenidze”*, Orientalische Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze, May 1916, 11.



Figure 3.22 "Ein Blick in einen Teil der Ruhehalle," (A look in one part of the Rest Area). Photograph. In Georg Lißke, *Erinnerungsblatt zum Besuch der Mitglieder der Bulgarischen Sobranje in Dresden und bei der Orientalischen Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik “Yenidze,”* Orientalische Tabak- und Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze, May 1916, 11.



Figure 3.23 Franz Anton Bankuti, "Wohn- und Arbeitssituation einer Heimarbeiterin, dargestellt im Tabakmuseum Hockenheim" (Living and Work Situation of Cigarette Workers, recreated in the Tobacco Museum in Hockenheim). Photograph. In Franz Anton Bankuti, “Die Geschichte Des Tabakanbaus in Hockenheim,” *Badische Heimat* 1 (2019), 43.



Figure 3.24 Monument to the Tobacco Worker (Tabaknäherin) of Lorsch, by Siegfried Speckhardt, in front of the Rathaus in Lorsch, Germany. Photograph. Reproduced from Rhein-Neckar-Industriekultur e.V.

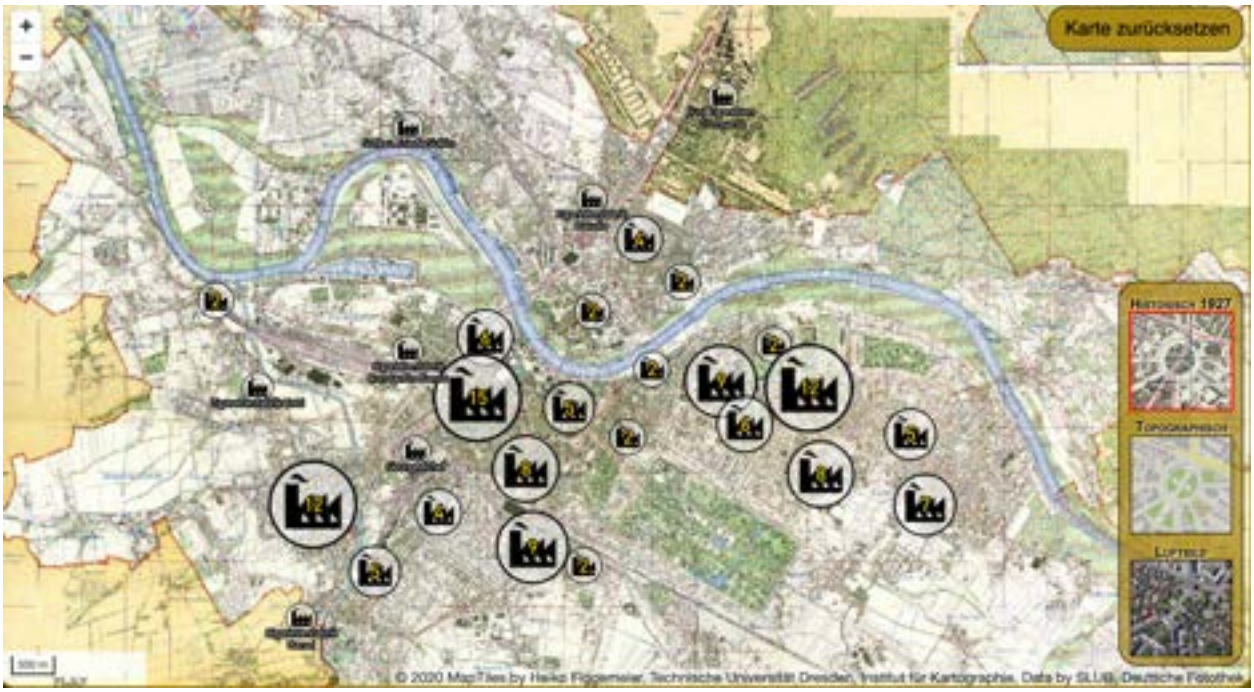

Figure 3.25 *Tobacco Factories in Dresden's Inner City ca. 1860-1940*. Tabakstadt Dresden. Accessed March 24, 2026. https://tabakstadt-dresden.de/



Figure 3.26 "Manufacture Orientale Yenidze," ca. 1885-1897. Poster. Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg, Plakatsammlung, EP2012.18.



Figure 3.27 "Kosmos Cigaretten Dresden." Poster. In Rima Chahine, “Das orientalische Plakat Westeuropas, 1880-1914” (PhD diss., Carl von Ossietzky Universität, 2013), 152.



Figure 3.28 Osman Hamdi Bey, *Feraceli Kadınlar*, 1887. Yapı Kredi Painting Collection, Istanbul.



Figure 3.29 “Salem Gold - Etwas für Sie!” Reklamemarke Salem Gold Zigaretten (Branded Stamp). Orient Tabak- und Cigaretten Fabrik Yenidze Inh. Hugo Zietz, Dresden. Author's Collection.



Figure 3.30 “Salem Gold - Etwas für Sie!” Reklamemarke Salem Gold Zigaretten (Branded Stamp). Orient Tabak- und Cigaretten Fabrik Yenidze Inh. Hugo Zietz, Dresden. Author's Collection.



Figure 3.31 "Cigarettenfabrik Yenidze," 1911. Postcard. Stadtmuseum Dresden, SMD/Ph/2000/01860.



Figure 3.32 “Mohamed-2Pfg. Cigarette-Fabrik-Ansicht," 1912/1914. Advertising poster. Stiftung Historische Museen Hamburg, Museum der Arbeit, Reemtsma Werbemittelarchiv, inv. no. MA.A 2005/020.09283.



Figure 3.33 "Yenidze's Nr. 3-Die schmeckt Ihnen!," 1916. Cigarette carton. Stiftung Historische Museen Hamburg, Museum der Arbeit, Reemtsma Werbemittelarchiv, inv. no. MA.O 2007/003.3698.



Figure 3.34 “Zwei Welten – ein Name: Orient und Okzident sind nicht mehr zu trennen!” Full-page newspaper advertisement. In Holger Starke, ed., *Tabakrausch an Der Elbe: Geschichten Zwischen Orient Und Okzident* (Michael Imhof Verlag, 2020), 46.



Figure 3.35 Ateliers d'arts Müller & Co., Lausanne. "Vautier Fréres & Co. - Cigarettes Orientales," ca. 1896. Poster. Zürich, Kunstgewerbemuseum.. In Rima Chahine, “Das orientalische Plakat Westeuropas, 1880-1914” (PhD diss.,Carl von Ossietzky Universität, 2013), 212.



Figure 3.36 Yenidze dome, after restoration. Photograph. Courtesy of the current owner, www.yenidze.eu



Figure 3.37 Amir Khayrbak Funerary Complex, Cairo, 16th century. Photograph by Sailko, 2015, CC BY 3.0.



Figure 3.38 Dome and minaret of the mosque in the Amir Khayrbak Funerary Complex, Cairo. Architectural drawing, published as plate XXIX in Émile Prisse d'Avennes, *L'Art arabe d'après les monuments du Kaire* (Paris: A. Morel, 1877).



Figure 3.39 Unknown photographer, Funerary Complex of Mamluk Sultan al-Ashraf Qaytbay, Cairo (built 1470-1474). Albumen Print, ca. 1880-1900. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, acc. no. 360-1924.



Figure 3.40 Yenidze dome at night, Dresden, March 2026. Photograph by the author.



Figure 3.41 Interior of the Yenidze dome, Dresden. Photograph. Yenidze website, https://www.yenidze.eu/en/yenidze/architecture/ (accessed March 24, 2026).



Figure 3.42 Mosque of Sayyida Sukayna, Cairo, 1904. Photograph, 2007. http://ne3matullah.wordpress.com (accessed March 2026).



Figure 3.43 City Hall of Sarajevo, 1891-1896. Alexander Wittek and Ćiril Iveković, architects. Photograph by Ladislav Boháč, 2022.

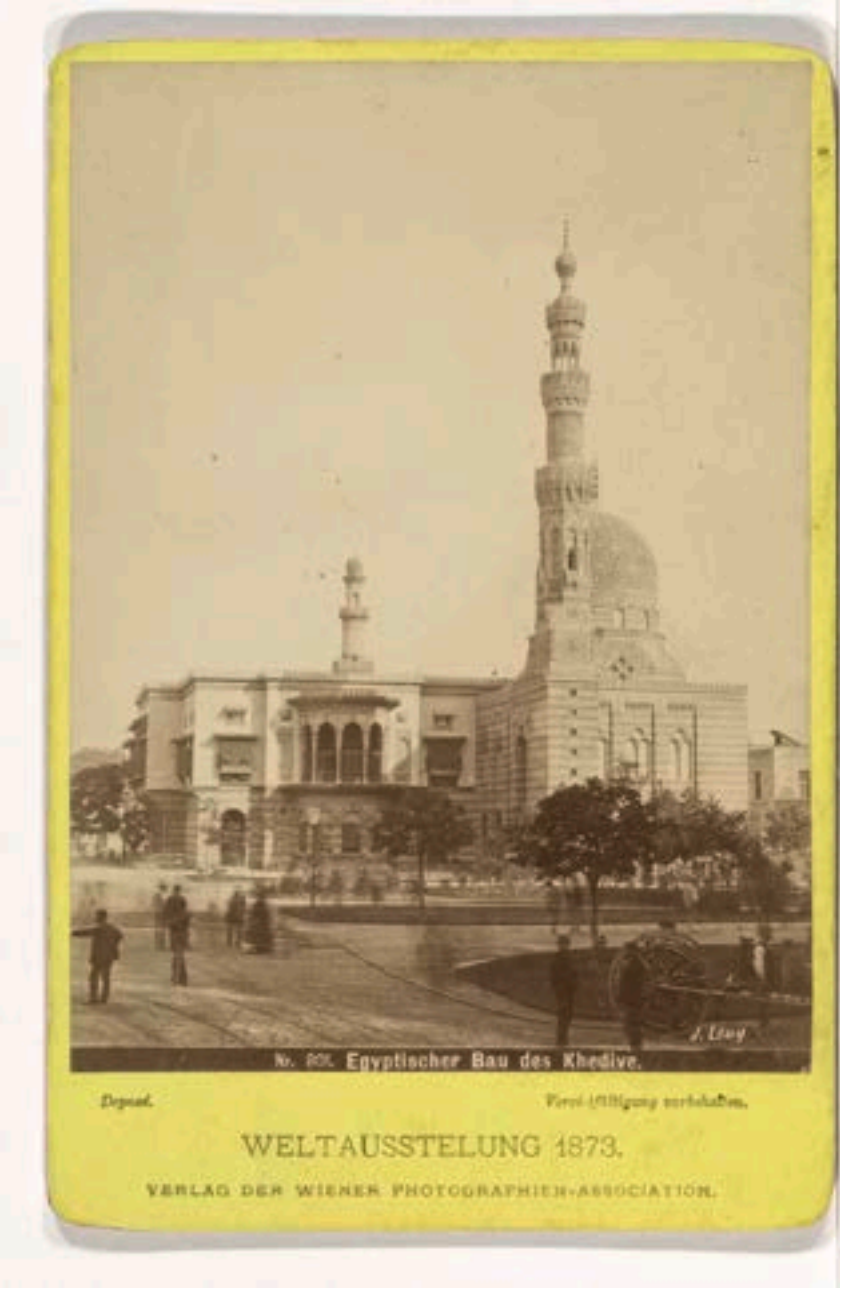

Figure 3.44 Josef Löwy (photographer), "Weltausstellung 1873: Ägyptische Baugruppe (Nr. 801)" (World's Fair 1873: Egyptian Pavilion). Photograph. František Schmoranz and Heinrich Brugsch architects. Wien Museum, inv. no. 174004/20.



Figure 3.45 Adolph Friedländer, *Berliner Gewerbeausstellung 1896. Specialausstellung Kairo* (Berlin Industrial Exhibition 1896. Special Exhibition Cairo). Poster. German History in Documents and Images (GHDI), Deutsches Historisches Institut Washington, image no. 5379.

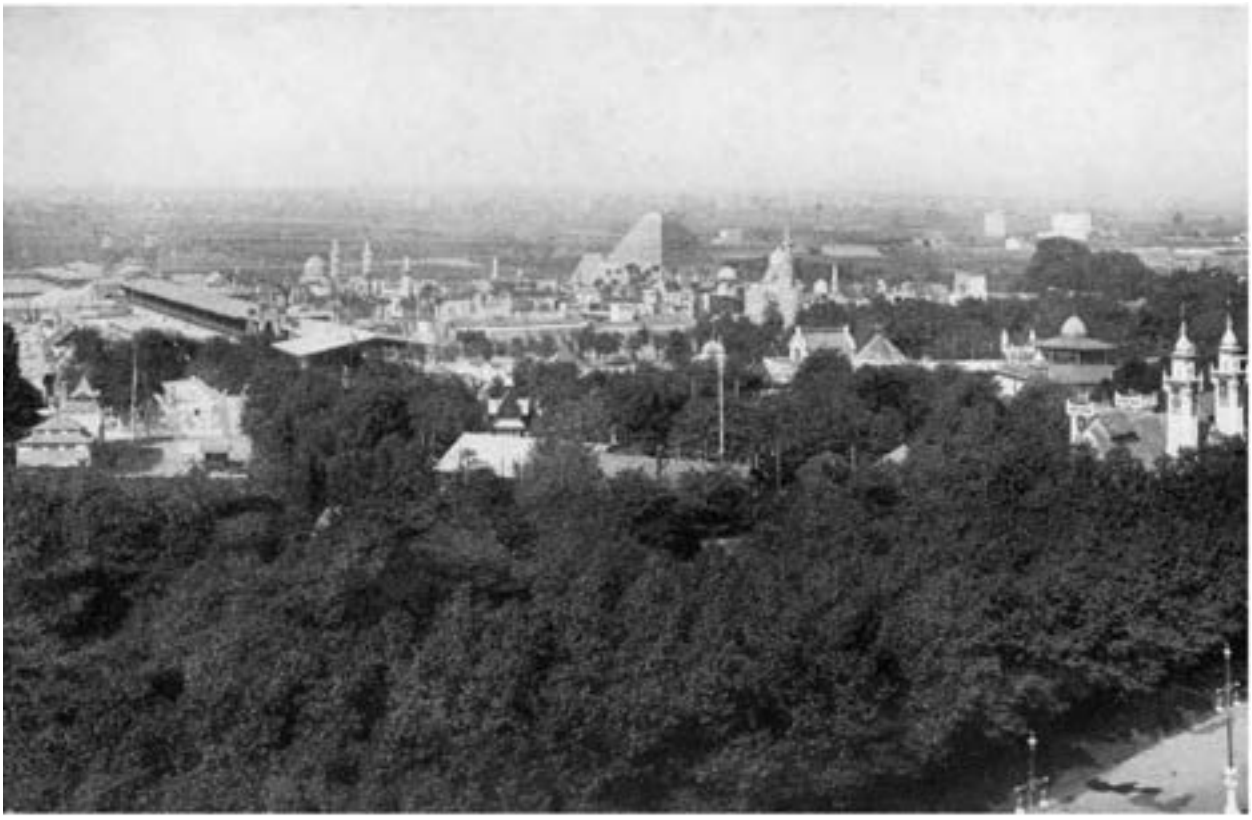

Figure 3.46 Verband für Photographie und deren Vervielfältigungsarten für die Gewerbe-Ausstellung 1896, "Aus der Vogelschau: Austellungs Bahnhof und Kairo" (From the Bird's Eye View: Exhibition Train Station and Cairo). Photograph. In *Erinnerung an Die Berliner Gewerbe-Ausstelung 1896* (Berlin: 1896), 93.



Figure 3.47 C.D. Arnold and H.D. Higinbotham, "The Midway, From Ferris Wheel, Looking East," 1893. Photograph. In *Official Views of the World's Columbian Exposition* (Chicago Photo-Gravure Co., 1893), Plate 98.



Figure 3.48 Damascus Palace, Chicago, 1893. Photograph. In Laird and Lee, *Glimpses of the World's Fair. A Selection of Gems of the White City Seen Through a Camera* (Chicago: Laird & Lee, 1893).



Figure 3.49 "New Garden in Leicester-Square Opened on Thursday." Wood engraving featuring the Alhambra Theatre. "Leicester-Square Garden," *The Illustrated London News* 65 no. 1819 (July 4, 1874): 4.



Figure 3.50 Qmin, "Royal Pavilion, Brighton, England," 2011. Photograph of the Royal Pavilion (built 1815-22). John Nash architect.



Figure 3.51 Sarah Grice (photographer), *Temple Works*, 2008. Photograph of the Temple Works in Leeds, England, built 1836. James Coombe, David Roberts, and Joseph Bonomi the Younger architects.



Figure 3.52 Richard H. Boettcher (photographer), "Ansicht von Minarett und Haus" (View of Minaret and House), 2023. Photograph of the Suchard Minarett in Neuchatel, Switzerland, built 1868. Louis-Daniel Perrier architect.



Figure 3.53 Gerhard Mirza (photographer), Postdam Dampfmaschinenhaus. Photograph, built (1841-1843). Ludwig Persius architect. Stiftung Preussische Schlösser und Gärten Berlin-Brandenburg.



Figure 3.54 Ansgar Koreng (photographer), "Neue Synagoge, Oranienburger Straße, Berlin-Mitte," 2016. Photograph of the New Synagogue on the Oranienburger Straße in Berlin, built 1859-1866. Eduard Knoblauch, architect.



Figure 3.55 Gottfried Semper, Semper Synagogue, Dresden, 1840. Photograph, 1898. In the "Die Architektur des XX. Jahrhunderts," *Zeitschrift für moderne Baukunst* 1901.



Figure 3.56 Unknown artist, *Hauptsynagoge, Börnerstraße, Frankfurt am Main*. Chromolithograph, built (1855). Johann Georg Kayser architect.



Figure 3.57 Alfred Krauße and Adolf Eltzner (artists), Interior, Große Gemeindesynagoge, Leipzig, 1850. Engraving after a drawing, built 1854-1855. Otto Simonson architect. Staatliche Kunstsammlung Dresden, *Kupfersich-Kabinett, Zeugnisse jüdische Kultur* (Erfurt, 1992), 239.



Figure 3.58 w_lemay (photographer), Murat Shrine Temple, Indianapolis, Indiana, 2024. Photograph, built 1909. Oscar D. Bohlen architect.



Figure 3.59 Dimitrino & Co., “Cairo, Egypt,” ca. 1910. Cigarette tin. Worthpoint online auction (accessed March 27, 2026).

Chapter 4 The Moka Efti's Orientalist Environment

> A moving staircase, whose functions presumably include symbolizing the easy ascent to the higher social strata, conveys ever new crowds from the street directly to the Orient, denoted by columns and harem gratings.[545]

With these words, Siegfried Kracauer captured the spectacle of Berlin's Moka Efti Café in the late 1920s, where strategically chosen architectural technologies invoked an immersive, commodified orient. Typically insightful, in a single sentence Kracauer conveys the mystique of modern technology, exemplified by the escalator, which appeared to the masses of café customers to contain the power and promise of long-distance travel and class mobility. The destination for those who stepped aboard the oscillating, ascending steps, was not only the orient, "denoted by columns and harem gratings," but also a vision of the future refracted through the lens of an imagined past. As this chapter will show, the Moka Efti's technological orientalism exemplifies how interwar leisure spaces intensified the commodification of everyday life and aspirational desire while simultaneously reconfiguring the gendered boundaries of visibility and participation. What sets the Moka Efti apart, and makes the example especially relevant for the present study, is the way its branded environment fully commits to an immersive, spatial image of the harem. Through the Moka Efti, I demonstrate an instance of how popular architecture deployed the spatial image of the harem as a modern, mediated form of experience.

When bringing Kracauer's textual description of the Moka Efti's entrance into conversation with a postcard photograph of the space, it is clear that the thin columns flanking the stairs served purely aesthetic purposes (Figure 4.1). The location of "harem gratings" is unclear. The first image that comes to mind is that of intricate wooden or metal lattice screens, often called *mashrabiya* in Arabic contexts or *kafes* in Turkish, that are affixed to windows (Figures 1.3, 4.2). Designed to allow air and light inside while preventing visibility from the

[545] Kracauer, *The Salaried Masses*, 93.

outside, these architectural devices, dating back to antiquity, mediate between interior and exterior. They are also sometimes used within the interior to divide domestic space based on gender.[546] Perhaps Kracauer is referring to something unseen in the photograph, concealed within the darkened arched spaces, behind the potted plants. More likely, he is referring to the decorative panels attached to either side of the café's exterior door (Figure 4.2).

Whether or not such "harem gratings" were physically present, the description delineates the boundaries of the harem's spatial image explored in previous chapters. At the Moka Efti, this image was not merely reproduced but fully staged as an environment to be entered and interacted with. Unlike the Turkish style cozy corner, which provided a harem-like environment for an individual or small group, the Moka Efti was intended for hundreds of consumers to experience the space together. The dramatic entrance set the tone for what followed: an immersive narrative of travel, social mobility, and cosmopolitanism that unfolded through movement, light, and sound. Building on the logic of display at the Yenidze, where the orient's visual vocabulary served the purposes of advertising and industrial spectacle, the Moka Efti transformed this aesthetic into an affective, participatory experience. Unlike the factory, which invited the gaze from without, the café drew visitors inside, surrounding them with a familiar yet exotic atmosphere. The Moka Efti café is thus a particularly revealing site for understanding popular architecture as an experiential form of modernity.

Fantasy of Place

The Moka Efti is a space and image saturated with fantasy and projection. No longer extant, accurate details about the café can be elusive, but some information is reconstructable through fragmented sources. These include visual and descriptive evidence such as photographs and postcards.[547] One extant marketing brochure includes whimsical illustrations and detailed descriptions of the interiors although these often differ from the available photographs.[548] There are a few reviews of the venue, published in Berlin newspapers and one in *Bauwelt*. These

[546] Abdelazim, "The Mashrabiya Project."
[547] Photographs and postcards referenced throughout the chapter were largely found in the postcard collection of the Berlin Sammlung at the Zentral Landesbibliothek Berlin and the Berlin-Mitte-Archiv.
[548] Urban Beaury, *Moka Efti Equitable: An Berlins Populärster Ecke* (Berlin, 1929).

provide quite exaggerated perspectives, oscillating between high praise and extreme vitriol.[549] Some published tour guides highlight the café's escalator as a must see attraction in addition to the low price for coffee (between 25-36 pfennig).[550] Kracauer's brief description in *Die Angestellten* (*The Salaried Masses*) is the most evocative.[551] The café also appears in a few celebrity memoirs as well as those of musicians who played in the café's orchestra. While the memoirs do not dwell on the decor or descriptions of the interiors, they do confirm the Moka Efti as extremely popular and give an impression of the raucous late night environment.[552] These descriptions also lend an air of mythology to the café.

This mythology has been fictionalized in various forms since the end of the Second World War. Most recently the Moka Efti re-emerged as a central symbol of Weimar Berlin in the highly acclaimed German television series *Babylon Berlin*. Based off of the 2008 book series *Der nasse Fisch* by Volker Kutscher, the show premiered in 2017 and reimagines the Moka Efti for a contemporary audience. In doing so, the café's orientalist interiors are notably absent. Instead, the show's version of Moka Efti references primarily art deco trends of the Weimar period, the exterior somewhat corresponding to the later Tiergarten location of the Moka Efti and using the Delphi Theater to represent the interiors, creating an imaginative condensation of Berlin's interwar nightlife (Figure 4.3). Interestingly, despite the lack of orientalist décor that initially made Moka Efti enormously successful, the book and television series invent a bordello located in the basement. The location of this submerged, just out of sight, sexually charged area

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[549] Knud Wolffram, *Tanzdielen und Vergnügungspaläste: Berliner Nachtleben in Den Dreissiger und Vierziger Jahren* (Hentrich, 1996), 77.

[550] Wolffram, *Tanzdielen*, 37. The prices were also good: Werbeanzeige, *Berliner Herold*, no. 11 (18 March 1934): "ein kleines Radeberger Pilsner oder einen Likör 41 Pfennig; eine Tasse Kaffee, Marke Moka Efti, kostete 36 Pfennig." While precise conversions are difficult, contemporary price indices suggest that amounts in the range of 25–40 Pfennig correspond approximately to one to two euros in present day terms.

[551] Kracauer, *The Salaried Masses*, 93.

[552] Jörg Meyerhoff, ed., *Das Swing-Tagebuch des Bruno W.* (Audible, 2016); Udo Brozio, *Ganz leis' erklingt Musik: Eine Romanbiographie des Musikers und Komponisten Kurt Dörflinger* (tredition, 2023). Not discussed here are the hundreds of online blogs that reference the space, often with inaccurate and/or exaggerated descriptions. Philip Oltermann, "Sex, Seafood and 25,000 Coffees a Day: The Wild 1920s Superclub That Inspired Babylon Berlin," *The Guardian*, November 24, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/24/babylon-berlin-real-1920s-superclub-behind-weimar-era-thriller; Dr. phil. Jochen P. Ziegelmann, "Moka Efti Cafe Am Tiergarten," accessed September 7, 2021, http://www.potsdamer-platz.org/moka-efti.htm.

corresponds to the darkened, unknowable space protected by Kracauer's imagined "harem gratings." Although not accurate to the original Moka Efti, the inclusion of the bordello is reflective of contemporary transformations in the imaginary harem's spatial image. The name *Moka Efti* has since 2020 been revived by several Berlin bars trading on nostalgia and, surprisingly, the orientalist interiors have returned (Figure 4.4).[553] An ensemble using the name Moka Efti Orchestra is also active in the city.[554]

The café functioned throughout the late 1920s and 1930s as a social hub, an escape, a place to relax, a workplace, and at least once in 1934 as a meeting venue for prominent National Socialists.[555] Although this chapter focuses on the first large-scale Moka Efti location in Berlin *Mitte*, the argument can be made that the *Tiergarten* location was the more renowned of the two. When consulting the primary source material available it is often difficult to determine exactly which location is being described or referenced and it is a combination of the two venues that seems to have remained in public consciousness. There existed at least four Moka Efti locations in Berlin before the Second World War: a small roastery in the *Leipzigerstraße*, the *Friedrichstraße* or *Mitte* location discussed at length in this chapter, the Moka Efti *Tiergarten* location opened in 1933, and a smaller kiosk-like café at Berlin's Luna Park on the periphery of the city (Figures 4.5-4.8).[556]

For the purposes of this analysis, I do not purport to describe the patrons or café interiors exactly as they were. The ways in which the café, its staff, and customers were portrayed in print marketing materials (my primary sources) may differ significantly from the historical details of the actual space. My focus is rather on the ways in which the café and its reproductions in print successfully worked together to conjure up a technological, yet nostalgic and comforting spatial image of the harem. It is through and against this highly generic image of the imaginary harem

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[553] Hester Baer and Jill Suzanne Smith, *Babylon Berlin, German Visual Spectacle, and Global Media Culture* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2024); Volker Kutscher, *Der nasse Fisch: Der erste Rath-Roman* (Piper ebooks, 2020); "Auf den Spuren der Goldenen Zwanziger: Eröffnung der „Moka Efti Bar" in Mitte," *Der Tagesspiegel Online*, n.d., accessed August 24, 2024, https://www.tagesspiegel.de/berlin/eroffnung-der-moka-efti-bar-in-mitte-4138312.html.
[554] "MOKA EFTI ORCHESTRA & BENNO FÜRMANN feat. LE PUSTRA," *Living Concerts*, n.d., accessed August 24, 2024, https://www.livingconcerts.de/events/moka-efti-orchestra.
[555] Michael H. Kater, *Different Drummers: Jazz in the Culture of Nazi Germany* (Oxford University Press, 1992).
[556] Wolffram, *Tanzdielen*, 22, 31.

that it is possible to gain some insight into the desires and morphing spatial relations of Berlin's café-going population. What originally made the Moka Efti popular was how it condensed fantasies of the harem into a participatory commercial space. The immediacy of the spatial image was crucial, attracting customers with a promise of something, somewhere 'other' than the instability, chaos, and violence of Weimar Berlin. Although in subsequent locations and re-imaginings of the Moka Efti the orientalism of the space would become less and less explicit, the spatial image of the harem remained, albeit transformed.

Early Twentieth-Century Berlin as Industrial and Commercial Center

In the decades around 1900 the population of Berlin ballooned from 826,000 to over three million. By 1920 the greater Berlin area had a population of over four million. The only other city that came in close second to such a rapid expansion at this moment was Chicago.[557] As discussed in Chapter 3, in the last half of the nineteenth century, Dresden attracted a large community of international and domestic migrants who both owned and worked in tobacco factories as well as logistics and shipping companies. This was similar to developments in Berlin, the second largest tobacco production center in Germany. In addition to tobacco, the industries centered in Berlin included textiles and clothing, construction materials, machine construction, railway, telegraph machines, piano and other instrument builders, breweries, and electrical (Siemens & Halske in 1887 and then later the *Allgemeine Elektrizitätsgesellschaft* (AEG) which would employ over 70,000 people by 1907).[558] The presence of large companies such as Borsig, Siemens, AEG, and AGFA (production of dyes and chemicals) attracted hundreds of thousands of domestic and international migrants looking for work in factories on the periphery of the city, while international company headquarters, like that of the Equitable Life Company, made central Berlin a destination for white collar workers.[559] This concentration of economic and political activity, along with a steady influx of international visitors, made

[557] Iain Boyd Whyte and David Frisby, *Metropolis Berlin 1880-1940* (University of California Press, 2012), 2. While the two cities are comparable in terms of their population growth at this moment the context for this growth had some differences. Whereas Berlin, due to its status as capital became a major center for industry, politics, and culture, attracting people from across Germany and beyond, Chicago's rapid growth had much to do with its strategic location as a transportation hub and boomed due to industries like meatpacking, manufacturing, and finance, drawing migrants from various regions.
[558] Whyte and Frisby, *Metropolis Berlin*, 77.
[559] Smith, *Berlin Coquette*, 4.

Berlin an especially attractive site for entrepreneurs in the restaurant and entertainment sector seeking to profit from its burgeoning local and global clientele.[560]

The Moka Efti locations in *Mitte* and *Tiergarten* belong to a category of oversized, multi-purpose, leisure spaces in Berlin that included the Delphi, Casanova Casino, Wintergarten, Resi-Casino, Haus Vaterland, and others (Figures 4.9-4.14).[561] The Moka Efti *Tiergarten* was likely one of the last notable large-scale leisure establishments of its kind, opened at the very end of the Weimar years. In the 1930s and 1940s, "*Die Blütezeit der Berliner Tanzlokale* (the golden age of Berlin dance venues)," venues offering live music and dancing were often named café or *Kaffeehaus* although they functioned effectively as restaurant, café, bar, club, and music venue. In contemporary sources these venues are sometimes referred to as "*Konzert-Cafes*."[562] Kracauer, pointing to the masses of the "salary earning army" that sought distraction in such venues, described the Moka Efti, *Haus Vaterland*, and *Wintergarten* as "pleasure barracks."[563]

The descriptor "café" for such venues is symptomatic of the period, but does not accurately reflect the range of services offered or the demographics they were intended to attract.[564] Establishments with names including 'café' or '*Kaffeehaus*' located in the entertainment centers of *Mitte* or *Tiergarten* differed significantly from those located in working-class areas. Johanna Niedbalski, in her study of the *Fruchstraße* (a street within the *Stralauer Viertel* that in the 1920s was being developed into what is today the Friedrichshain neighborhood of Berlin) notes that on this single street 32 cafés and *Kneipen* were in operation in 1925.[565] Wolffram, in his book length study of Berlin *Tanzdielen* (establishments with dancing permits issued by the city), does not distinguish between establishments with the names café, *Kneipe*, *Kaffeehaus*, or *Gaststätte* due to these confusing naming conventions. The author remarks how it

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[560] Paul Nolte, *Die Vergnügungskultur der Großstadt: Orte - Inszenierungen - Netzwerke (1880-1930)* (Böhlau Verlag Köln Weimar, 2016), 4.
[561] Kracauer, *The Salaried Masses*, 91.
[562] Wolffram, *Tanzdielen*, 13, 16.
[563] Kracauer, *Die Angestellten*, 91.
[564] Wolffram, *Tanzdielen*, 18.
[565] Johanna Niedbalski und Hanno Hochmuth "Kiez und Kneipe" in Paul Nolte, *Die Vergnügungskultur der Großstadt: Orte - Inszenierungen - Netzwerke (1880-1930)* (Böhlau Verlag Köln Weimar, 2016), 137-138 n. 23, 141. This was the most populated neighborhood in the city with about 330,000 people living within 10 square kilometers. Niedbalski describes how everything that happened on the street could be considered part of the *Vergnügungsviertel* and, like on the *Friedrichstraße*, but perhaps more intense, this area was associated strongly with prostitution.

is impossible to know how many of each type of venue existed before the Second World War. Instead, he attempts to approximate how many bars, clubs, cafés, etc. in total possessed permits during the interwar period. He is only able to state that in 1937 Berlin had 13,346 *Gaststätten* (any licensed establishment where food and/or drink were consumed on the premises).[566] The indistinct naming practices and fluctuating numbers of venues point to the liveliness as well as instability of Berlin's interwar culinary and entertainment scene, characterized by rapid turnover, shifting ownership, and constant reinvention. This dynamic is also exemplified in the Moka Efti, which since 1929, has existed under the purview of various owners, in different locations, and with different concepts. This is a dynamic that continues to shape the city's entertainment and restaurant scene today.

Berlin, Friedrichstraße, the Equitable-Palast

The original Moka Efti was located on the second and third floors of the *Equitable-Palast*, designed by the architect Carl Schäfer of the Berlin firm Schäfer & Hartung.[567] The structure was built between 1887-89 to house the Berlin headquarters of the New York City based American Equitable Life Assurance Company. Constructed in the same decade that Hugo Zietz founded his tobacco company in Dresden, the *Equitable-Palast* provides an alternative vantage point from which to observe this period of economic growth and rapid transformation in German cities. The building was one of the first new commercial buildings appearing on *Friedrichstraße*, replacing what had once been a wealthy residential street in the center of the city with office buildings, shopping malls, cafés, restaurants, cinemas, and hotels.[568] The new technologies and modern conveniences of the *Equitable-Palast*, as well as the development of the city center in which it

[566] Wolffram, *Tanzdielen*, 19.
[567] Heinrich Schackow "Berolina: A Metropolitan Aesthetic" first published as "Berolina: Eine Großstadt-Ästhetik" *Neue Deutsche Rundschau (Freie Bühne)* 7, nos. 1/2 (1896): 386-90.
Reprinted and translated in Whyte and Frisby, *Metropolis Berlin,* 22-23. I use the American and Canadian norm for designating floors in a multi-story building. By European conventions the Moka Efti would have been on the first and second floors of the Equitable-Palast.
[568] Whyte and Frisby, *Metropolis Berlin*, 22-2; Martin Mende, "Leipziger Straße - Die Geschichte Berlins - Verein Für Die Geschichte Berlins e.V. - Gegr. 1865," 2015, https://www.diegeschichteberlins.de/geschichteberlins/berlin-abc/stichwortehn/829-2015-06-08-08-06-33.html.

was located, reflects the transition of Berlin as it came to rival London, and for a time superseded it, as the largest and most populated commercial and industrial center in Europe.[569]

The *Equitable-Palast* opened in 1891 to positive reviews that heralded a new era of expansion and growth in the city. During construction it gained the moniker "House of Stone and Iron" due to the granite exterior and roof framework made of iron and concrete.[570] As a real estate development, the building housed retail and commercial office space for rent as well as the corporate offices of the Equitable Life Company. The building was also technologically advanced. With four floors, reaching a height of 22 m, the building featured two elevators built by the Crane Elevator Company in Chicago, plumbing fixtures for hygiene and fire safety in each room, central heating, ventilators for warm weather, centrally controlled automatic blinds, and electric lighting. The energy for electricity was generated on location by steam engines.[571]

Among the first wave of such construction in the capital, the *Equitable-Palast* served as a model for a new building type: the office building. These "new office buildings, which differed from each other only in their external decoration" provided space for "an ever-expanding army of office workers."[572] This shift in the types of buildings deemed suitable for the city center reflected a broader reorganization of urban labor, as office work became a key driver of Berlin's economic growth and a new pathway for social mobility. Although the majority of white-collar workers were men, many women from rural working-class families, a previously untapped resource, were recruited to the city to provide supportive labor for this "army" as typists, stenographers, bookkeepers, assistants, saleswomen, teachers, and librarians.[573] The growing commercial district around the *Equitable-Palast* quickly developed to accommodate the needs of office workers, with new cafés, restaurants, department stores, and entertainment venues opening in proximity to new office buildings. In little more than a decade, *Friedrichstraße* had been remade from a wealthy residential street into the most important shopping and nightlife

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[569] Whyte and Frisby, *Metropolis Berlin,* 1-2.
[570] Schackow, "Berolina," 22-23.
[571] "Dampfmaschinen im Prachtbau der *Equitable* in Berlin," *Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek*, accessed July 13, 2024, https://www.deutsche-digitale-bibliothek.de/item/74S76ABTBJ34AKZTFKYXO652RQGM2WFI.
[572] Whyte and Frisby, *Metropolis Berlin*, 79.
[573] Whyte and Frisby, *Metropolis Berlin*, 79.

thoroughfare in the city. Served by nineteen tram and three bus lines, it was Berlin's most vital east–west connection (Figures 4.15-4.16).[574]

The company that commissioned the *Equitable-Palast*, an American insurance firm, signals the recognition of Berlin internationally as a metropole worthy of investment as well as the encroaching American market in Europe. As has been widely discussed within scholarship on this period in Berlin, there existed a tension between enthusiasm regarding the introduction of American popular culture – jazz, cinema, the "New Woman" — and distrust of its "broad popularity, perceived persuasiveness, and aggressive advertising, especially aimed at young people" which, for some, made it particularly threatening.[575] In 1892 Mark Twain famously called Berlin "Chicago on the Spree," and Marcel Montandon, a Swiss zoologist and anthropologist, described the city after visiting in 1903 in this way:

> everything is intensive life, unlimited ambition, energy, a desire to shift mountains, uncontrolled lust to conquest. In Berlin, modern life stands at its height, automatic, splendid, and flashing like a fully loaded cannon. In addition, it contains something fever like, capricious and American.[576]

The embracing as well as denouncement of American culture would remain central to Berlin's cultural landscape, shaping responses to new forms of mass leisure and consumption throughout the twentieth century.

The architect Karl Scheffler, reflecting on two decades of building in Berlin in 1907, appropriately describes the *Equitable-Palast* as "betwixt and between" two eras. Constructed of granite, iron, concrete, marble, bronze, and glass and "absurdly adorned with details otherwise found on a freestanding palace" the *Equitable-Palast* exterior, for Scheffler, appeared to be neither wealthy residential property nor public commercial and retail establishment, but something stuck in between.[577] The interiors were ornate. The foyers, hallways, and stairwells were covered in marble, the door frames and built in furniture carved from oak, and the central

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[574] Mende, "Leipziger Straße - Die Geschichte Berlins"; Karl Baedeker, *Berlin und Umgebung - Handbuch für Reisende* (Leipzig: 1908).
[575] Agnes C. Mueller, *German Pop Culture: How "American" Is It?* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 58.
[576] Theodor Fontane, *Wie man in Berlin so lebt* ed. G. Erler (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 2002), 59.
[577] Karl Scheffler "The Retail Establishment" First published in Scheffler, *Moderne Baukunst* (Berlin: Bard: 1907), 43-48. Reprinted and translated in Whyte and Frisby, *Metropolis Berlin*, 91.

meeting room for the Equitable Life company, the centerpiece of the building's interior designed by Schäfer, was done in a Rococo style (Figure 4.17).[578] For Scheffler the *Equitable-Palast* was an artifact of a city in transition while Messel's Wertheim Department Store, opened in 1904 and located just down the street, signaled the true coming of age of the modern commercial building in Berlin (Figure 4.18).[579]

In addition to office work, shopping, dining, and dancing, the area (along with other hot spots in the city) was well known for its sex industry. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's *Straßenszene (Friedrichstrasse, Berlin)* from 1914 (Figure 4.19), is an oft referenced depictions of this mixing of commercial consumer culture, entertainment, and sex work in early twentieth century Berlin. Smith refers to Berlin's sex workers at this moment as "self-conscious commodities," suggesting that they were at once agents of their own display and objects within a commodified sexual economy.[580] The visibility and presence of sex workers along *Friedrichstraße* attracted tourists and locals alike to the area.[581] Although prostitution had long been a common aspect of life in the city, it was in the early twentieth century that Berlin witnessed the development of a "large-scale, commercialized prostitution."[582] This would acquire the city an international reputation for licentiousness that would only intensify in the interwar period.

The *Equitable-Palast* provides a glimpse into palpable tensions in Berlin during the interwar years that cut across popular culture, economics, and politics. The monumentality of the building, erected in the late nineteenth century in a neo-Baroque style, reflects a moment when Berlin was making its mark on the world stage as both industrial giant and colonial power.[583] The First World War brought an end to Berlin as it had been: an imperial capital and seat of a powerful monarchy. The new German parliament moved to Weimar and Berlin became simultaneously a place known for its uncertain politics and violence as well as a place of

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[578] Schäfer & Hartung Papers, Architekturmuseum der TU Berlin, Inv. Nr. 15274.
[579] Scheffler, *Moderne Baukunst*, 43-48.
[580] Smith, *Berlin Coquette,* 6, 18.
[581] For a contemporary tourist guide of Berlin that comments heavily on commercialized prostitution in the city see Curt Moreck, *Ein Führer durch das lasterhafte Berlin das deutsche Babylon 1931* (be.bra verlag, 2018 [1931]).
[582] Smith, *Berlin Coquette*, 6.
[583] Whyte and Frisby, *Metropolis Berlin*, 77-79.

possibility and opportunity.[584] Despite inflation, an economic depression, a dysfunctional democracy, and general instability in Weimar Germany, Berlin, like other large cities such as New York, Paris, and London, experienced a short period of optimistic flourishing between 1924-1929.[585]

The number of unmarried adult women in Berlin had grown rapidly since the late nineteenth century. Following the First World War this increased exponentially due to scores of newly widowed women.[586] As more women in a growing middle class decided to take up careers such as teaching, by far the largest group of working women in the "free professions," many did not marry due to celibacy laws that prevented married women from working outside the home.[587] This growing demographic contributed to contemporary stereotypes of Berlin as a "city of women."[588] Although women, on the whole, received fewer opportunities and lower pay than men (women earned about 30 pfennig to each mark of their male counterparts), an ever growing class of women who were not married and did not have children, but had some money at their disposal, created a novel and large category of consumers. [589] This group was hungry for entertainment and consumer goods. Berlin establishments scrambled to keep up and were forced to innovate with new spatial configurations and offerings to accommodate the changing patterns of women's life and work.[590]

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[584] Matthew Biro, *The Dada Cyborg: Visions of the New Human in Weimar Berlin* (U of Minnesota Press, 2009), 27.
[585] Whyte and Frisby, *Metropolis Berlin*, 3.
[586] Taking the *Fruchtstraße* in 1925, a street that contained thirty-two bars and cafés, as a random sample: out of 527 tenants recording to be living in the street, 176 were widows who did not work making them the largest demographic living in the street. Niedbalski und Hochmuth "Kiez und Kneipe," 138, n. 23. The *Fruchtstraße* was renamed to *Straße der Pariser Kommune* and is located today in Friedrichshain. *Berlin, Fruchtstraße Am 27. März 1952/on March 27,1952* with Annett Gröschner et al. (Spector Books, 2021).
[587] Stratigakos, *Women's Berlin*, xiii. Laws forbidding women to work after marriage were not abolished until 1951.
[588] By 1927 sex work had been made legal in Berlin. In including sex workers as part of the working class I am following Smith, *Berlin Coquette*, 5-6.
[589] Katharina von Ankum, *Women in the Metropolis: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 4.
[590] Smith, *Berlin Coquette*, 5. In the 1931 novel *Fabian* Kästner describes various tactics that Berlin venues used to attract female customers including free drinks and even male dancers and sex workers. The Austrian-American filmmaker and screenwriter Billy Wilder described working as a "taxi dancer" at a Berlin hotel in 1926. Alastair Phillips, *City of Darkness, City of Light: Emigré Filmmakers in Paris*

Place, Persona, Product

The first café to occupy the space that would later house the Moka Efti was the Café Kerkau. It quickly became a popular meeting place for employees of the Equitable Life Company and other nearby offices. The café also attracted billiard enthusiasts and tourists who hoped to catch the owner, the world famous billiard player Hugo Kerkau, at a game. The lower floor consisted of a *Damen-Zimmer* (Women's Lounge), Reading Room, and dance floor while the second floor featured twenty-four billiard tables and a bar serving "American drinks" (Figures 4.20-4.21).[591] Café Kerkau was so successful that in 1910 the owner commissioned a freestanding building down the street to be known as the *Kerkau-Palast* (Figure 4.22).

After Kerkau left, the space, keeping the interiors as they were, was taken over as the Café Zielka Equitable.[592] Under the name Zielka the café became a central meeting place for chess clubs in the city. The space was so important to the city's chess scene that, when the owner came into financial trouble in 1924/25, it was the city's chess clubs that kept the café in operation (Figure 4.23).[593] Despite this, the economic downturn ultimately forced Café Zielka to close. Sometime in 1927 or 1928 the future owner of the Moka Efti, Giovanni Efitmiades, secured a large investment from an English sponsor, Peter Stüber, to rent the multi-story space and to undertake a complete renovation.[594]

Giovanni Eftimiades embodied Berlin's reputation as a city of entrepreneurial ambition and immigration (Figure 4.24). Although it is difficult to find trustworthy information about Eftimiades, he seems to have been a larger than life character, supposedly describing himself as a

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1929-1939 (Amsterdam University Press, 2004), 190; See Stratigakos for a more in depth discussion of the new architectural infrastructure that was need in Berlin to support this new demographic of women in the city. Stratigakos, *Women's Berlin*, x.

[591] See "Berlín: del Café Kerkau al 'Kerkau Palast' del arquitecto Bruno Paul," *Mueble de Viena*, May 23, 2018, for period postcards and description of the café's billiard rooms and salons; and Hugo Kerkau, *de.wikipedia.org* (accessed July 4, 2024) for details on the café's layout with Damen-Salon, Lesesaal, and billiard tables. Although I haven't been able to locate a copy, the wikipedia page cites.Peter Mugay, *Die Friedrichstrasse. Geschichte und Geschichten* (Berlin: Christoph Links, 1991).

[592] Mende, "Leipziger Straße."

[593] "Pulsierendes Schachleben: Berliner Schachcafés 1920–1933," Schach Nachrichten, March 10, 2020, https://de.chessbase.com/post/pulsierendes-schachleben-berliner-schachcafs-1920-1933.

[594] Wolffram, *Tanzdielen*, 77.

Greek-Italian immigrant by way of Constantinople. In a commemorative article published in 1958, shortly after his death, he is named "Giovanni or Jean Eftimiades" with the caveat that many in Berlin knew him simply as "Moka-Efti" or "Efti." The information in the article seems exaggerated, bestowing on the owner a sort of legendary status. It states that the Eftimiades family was very well liked in "the entire Orient and in many areas of Africa." Born to Greek parents, in his young adult years he is said to have worked as a salesman traveling extensively in Europe, the Mediterranean, and North Africa for the likes of the French *Societe generale d'automobile*, Fiat, the Texas oil company, and the Carnegie Steel Corporation. Part of his expertise consisted of introducing workers in these regions to "the modern American working methods" which must be referring to methods of scientific management developed by Taylor and Ford.[595]

The article explains that Eftimiades was passionate about translation and spoke "all European languages." He also prided himself on being widely read and, as an aspiring author, published a book of poetry and short stories titled *Fleurs du Bagne* (Flowers of the Penal Colony) in 1948.[596] Shortly before the start of the First World War he moved to Leipzig with the hopes of opening a publishing house specializing in the translation of books from Turkish and Arabic to German and English. This did not pan out, given the outbreak of war. According to the article, amid the extreme political instability, violence, and population upheavals in Greece and Turkey after November 1918, all of his existing businesses there failed, plunging Eftimiades into bankruptcy.[597] It was at this point that he decided to start a coffee import company, the *Internationale Moka-Efti-Gesellschaft*, together with the Rodocanacchi Sons in Milan. Sometime between 1927-29 this company also went bankrupt (and/or there were conflicts between the

[595]Hanns Martin Elster, "So War Moka Efti," *Telegraf*, April 12, 1958, Newspaper Clippings, Berlin Sammlung - ZLB Berlin; Frederick Winslow Author Taylor, *The Principles of Scientific Management* (Wellington : Floating Press, The, 1911); Henry Ford and Samuel Crowther, *My Life and Work* (Doubleday, Page, 1924); Mueller discusses the popularity of Ford's translated autobiography in Germany in *German Pop Culture,* 55.
[596] *Les Fleurs du Bagne Poèmes en prose et en vers*, Europäische Buchreihe (Duisburg: Visser, 1948).
[597] On the 1915 Tehcir law, postwar population transfers, and the 1923 Greek–Turkish Exchange of Populations Treaty, which together produced profound economic and social disruption across the region.see Esra Akcan, *Architecture and the Right to Heal: Resettler Nationalism in the Aftermath of Conflict and Disaster* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2025), 12–13, 20.

owners. The sources are unclear.) that prompted Eftimiades to again try his hand in Germany, this time in Berlin.[598]

In a similar fashion to the Yenidze company, Moka Efti was a clever brand name that drew on popular associations with coffee while perpetuating a not-quite-true narrative about the product. Combining the word *Moka* with the owner's nickname, *Efti*, marketing materials for the café describe the origins of both words. The brochure explains that Eftimiades could be considered an expert in coffee quality due to his Greek heritage.[599] This recalls the decision made by Lady Morgan in her book *Woman, Or Ida of Athens*, discussed in Chapter 1, to situate her harem in Greece. In doing so, she drew on Greece's cultural prestige as the cradle of European civilization to make an otherwise "oriental" setting more legible and sympathetic to European readers.[600] The word *Moka* or *mocha* comes from *al-Mukhā*, a port city on the Red Sea coast of Yemen that was the principal port through which Yemeni coffee was shipped from the 15th to 17th centuries.[601] During this period Yemeni coffee was considered the finest in the world, and the word *moka* or *mocha*, brought to Europe via Italian and French merchants, became associated with high-quality coffee beans.[602] Eftimiades' choice of the term reflects a strategic misattribution that has since become widespread as a marketing term for coffee blends or flavors that retain no connection to Yemen (or Greece). It is perhaps ironic that the coffee beans used to make *Mokas* at the Moka Efti, as can be seen on a still extant menu, like most coffee consumed in central Europe in the 1920s and 30s, was sourced from South America via Hamburg (Figure 4. 25).[603]

The story of the name Moka Efti reveals more than a clever piece of branding. It shows how Eftimiades, whether intentionally or not, grounded his café in a narrative that made the

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[598] Elster, "So War Moka Efti"; A coffee company called Moka Efti still exists in Milan, Italy today although it is unclear if it is related to the more well known Swiss company that sells Moka Efti coffee today. *MOKA EFTI Mendrisio | Mendrisio*, accessed April 3, 2024, https://www.facebook.com/mokaeftich.
[599] Beaury, *Moka Efti Equitable*, 10.
[600] Sifaki, "A Gendered Vision," 57-58.
[601] Jane Hathaway, "The Ottomans and the Yemeni Coffee Trade," *Oriente Moderno* 25 (86), no. 1 (2006): 161–162. John Brewer and Roy Porter, *Consumption and the World of Goods* (Psychology Press, 1993), 142-143.
[602] Jonathan Morris, *Coffee: A Global History* (Reaktion Books, 2018), 58, 75.
[603] Dorothee Wierling, "German History as Global History: The Case of Coffee," in *German History in Global and Transnational Perspective*, ed. David Lederer (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2017), 69.

exotic legible through European cultural reference points. By linking his own cosmopolitan persona to a product name that merged Greek and Ottoman associations, he offered customers a familiar entry point into what was marketed as an exotic experience. This translation of cultural difference into something recognizable for the consumer parallels the café's broader spatial strategy: transforming the fantasy of the harem into an everyday experience. In this sense, the brand itself anticipated the Moka Efti's architectural logic of familiarity and projection.

Crossing the Threshold

The first impression of the café for potential customers was the large, neon signage declaring 'MOKA EFTI,' that once prominently stood out above one of Berlin's busiest intersections, the crossing of *Friedrichstraße* with *Leipzigerstraße* (Figure 4.6). In one photograph, a large picture window can also be observed underneath the café's name on this corner of the *Equitable-Palast* through which passerby might gain a glimpse of the goings-on inside. In the photograph, the window is framed by neon piping and, together with the brightly lit interior, it is transformed into something resembling a glowing display or flashing advertisement.

The signage and picture window contributed to the transformation of the city at night. Electric lighting, in addition to the widespread consumption of caffeine (and other stimulants), freed Berliners from darkness as a barrier to work and leisure.[604] Loberg argues that, due to years of restrictions on lighting in the capital after the First World War, the excessive lighting in Berlin after 1923 was due to an "intensified…thirst for light."[605] In just four years, between 1924 and 1928 the number of lights used for advertising in the city doubled and Germany became the leader globally in producing neon lighting. Businesses that were open primarily at night such as bars, carnivals, cinemas, cafés, and dance halls boomed. In 1926 the hours that businesses were required to close was shortened considerably to between just 3 and 6 a.m.[606] The neon-framed window of the Moka Efti exemplified how electric light redefined Berlin's streetscape, turning interiors into advertisements and making spectacle an everyday feature of the city at night.

To enter the Moka Efti, customers would disentangle themselves from the crowds of shoppers, dinner goers, and solicitors, to approach a side entrance on the ground floor (Figure

[604] Loberg, "The Streetscape of Economic Crisis," 370, 372,376.
[605] Loberg, "The Streetscape of Economic Crisis," 376.
[606] Loberg, "The Streetscape of Economic Crisis," 376-377.

4.2). The visual references used to signal the entrance include a decorative miniature glass dome, perched above the door, and ornamental wooden panels surrounding it. While diminutive, this glass dome channels both long ingrained associations of domes with Islamic culture, as discussed in Chapter 3, as well as a developing repertory of architectural signs in Germany. The Reichstag building in Berlin, constructed between 1884 and 1894, originally featured a dome made of steel and glass, an engineering feat at the time, that signaled the forward thinking nature of the newly unified German Empire (Figure 4.26).[607] Subsequent buildings featuring glass domes, such as the *Akademie der Bildenden Künste* (1894) and the Yenidze (1909) in Dresden, Hugo Kaiser's *Hauptzollamt* in Munich (1912), and Bruno Taut's *Glaspavillon*, built for the Deutscher Werkbund Ausstellung of 1914, underscored associations between domes, glass, and steel with futurity and transparency.[608] The Haus Vaterland's dome (built ca. 1928), a direct competitor of the Moka Efti, could be said to directly reference the 1894 Reichstag building in its commercialization of German patriotism (Figure 4.27).

The decorative wooden panels on either side of the door signal a threshold between inside and outside, public and private. *Mashrabiya* or *kafes* would likely have gendered connotations for German audiences and be associated with voyeurism: seeing without being seen. Despite references to functional architectural technologies, both the dome and wooden panels at the Moka Efti's entrance were purely ornamental. Additionally, in combination, the glass dome and wooden panels create the impression of a tiny palace, an architectural caricature that distills the orient into its most recognizable features. Engendering the start of the Moka Efti's spatial narrative, such reference to a palace would have likely been familiar to consumers who encountered *Die tausendundeine Nacht* as children.[609] Like the temporary pavilions of world's fairs or amusement parks, the effect is both theatrical and economical, conjuring the fantasy of a sultan's palace with the least possible means. The name of the building, the *Equitable-Palast*, additionally emphasizes the café's location within a commercialized palace.

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[607] Architekten-Verein zu Berlin and Vereinigung Berliner Architekten, *Berlin und seine Bauten*, with University of Virginia (Berlin : W. Ernst, 1988), 58-64.
[608] The Haus Vaterland also featured a glass dome which apparently could be opened in the summer. Walter Benjamin, *Beroliniana* (Koehler & Amelang, 2001), 202; James-Chakraborty, *German Architecture for a Mass Audience*, 49.
[609] Mathias Mayer and Jens Tismar, "Deutsche Kunstmärchen im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert," in *Kunstmärchen*, ed. Mathias Mayer and Jens Tismar (J.B. Metzler, 2003), 32-54.

After stepping off the crowded and brightly lit street, and moving through the domed threshold, visitors to the Moka Efti would traverse two liminal spaces between the city and café (Figures 4.1, 4.28-4.29). First, customers would enter a nondescript, dark space. As can be seen in a postcard photograph, an expanse of solid, dark wall on both sides of the staircase and escalator greeted visitors at the ground level. A floral design with a white background provides a frame. After stepping on the escalator (or climbing the adjacent stairs), thin, white columns and a series of arches would slowly come into view. An electric light, centered on the landing above, appears to guide the way as well as provide interesting plays of light and shadow to the transitional space below. An illustration of this same space found in a marketing brochure corresponds to the photographs, yet depicts slight differences including two cushioned seating areas incorporated into niches on either side of the stairs (Figure 4.30). It is difficult to determine if these seating areas were actually integrated into the space. Reminiscent of cozy corners, the connotation in the illustration is of an immediate reference to domestic spaces, of coming home, comfort, and rest.

After the ascent from ground level to the second floor, visitors would find themselves in a hallway designated on one postcard as the "Moka Efti Express" (Figure 4.29). Made to resemble a train car, the hallway featured horizontal, rounded "windows" along the corridor. Displayed within the frames of these fake windows were images, that, according to Kracauer, would have been lit from behind. They show sweeping views of green landscapes, the Bosphorus, and the minaret and dome pierced skylines of the Golden Horn. While not actually recessed, thick frames and wood paneling on the lower half of the wall create the appearance of depth, evoking the experience of looking out from a train carriage. Even the ceiling was gently curved and articulated with wooden ribs, enhancing the illusion. A narrow, oriental carpet leads patrons down the hall towards the café.

In these two spaces between the street and café, the escalator and hallway work together to simulate the physical and psychological experience of train travel. Like a train ride, while on the escalator, the body remains stationary while taking in the surrounding scenery. The physical slowing down required also creates a mental separation from the hectic nature of everyday life on the street and the space of leisure inside the café. After stepping off the escalator, patrons would then walk down the hallway towards the coffee bar. Although not sitting motionless in a train car, passing the backlit scenery on either side would create the impression of landscapes

flashing by at regular intervals. This is both more simplistic and more explicit than the advertising experience created by the Yenidze factory's facade. Here the illusion of the Moka Efti Express' arrival in Istanbul is straightforwardly depicted. Although not pictured, perhaps café visitors may have imagined Istanbul's Sirkeci and Haydarpaşa stations. While European travelers arriving by train first entered Istanbul through Sirkeci Station, Berliners were more likely to be familiar with Haydarpaşa Station on the Asian side of the Bosphorus, whose 1906 modernization by the German architects Otto Ritter and Helmut Conu was widely publicized in the capital.[610] Together, the escalator and subsequent hallway create an immersive simulation of travel and function as the first installment in the narrative experience of the Moka Efti.

Affective Technologies

While the entrance to the café along with its reproduction in print marketing materials might not explicitly stage the oriental harem, they recall its spatial image in the minds of customers. This is achieved through recourse to already established visual strategies. In recalling this image, the entrance as well as advertisements depicting it set the tone for the atmosphere inside. This spatial image was a nostalgic one, drawing customers through the strategic use of new technologies and a paradoxically familiar exoticism. In Kracauer's discussion of commercial spaces of distraction in Weimar Berlin, the author places emphasis on the experience of moving from the street, through the entrance, and into the Moka Efti in establishing a "dream image."[611] This dream image suggests travel, adventure, excess, even eroticism, while also encouraging customers to fill in the blanks and to imagine. In doing so, the space taps into what Edward Said referred to as "Europe's collective daydream of the Orient."[612] This, while also suggesting how architectural and technological design could choreograph emotion, turning curiosity, anticipation, and desire into consumer experience.

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[610] Sean McMeekin, *The Berlin-Baghdad Express: The Ottoman Empire and Germany's Bid for World Power* (Albany, NY: Penguin Books, 2010), 2. Built during the reign of Kaiser Wilhelm II, the station was meant to connect Berlin to Baghdad. "Wilhelm wanted Germans to lead the way in 'civilizing' the Middle East, reinvigorating its moribund economy and integrating it with Europe's." Need to cite christensen here as well.
[611] Kracauer, *The Salaried Masses,* 93.
[612] Patricia Plummer, "'The Free Treatment of Topics Usually Taboo'd': Glimpses of the Harem in Eighteenth-and Nineteenth- Century Literature and the Fine Arts," *Cross/ Cultures*, no. 116 (2009): 47.

On the one hand, installing an escalator was a purely functional decision. If an elevator had been installed this would have created a stilted experience for customers who would need to form a line and wait. Instead, an escalator enabled the continuous flow of customers into the café.[613] On the other hand, as one, if not the first, escalator installed in a café/ nightlife venue in the city, it proved highly symbolic and became a tourist attraction in its own right. Newspapers in 1929 report curious tourists and locals alike stopping by solely to experience an escalator for the first time. The café's brand became intertwined with the image of the escalator and was widely publicized as "Der Cafe mit der Rolltreppe!" (The café with the escalator!).[614]

Also known as rotating stairs, escalators came relatively late to Germany in comparison with England and the United States.[615] They were part of a broader fascination in the early twentieth century with mechanized, continuously circulating systems that transformed how people moved through buildings and urban space. Among the most striking examples of this period of experimentation was the *paternoster*, a continuously moving chain of open elevator compartments into which passengers stepped as it ascended or descended without stopping (Figure 4.31). Like the moving staircase, the *paternoster* embodied a modern ideal of uninterrupted motion, efficiency, and progress. These devices reimagined the circulation of human bodies as a seamless and mechanized process. Featured heavily in Fritz Lang's

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[613] "Das Etagenkaffeehaus hat heute unter gewissen Schwierigkeiten zu leiden, besonders wenn es, wie Moka Efti mit einem selbst für Berliner Verhältnisse starken Besuch zu rechnen hat. Es galt daher, einen interessanteren und bequemeren Straßenzugang zu schaffen, der die Unbequemichkeit des Treppensteigens ersparte und der die langweilige und zeitraubende Fahrstuhlbeförderung ausschaltete. Ich habe aus diesen Erwägungen heraus für die moderne Fahrtreppe entschieden, die für den Haupteingang der Friedrichstraße vorgesehen und in der Lage ist, selbst den größten Publikumsandrang spielend zu bewältigen." Beaury, "Moka Efti Equitable," 4.

[614] Wolffram, *Tanzdielen*, 77.

[615] The first moving staircases were patented in the mid-nineteenth century in the United States with the first installed at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1892. Between 1895 and 1906 they were installed at two theme parks near New York City as well as in New York City and London rail and subway stations. During this same decade they were also installed in department stores in New York City and London. Sam Roberts, *A History of New York in 101 Objects* (Simon and Schuster, 2016), 76; David A. Cooper, "The History of the Escalator," *Elevator Technology* 9 (1998), 76-78; Nenad Zrnić, Miloš Đorđević, and Vlada Gašić, "First Escalators and Their Inventors Until the End of the 19th Century," in *Explorations in the History and Heritage of Machines and Mechanisms*, ed. Marco Ceccarelli and Irem Aslan Seyhan (Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland, 2024), 97–112.

Metropolis, revolving doors, paternosters, elevators, and escalators became visual and experiential emblems of modernity itself (Figure 4.32).[616]

The first modern escalators in Berlin were installed in 1896 in Messel's Wertheim Department store. Lauded, among other achievements, for its many technological innovations, the Wertheim store was aimed primarily at a wealthier clientele. The escalators inside were therefore accessible only to those who could afford to shop there. The first appearance of rotating stairs enjoyed by a mass public was a theme park ride at what would later become Berlin's Luna Park (Figure 4.33). The "Shimmy Treppe," as it was called, shook a little bit, adding danger and excitement to the experience of being carried upward. Contemporary commentators emphasize the gusts of air that came from underneath the stairs, "delightfully" blowing up the skirts of women on the ride. The "Shimmy Treppe" would remain the longest moving staircase in Europe until after the Second World War.[617] Earlier and more rudimentary moving staircases could be found in select *U-Bahn* (subway) stations in Berlin.

The Moka Efti's escalator, while not the first in the city, was one of the earliest, if not the first, to be placed in a cafe or nightlife environment patronized by a diverse clientele. Not a strictly public space like the *U-Bahn* or an exclusive one like Wertheim's, the Moka Efti's escalator provided comfort to those who could afford a cup of coffee with cream for 29 pfenning (or at least pretend to be doing so).[618] In the early days it seems as though even this was not a strict requirement as passersby were allowed to spontaneously try the escalator out.[619] As was typical in the early days of escalator use, a normal staircase was placed alongside the rotating version for those who might not be comfortable with the new technology. An assistant would

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[616] A functional paternoster is still in operation at the Goethe Universität in Frankfurt. Revolving doors were first installed in 1899 in the Rector building in NYC. Andreas Bernard describes the advent of how elevators and similar technologies like escalators and how they were slower to take hold in European cities as opposed to the United States. Andreas Bernard, *Lifted: A Cultural History of the Elevator* (NYU Press, 2014); For more on the paternoster see Lee Gray, "Hart's Cyclic Elevator, Part I," *Elevator World* (April 2012); Fritz Lang, *Metropolis* (UFA, 1927), film; Anton Kaes, "Metropolis (1927): City, Cinema, Modernity," in Noah Isenberg, ed., *Weimar Cinema: An Essential Guide to Classic Films of the Era* (Columbia University Press, 2009), 177-179.

[617] Paul Dobryden, "The Institution of Pleasure: From Display to Environment at the Berlin Lunapark," *Studies in European Cinema* 10, no. 2–3 (January 2013): 61.

[618] "Moka Efti menu," reproduced on *Espresso International*, accessed January 18, 2026, https://www.espresso-international.com/moka-efti

[619] Wolffram, Tanzdielen, 78.

have been at the ready to help those who did not feel stable or who might even experience motion sickness.[620] These associations with adventure, travel, consumption, cheeky eroticism and perhaps even a little danger, were all at play in the inclusion of an escalator in the entrance vestibule to the Moka Efti. Together with the "Moka Efti Express," strategic lighting, and decor, it functioned as an affective technology, orchestrating anticipation as visitors ascended toward the cafe.

The cafe was of course selling Moka Efti brand coffee, but it was also selling an experience. These first two spaces traversed by customers, liminal spaces between the outside and the inside, established an immersive effect. In many ways, the cafe's design can be interpreted as a precursor to what today would be referred to as a branded environment. Such environments work to extend the identity of a brand into spatial experiences, aiming to engage customers on an affective level. This is achieved through utilizing space as a storytelling canvas, to produce emotional, sensory, and bodily responses that strengthen identification with the brand.[621] The Moka Efti thus offers a glimpse into how popular architecture began to operate as an affective medium, translating well-known images like the harem into spatial experiences that shaped everyday forms of longing and belonging.

The Cafe's Interior - The Harem as Immersive, Branded Environment

After patrons made their way through the circulation areas of the entrance with its escalator and train car hall, they would arrive at the coffee bar. A photograph, watercolor, illustration, and newspaper article provide visuals of the coffee bar. The area featured a substantial, black and gold, undulating bar cladded with various motifs reminiscent of Egyptian hieroglyphics as well as floral motifs (Figures 4.34-4.37). A row of six tall, modern coffee machines topped with lightbulbs stood prominently in a row on the counter. Behind the bar hung a painting of a Turkish coffee house next to a larger mural of nested archways bearing the name of the cafe and a view onto an expansive landscape beneath. In the photograph a wooden coffered ceiling with star-patterned geometric ornamentation can be seen. In the watercolor, the

[620] "Erfindung der Rolltreppe - Hoch die Massen!," Geschichte, *Der Spiegel*, June 8, 2012, https://www.spiegel.de/fotostrecke/erfindung-der-rolltreppe-hoch-die-massen-fotostrecke-107450.html.
[621] Ankitha Gattupalli, "What Are Branded Environments?," ArchDaily, February 4, 2023, https://www.archdaily.com/992486/what-are-branded-environments.

wall opposite the bar is depicted as done in an *ablaq* style of alternating blue and red stripes reminiscent of both the Yenidze's exterior as well as earlier precedents like the *Dampmaschinenhaus* in Potsdam. Centered on this striped wall is the entrance to another, brighter space. Two floor to ceiling, but indistinguishable paintings have been placed on either side.

This portal likely led to one of three large salons, designated as done in "Moorish," "Arab," and "Egyptian" styles according to postcard photographs (Figures 4.38-4.41). All three featured plush, upholstered seating, low, octagonal wooden tables, various vases and vaguely 'oriental' objects placed on consoles and side tables, as well as a variety of patterned wall decor. It is not immediately clear what, if any, stylistic choices determined the naming of each room. From newspaper announcements of the cafe's opening, it is clear that visitors would find a range of services on offer including a restaurant, coffee bar, seating and lounge areas, space for a band and dancing, hair salon, co-working space, and post office.[622] Reporters from the *Berliner Harold* report that,

> The Berlin city officials and merchants are relieved, a cup of coffee with music while shaving —that's finally something new, saves time, is comfortable (even on Sundays??) — it's a pleasure, how the new co-owners Peter Stüber and Mr. Efti meet the needs of their audience![623]

The brochure depicts a few other areas of the cafe that may or may not have actually been included in the built space. This includes a Turkish corner, a panorama of a landscape, a concert room, and a large, decorative fountain (Figures 4.42-4.43).[624] The upper floor, divided into a billiard room, hair salon, co-working space and post office (advertised as having employees at the ready to assist in case customers might need help dictation or translation) was not as overtly orientalist in style as the lower floor (Figures 4.44).[625]

Lighting, in tandem with color, was used strategically throughout the cafe. One source reports the interiors to have been lush and green due to an abundance of live plants placed

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[622] Many internet sources attest to the fact that there was a restaurant in the Moka Efti yet this is not portrayed in any of the primary source materials that I have come across. I think the restaurant might have not been in the original location, but at the Tierpark location.
[623]Wolffram, *Tanzdielen*, 77.
[624] Beaury, "Moka Efti Equitable," 11, 13, 15, 18.
[625] Wolffram, *Tanzdielen*, 77.

throughout, kept alive by the incorporation of windows and skylights made of colored glass.[626] Electric lighting structured both the spatial sequence and the ambiance of the café. From the darkened entrance to the brighter light at the top of the escalator, and onward through the hallway with its false windows illuminated from behind, to the bar area illuminated by glowing coffee machines, light orchestrated the visitor's passage. In the adjoining salons, indirect fixtures including pagoda-shaped lamps and backlit panoramas extended the effect, transforming illumination into a key element of the café's immersive design.

Kracauer is particularly evocative when describing the effectiveness of lighting at the Moka Efti:

> Up here you do not sit, you travel. 'Do not lean out!' is written upon the train window through which you gaze at nothing but sunny picture-postcard landscapes [...] The floods of light […] contribute everywhere to the ensemble [...] they are dispatched through the room in myriad hues […] with a wealth of colour that the setting sun would never manage. They are so much part of the establishments' defining features that you cannot help thinking that, during the day, the establishments are not there at all. Evening after evening they arise anew. [...] If the waiter switches it off, though, the eight-hour day shines in again.[627]

Kracauer describes the interiors of the Moka Efti (together with that of the Haus Vaterland and Resi Casino) as a kind of technological mirage, one that appears to exist at night, but during the day proves to be only an illusion. Kracauer's reflections on the contrast between natural and electric light recall the preoccupation of nineteenth-century European, orientalist painters with luminosity and atmosphere.[628] It was common amongst European intellectuals to comment on the qualitative difference between the bright light of the sun in places such as Egypt and Turkey in contrast to the dull sun of Europe.[629] The play of light and shadow on the environment, various textures, and colors in French orientalist painting were trademarks of this genre and what

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[626] Contemporary photographs of the Moka Efti interiors do not always make features such as live planting or upper lighting clearly legible. Beaury's account should therefore be understood as a programmatic description of the intended atmospheric effects of the design, which may not be fully captured in surviving visual documentation. Beaury, "Moka Efti Equitable," 6.
[627] "The floods of light invoked in the department-store publicity brochure contribute everywhere to the ensemble." Kracauer, *The Salaried Masses*, 93.
[628] Grotenhuis, "Smoking Hot," 19; For one precursor example of Frederic Church's inspiration and implementation of light in his home, Olana see Rosenbaum, "Outside In."
[629] "Charles Baudelaire (1821-1876) remarked that he could still experience the warm sun during the night, almost like a fever, after having seen Eugene Fromentine's (1820-1876) *Une Été dans le Sahara* at the Salon of 1859," Grotenhuis, "Smoking Hot," 3.

Marc Gotlieb has called the "Orientalist Sublime."[630] At the Moka Efti, such effects were reimagined through spatial means: electric light and sensory cues of taste, smell, and sound transformed representative orientalism into an enveloping, multisensory experience.

Taste and smell would have also of course been integral to the spatial image of the harem constructed in the cafe. In European orientalist imagery, especially representations of the harem, smoking and drinking coffee is practically obligatory, performed by reclining figures whose languid poses convey leisure and sensual ease (Figures 2.43-2.44, 4.45-4.46). Such scenes, grounded in slowness and indulgence, stand in sharp contrast to Berlin's reputation during the Weimar years as a city of speed, noise, and relentless activity. This would have been an atmosphere in which lingering itself became a luxury largely reserved for the wealthy.[631] At the Moka Efti, this contrast was reimagined through the sensory language of modern consumption: instead of long-stemmed hookahs typical of harem scenes, the air would have been filled with the sharper scent of tobacco from small white cigarettes, occasionally mixed with the earthier notes of short wooden pipes.[632]

Coffee was the central product around which the branded environment of the Moka Efti was designed and therefore its framing was important. The first impression of the product would come from the tall, modern coffee machines, topped with a bright light bulb, and placed in a row on the coffee counter (Figure 4.34). The marketing brochure includes two essays describing the ritual of making "Cafe Turc" compared to the state of the art Dorag Coffee Machines (*Dorag-Frischkaffeemachinen*) installed in the cafe. The first essay, "Cafe Turc: Wie man im Orient

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[630] Marc Gotlieb, "Figures of Sublimity in Orientalist Painting," *Studies in the History of Art* 74 (2009): 316–41. The author has a forthcoming book with the working title *The Orientalist Sublime* expanding on the topics of this earlier article.

[631] On the relationship between modernity, time discipline, and leisure, see Siegfried Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament*, especially "The Cult of Distraction," as well as his essay "Hotel Lobby," where he observes that for service workers "time belongs to their employers." On the uneven distribution of temporal autonomy in modern urban life, see also Georg Simmel's writings on metropolitan experience, discussed in David Frisby, *Fragments of Modernity*, and Miriam Hansen's work on distraction, spectatorship, and modern mass culture. Siegfried Kracauer, "The Cult of Distraction," in in Siegfried Kracauer and Thomas Y. Levin, *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), 323-330; David Frisby, Fragments of Modernity: Theories of Modernity in the Work of Simmel, Kracauer, and Benjamin (Cambridge, Mass. : MIT Press, 1986), 38-108.

[632] For more on the changing nature of tobacco consumption from the 19th to 20th centuries in Germany specifically, see Chapter 3 of this dissertation. For a more in depth look see Jacob and Dworok, *Tabak und Gesellschaft.*

Mokka schlürft," is the only explicit textual mention of harem spaces in any extant marketing material for the Moka Efti I have come across. The essay discusses how, traditionally, it was women who lived in harems who made and enjoyed coffee with friends. In this essay harem women drinking coffee are also described as smoking the *nargileh* or self rolled cigarettes. Described in the essay as "holy," the complex process for making includes the time intensive tasks of counting out twenty coffee beans per cup, roasting and grinding them into a powder, and bringing the cup to boil two or three times over hot coals, a process which could take over two hours. In contrast, the Dorag machines at the Moka Efti have rationalized this process:

> The Dorag automates the art practiced by those select few who know how to make real coffee and is capable of providing entire regiments of true coffee lovers with the delicious beverage in the shortest possible time. It thus represents the rationalization of coffee preparation. The art of making good coffee has ceased to be a secret. Operating the Dorag is effortlessly simple.[633]

In this way, the Moka Efti transformed the harem's slow rituals of leisure into an experience of modern efficiency, allowing Berliners to consume the fantasy of oriental luxury at the tempo of urban life. Through what at the time must have felt like instant gratification, the cafe commodifies the very idea of leisure through speed. The essay also frames the making of coffee as something about the harem and harem women that is being demystified through the Moka Efti experience.

Sound, too, played a key role in shaping the Moka Efti's immersive atmosphere. Along with the sounds of coffee preparation and conversation, live musicians, both those playing in the renowned Moka Efti Orchestra as well as invited artists, were amplified throughout the various rooms through speakers.[634] Music was central to the Moka Efti's identity, bridging its branded harem environment with Berlin's broader culture of nightlife and dance. Although jazz became popular in the United States in the 1910s, the first live jazz concert in Germany did not take

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[633] "Die Dorag versieht die Kunst derjenigen Auserwählten, die wirklichen Kaffee zu bereiten wissen, maschinell und ist imstande, in allerkürzester Frist ganze Regimenter wahrer Kaffeefreunde mit dem köstlichen Getränk zu versehen. Sie bedeutet also die Ratonalisierung der Kaffeebereitung. Die Kunst der Bereitung eines guten Kaffees hat aufgehört ein Geheimnis zu sein. Spielend leicht ist die Bedienung der Dorag." Beaury, "Moka Efti Equitable," 27.

[634] "Moka Efti, ecke Friedrichstraße, wo die Weiläufigkeit und die bizarre maurische formgebung die Augen nicht zur Ruhe kommen lassen und das Ohr von der durch Lautsprecher übermäßig verstärften Klangfülle des Orchesters gemartert wird." Alfred Stieler, "Berliner Kaffeehäußer von heute," *Westermanns Monatshefte* 149, no. 891 (1858): 262.

place until 1924. Classically trained German musicians had access to some American recordings, but they mostly used sheet music which they interpreted without recordings for reference. Therefore a distinctly German form of jazz emerged during the Weimar period which, unlike American jazz, incorporated orchestral instruments like violins and emphasized drums and beats. American jazz musicians also traveled to Berlin along with other foreign musicians, lending a distinct sound to Berlin jazz. One can therefore assume that the musicians working in 1929 at the original location in *Mitte* were a mix of German and foreign musicians playing a German interpretation of American jazz.[635] While detailed documentation of the Moka Efti's house band, or The Moka Efti Orchestra as they came to be known, is limited, it has been widely recognized that after James Kok, a Romanian conductor, came to the Moka Efti, the cafe boasted the best big band orchestra in the city.

The Moka Efti's design was not unique in its emphasis on an immersive and varied experience. Eftimiades had taken note of the strategies used in other large entertainment venues that could be found throughout the city by the end of the 1920s. A particularly good example of the immersive quality aspired to by these venues is the *Rheinterasse* at the Haus Vaterland (Figure 4.47). Here, although guests are actually sitting in a round, windowless room on Berlin's *Potsdamerplatz*, the illusion is of being on holiday. Guests imagine themselves enjoying a meal while sitting on a tented terrace, surrounded by panoramic mountain views of what could be the Rhein River in southern Germany or the Swiss Alps. Once a popular standalone attraction of the nineteenth century, by the late 1920s generic panoramas like this one were utilized as backgrounds to stage everyday activities within expansive landscapes in distant places. Large-scale entertainment venues, including the Moka Efti, used large panoramas as well as fake windows to simulate views of empty landscapes and popular travel destinations. These images were electrically lit from behind to give the impression that customers were always experiencing beautiful, sunny weather (Figure 4.29, 4.41, 4.47). The Moka Efti was also not the only establishment in the city to take on foreign and exotic themes in its interiors. A look through postcard collections in Berlin libraries and archives provides a snapshot of the variety of

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[635] Michele Ferm, "Revealing Representations of Jazz in the Weimar Republic," *The Social Science Journal* (2008): 240 - 242. Mueller goes so far as to argue that "what passed for jazz in Weimar was 'commercial syncopated dance music', mostly homegrown to an imagined notion of jazz. He also argues that jazz never became mainstream in Germany, but was probably most popular in Berlin. Mueller, *German Pop Culture*, 56.

establishments including bars, restaurants, and tea houses that utilized exotic designs in their own way (Figures 4.48-4.50).

As Kracauer observes in *The Salaried Masses*, the sensory excess of such spaces synchronized perception itself to the tempo of production, turning leisure and enjoyment into a form of participation in capitalist space.[636] Such immersive design materialized the contradictions of Weimar modernity, bringing together the allure of pleasure with the discipline of efficiency, and the fantasy of distant places with the routines of everyday life. What stands out about the Moka Efti in relation to other large-scale venues in the city is how the strategic interplay of light, scent, taste, and sound transformed a nostalgic, and familiar spatial image of the harem into a participatory experience. In other words, unlike other large venues such as the Haus Vaterland, the Moka Efti's branded environment fully commits to the spatial image of the harem. What would have been appealing about the fantasy of entering the prohibited and mysterious space of the harem for consumers in Berlin in 1929? Hints of an answer emerge not only in what can be imagined about the sensory experience of the café itself, but also in how that experience was mediated and sold—through the posters, postcards, and brochures that extended the Moka Efti's spatial image beyond the physical site of the café.

The Café as Circulated Image

Posters, postcards, and a marketing brochure reproduce the Moka Efti through illustrations and photographs, though they did not aim to represent the spaces accurately. Instead they encouraged fantasy. A *Plakat* used in marketing for the café emphasizes two symbols: the escalator and the pointed arch. Hung in anticipation of the Moka Efti's opening day, it reproduces the café's entrance in its simplest terms (Figure 4.51). A winding mass of figures in trench coats and black bowler hats (for men), fur collared coats (for women), and a few children extend across an empty expanse. The crowd waits patiently to step onto the escalator that seems to have appeared out of thin air. For some viewers, the escalator on the poster might have also resembled the boarding stairs of an airplane although air travel in 1929 was accessible only to the military or the extremely wealthy. At the top, representing the café, is a pointed arch yet,

[636] Kracauer, *The Salaried Masses*, 93.

notably, not of the same design as any actually installed near the escalator. The darkness of the space within the arch emphasizes its shape in contrast to the stark whiteness of the background. The darkness also suggests that where the crowds are headed is mysterious and unknown. The text encourages the public to guess how many people will use the escalator on opening day for a 1000 mark prize to the person with the closest estimate.

Accuracy is not important in this depiction of the café. The effectiveness of simply including an arch, especially a pointed one, to convey both the entire world of the orient as well as the private space of the harem works remarkably well. This gesture towards an unknown beyond, within or behind the image's frame was already a well-established tactic for creating a mysterious atmosphere in orientalist painting. For example, in the background of Eugene Delacroix's *Women of Algiers in Their Apartment* (1834) we see a barely cracked door in the background leading to a pitch black space (Figure 4.45).[637] To provide an example from the German speaking world, the Austrian artist Ludwig Deutsch portrays a similar doorway that is inaccessible to outsiders (Figure 4.52). The arches installed alongside the stairs and escalators at the Moka Efti echo this feeling that there is something mysterious and forbidden beyond them. This idea is conveyed well in the brochure's illustration of the entrance (Figure 4.30). Yet the dark spaces between the arches are not the desired destination. Instead it is the brightly lit space above.

As can be seen in the brochure and photographic postcards, the arch motif continues from the entrance and into the café upstairs where it transforms from a negative space to a framing device, signaling the movement from the exterior to interior, and the customers' transformation from observer to participant. Two images, one a postcard depicting the "Arab Salon," the other an illustration of a "Turkish Corner" from the marketing brochure, demonstrate this framing and offer differing perspectives on what these interiors might have been like (Figures 4.38, 4.42). The postcard comes closest to documenting the café's actual appearance, as it was likely taken shortly before opening day and depicts the original decor. The brochure illustration, by contrast, conveys an idealized atmosphere rather than a literal depiction, emphasizing mood and fantasy over architectural accuracy. Within the frame of a pointed arch, a clientele of mostly women in

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[637] Ivan Kalmar, "The Houkah in the Harem: On Smoking and Orientalist Art," in Sander L. Gilman and Xun Zhou, *Smoke: A Global History of Smoking* (London: Reaktion Books, 2004).

short dresses, fur coats, and bob haircuts sit alongside men in suits in plush chairs around short octagonal tables. A waiter and waitress maneuver between the densely arranged tables taking orders and serving coffee. They are surrounded by carpets on the floor and walls and a hanging lamp, while in the photograph we see a console table displaying decorative pots and landscape paintings. The walls are done in a variety of decorative patterns that presumably would have been brightly colored.

Taken together, these representations blur the line between depiction and promotion, pointing to how the spatial image of the harem created at the Moka Efti was mediated as much through images as through space. Photographic postcards further extended the café's imagery beyond its physical confines, allowing the experience of Moka Efti to unfold before, after, and even in place of an actual visit (Figures 4.1, 4.34, 4.38, 4.39). For those who had not yet entered, the images offered a preview of the interior, cultivating curiosity and desire. For those who had patronized the café, the postcard might be sent to a friend, detailing one's experiences. In this way, postcards also recruit the customer to the role of marketing agent, inviting them to identify with the branded environment through the promotion of their own taste and experiences. Drawing on conventions of architectural photography, the Moka Efti postcards manipulate perspective to dramatize the space, producing anticipation and/or nostalgia depending on the viewer's relation to the site.

Modern architects of the interwar period tended to prefer photography (over film) due to its guarantee of full control over how a building or interior space is viewed. With photography the spectator is immobilized, viewing the work from one predetermined perspective or angle. Observers of the period go so far as to accuse architects of building more for the camera than worrying about those who actually used the space.[638] The two postcard photographs of the escalator and "Moka Efti Express" hallway tell a story of movement and intrigue. The first starts at the bottom of the stairs, looking up to a small square of light. The second image similarly creates the impression of the viewer standing in wider space, looking down a hall that becomes ever narrower. Although primary sources claim that the café was tremendously busy, advertising

[638] Elsaesser references a 1929 essay by Wilhelm Lotz titled "Architecture Photographs" where he talks about the risk of architects building for the camera at the expense of function and clarity.
Thomas Elsaesser, "The Architectural Postcard: Photography, Cinema, and Modernist Mass Media," *Grey Room* 70 (2018): 80–101.

seats for three thousand guests and selling more than 25,000 cups of coffee a day, postcard photographs of the café are notably empty. As Colomina explains, such empty interiors invite the immobilized spectator to step out of their body, imagining themselves inside the scene.[639] The photographs, in black and white, can also only convey so much about the interior. There is a promise being made that if one were to visit, the colors, textures, and detail could be better apprehended.

The "architectural postcard" allows for this predetermined photographic point of view to travel, reaching an unprecedentedly wide circulation of viewers. Owners of leisure establishments in Berlin, like modern architects, discovered that photographs on postcards ensured widespread notoriety. Unlike regular mail, postcards are public, breaking the confidentiality of the letter and allowing for both the photograph as well as the senders' message to be visible to anyone handling it. Anyone can inadvertently become the victim of postcard marketing, which turns their senders into marketing middle-men. In boasting of their visit to the Moka Efti to friends and family, the product (the experience of the café) says as much about the sender as does their choice image through which to convey a sense of the product.[640] The only remaining extant photographs of the Moka Efti's interior spaces are those on postcards. Their incredible reach is evident through the ways in which they can still be found today in bins at *Flohmärkte* (flea markets) around Berlin on a Sunday.

Representations of Bodies in the Café

Unlike the static photographs of empty rooms in promotional postcards, illustrations in the brochure are populated and lively, providing a sense for how the spaces were, or were expected to be, used (Figures 4.30, 4.35, 4.36, 4.40-4.43).[641] The images in the brochure are accompanied by text that includes a tour through the café, an essay by the architect and professor, Bernhard Schaede, about the paintings hung in the café, a reproduction of one of these paintings, an essay outlining how the coffee is made, and an essay by "Dr. H.B." as to the safety

[639] See Beatriz Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity*; Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility"; and Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, on the photographic image and the spectator's affective and imaginative investment.
[640] Elsaesser, "The Architectural Postcard."
[641] The images in the brochure are mostly attributed to a figure called Urban Beaury, what must be a pseudonym and about whom no information has been found. This could very well be a pseudonym for Eftimiades.

and health benefits of coffee. The final pages of the brochure contain advertisements for the various vendors who provided draft systems for beer, high tech coffee machines, carpets, lighting, wall ornament, and more to the café. The singular extant copy of this brochure, housed at the Berlin Zentral-Landesbibliothek, provides a wealth of information about the inspiration for the interiors of the café. Yet, it is unclear how many of these brochures were printed, who would have seen it, or if it might have been made for investors before the café existed. Yet considered in tandem with the few photographs available, it becomes possible through the brochure to imagine the dream image created by the café.

Firstly, it is telling that there are no representations of jazz musicians on extant marketing materials from the Moka Efti despite evidence attesting to the fact that bands performed in the space at all openings hours.[642] As Ferm explains, "For German audience members the jazz experience was complicated by the African ethnicity of many jazz musicians."[643] For many, jazz music was not only a symbol of American culture, it was also a mixing of primitive and modern sensibilities.[644] Despite public demand for foreign jazz artists to perform in Berlin, anxieties surrounding jazz music's connection to Black bodies and dances such as the Fox-Trot and Charleston are reflected in the absence of representation in Weimar media and advertising. When Black figures did appear on *Plakate* or other paper marketing materials for other venues, stereotypical tropes were often used instead of images of individual musicians (Figure 4.53). One such popular stereotype in German advertisements for products such as tobacco, coffee, and chocolate was that of the "moorish," male servant doting on "rich European ladies" (Figures 4.54-4.55). In these images,

> The role of the servant is layered by the mainstream culture's associations to harems where male servants often pose no sexual threat due to castration. The sexual threat of the exotic stereotype is downplayed [...] the physical threat of the exotic stereotype is further

[642] Straube Führer from 1925: " [...] das Konzert-Cafe in der Friedrichstadt und im Westen zu großartigen Dimensionen entwickelt. Der Betrieb beginnt hier schon vormittags und die Musik, von einmen vollen Orchester häufig künstlerischer Art ausgeführt, schon nachmittags 4 Uhr oder gar schon mittags." Cited in Wolffram, *Tanzdielen*, 18, 83.
[643] Ferm, "Revealing Representations," 243.
[644] Mueller, *German Pop Culture*, 57.

downplayed by servile obedience to the ladies of mainstream society.[645]

Whereas men's sexuality was de-emphasized, in advertisements for female entertainers, as seen in the case of Josephine Baker, their bodies were hypersexualized (Figure 4.56). But, as Ferm asserts, this distancing, generic stereotyping, or oversexualization typically broke down in live dance venues where the artists were physically present.[646] In the case of the Moka Efti, a branded harem environment, associations with what could be construed as the typical cast of characters in a harem scene might have been maintained as performers work within a spatialized advertisement. Musicians and performers would have contributed to the modern yet foreignizing atmosphere.

While musicians and performers are absent in available reproductions, the majority of human figures in the Moka Efti brochure illustrations are women. They appear in a variety of guises: as customers, service workers, and, on the title page, as a harem woman (Figure 4.57). On the one hand, the prominence of women in the brochure creates a sense of desire no different from other forms of orientalist product marketing. The message conveyed is that the Moka Efti Café is an exotic setting where many beautiful women can be found. On the other hand, there is reason to believe that women would indeed make up the majority of patrons and that such depictions in the brochure were meant to appeal to female customers specifically.

Illustrations of female customers are recognizable as the *Neue Frau* as they are dressed in the latest fashion, wear extravagant fur coats, flapper hats and short dresses, and have bobbed haircuts.[647] As discussed in Chapter 3, around 1900 developing connotations of the *Neue Frau* in Germany were intertwined with women's labor activism, and radical imagery of women smoking and wearing pants. By the late 1920s the figure of the *Neue Frau* was both increasingly

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[645] Ferm, "Revealing Representations," 247. For more on Black bodies in Weimar advertising see Cserno, "Race and Mass Consumption." For more on the Sarotti-Mohr in particular see Rita Gudermann and Bernhard Wulff, *Der Sarotti-Mohr: die bewegte Geschichte einer Werbefigur* (Ch. Links Verlag, 2004).
[646] Ferm, "Revealing Representations," 241.
[647] "Women's temporary participation in a culture of leisure, consumption, and body consciousness created the powerful image of the New Woman that populated the Berlin of the 1920s, yet this modernist female persona was as short-lived and ambiguous as it was generational." Ankum, *Women in the Metropolis,* 4.

problematic for women's political activism as well as thoroughly commodified.[648] The *Neue Frau* as brand character appeared everywhere, selling all sorts of products from perfume to vacuum cleaners and cigarettes. Well observed in the imagery of cigarette marketing, in the span of just a few decades women in advertisements transformed from the object of male desire to the target consumer. In cigarette advertising specifically, this reflects the mainstreaming of the *Neue Frau* as a commodified brand character on par with, and often conflated with, the harem woman (Figures 4.58-4.59).[649]

Kracauer, along with other cultural critics of the interwar period, especially those of the Frankfurt School, are by far the most cited in scholarship regarding the transformation of Germany, and Berlin especially, to a modern center of industry and colonial power in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Writers such as Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, and Walter Benjamin, published often on what they saw as the downfall of not only the city of Berlin, but civilization itself, to hyper industrialization and fascism. Their essays document the various ways in which technology and the pace of modern living alienated "the masses" not only from the processes of production, but also from nature and genuine human relationships. Whereas most contemporary commentators cited in scholarship today described the developments in Berlin as an overwhelming experience of sensory stimuli, economic disparity, and debauchery, many women, most new transplants, saw in that same city signs of opportunity.[650]

The variety in social stratification of single women in the city is testament to the many different versions of Berlin happening simultaneously and overlapping in spaces like the Moka Efti. Carl Moreck, the author of a series of popular guidebooks to the city, described the situation in this way,

> They [women] stood side by side with the men in the factories, in the offices, and at the machines; and through him they became acquainted with various places of pleasure…and

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[648] "Such emphasis on exhaustion rather than exhilaration with the new ways of life embodied by the flapper, the Girl, the Garconne, is a prominent aspect of the rejections of these "imported models of femininity." The deconstruction of the New Woman came with disillusionment with modernization which was imported from American economic principles as well as the french-influenced over sexualization of the female body." Ankum, *Women in the Metropolis*, 2.
[649] "If the feminist New Woman often provoked ridicule and rage, another variation, the New Woman as stylish consumer, proved far more popular." Stratigakos, *Women's Berlin,* 12.
[650] Stratigakos, *Women's Berlin*, xvi.

> in his company they spent their hours of leisure, in need of distraction: in the cafes, pubs, liquor loungers, and bars.[651]

Although they made up a significant portion of Kracauer's "salaried masses," only about one-third of office and other white collar workers in Berlin were women.[652] In his description of the Moka Efti it is this narrow version of the city as one of young, "Americanized" female professionals that he is describing. In a derogatory manner he describes such venues in terms of a surface "*Girlkultur*" that has overtaken the masses.[653] While it is the case that female white-collar workers grew 200% between 1907-1925, by 1925 they made up only 12.6% of working women in Berlin.[654]

Far more numerous were factory and service workers which would have included sex workers. This version of Berlin was that of the working class and industrial employees. Women arriving to the city, often from farming backgrounds, found work in textile factories, domestic service, department stores, etc.[655] While bourgeois women, artists, and students joined groups of friends for leisurely coffees in the afternoon and single women working in factories and offices joined their male coworkers at bars and clubs after work, there were always also women at work in spaces of leisure as barmaids, waitresses, performers, and clandestine sex workers. Sex workers are never explicitly referenced or depicted in any photographs, illustrations, or other marketing materials for the Moka Efti. Despite this, the *Friedrichstraße* was well known as an area in which they were prevalent, both in and outside of entertainment venues located there. Due to relaxed enforcement of regulations, sex workers in Berlin were more autonomous than those working elsewhere in Germany and were often able to work in public spaces deemed inappropriate for such activities elsewhere. The plentiful entertainment venues in the city offered an alternative to working in apartments or brothels. Similarly to situations in other large European cities such as Paris, sex workers operated in cafés, cabarets, museums, and even zoos, and dressed similarly to their middle-class and bourgeois counterparts due to the cheaper prices

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[651] Smith, *Berlin Coquette*, 110.
[652] Kracauer, *Salaried Masses*, 28.
[653] Ermarth, "Girls Gone Wild," 8.
[654] Ankum, *Women in the Metropolis*, 4.
[655] Smith, *Berlin Coquette*, 5.

of clothing realized through mass production. In contemporary accounts there was some anxiety about the difficulty to say for sure if female patrons in these spaces were sex workers or not.[656]

In sensationalist news media as well as in serious political discussions, by the late 1920s, the figure of the *Neue Frau* became synonymous with out of control prostitution, unwed mothers, and the overall downfall of traditional womanhood.[657] In contemporary sources, white collar working women, students, and those from wealthier families describe the presence of sex workers in the city to be potentially threatening. Published articles and opinions in newspapers, women's guides to Berlin, and feminist periodicals attest to the high level of staring and obscene remarks launched on women in public. There was also an ongoing issue with the police who would openly harass women for walking alone, assuming that they were prostitutes soliciting.[658] The appearance of a large number of women in public space enjoying leisure activities raised direct comparisons for many public commentators to bar maids and prostitutes who had once been the only social group of women present in public areas at night.[659]

In Moreck's *Führer durch das lasterhafte Berlin* (1931), a tourist guide promising to show visitors the "sinful" and licentious side of the city, the author points readers to attend a "five o'clock tea." Promoted at the Moka Efti as a "four o'clock *Tanztee*" (Figure 4.60), Moreck explains that this was a daily opportunity for Berlin's "beautiful, elegant, and lebenslustigen" women to see and be seen. Too cosmopolitan to care about mixing with other classes, explains Moreck, the "Fünfuhr-Frau" was a mixture of "Bürgerlichkeit und Halbweltlichkeit,"

> hat den gesamten Fundus der Eleganz, ist huebsch, schick, amuesant, kokett, in allen Saetteln der Bildung gerecht, eine reizende Unterhalterin und blendende Taenzerin, kurz, die Frau, mit der man sich zeigen und Neid eregen kann, die Frau comme il faut.[660]

The "Fünf Uhr Frauen," a mixing of middle-class women and sex workers, appeared at the end of the work day as the tenor of the street transitioned to evening activities.[661]

The *Neue Frau*, Harem Woman, and Turkish New Woman Walk into a Café

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[656] Smith, *Berlin Coquette*, 6-7.
[657] Stratigakos, *Women's Berlin*, 11-12.
[658] Stratigakos, *Women's Berlin*, 6.
[659] Ostwald, *Das galante Berlin*.
[660] Moreck, *Ein Führer durch das lasterhafte Berlin*, 58.
[661] Moreck, *Ein Führer durch das lasterhafte Berlin*, 56-60.

That the waitresses serving coffee at the Moka Efti were meant to be associated with the figure of the harem woman is straightforwardly inferred through two parallel illustrations in the marketing brochure (Figure 4.61). Although the harem woman is never depicted inside of the café, on the title page of the brochure this imaginary figure, so typified that she could be described as a brand figure, appears without any context. She is dressed in garb that would have been recognizable to European audiences as both vaguely "oriental," but also incredibly popular styles worn in European cities.[662] Devoid of personality or any kind of specificity, she manages to balance a tray of coffee while somehow also being captured mid-dance. A waitress in a similar pose appears a few pages later although she seems to be balancing her tray of coffee more carefully. Both the harem woman and the waitress perform the important task of bringing Moka Efti coffee to customers. The only significant difference between the two figures is their dress. The waitress appears in a short, black skirt with a white apron and white hat designating her role as service worker in the café. Placed on the title page, the illustration of the harem woman serves to welcome guests into the café space as well as set the tone for the spatial image of the harem within. A photograph taken at an unknown date within the Moka Efti solidifies this association. In the image a waitress dressed in costume as a harem woman serves a male guest by the coffee bar (Figure 4.37).[663]

Intriguingly, the *Neue Frau* and harem woman characters are brought together with the *türkische moderne Frau* (modern Turkish woman) in the brochure essay titled "*Cafe Turc: Wie man im Orient Mokka schlürft* (Turkish Café: How to Sip Mocha in the Orient)." As already mentioned, this essay contains the only explicit mention of harems in the café's marketing materials that still exist. "Die Harems" are mentioned only to point out that they no longer exist (at least in name), having been made illegal by Atatürk, the new leader of the Turkish Republic.

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[662] "Harem pants," wide legged and snug at the ankle, had been made popular by the Parisian designer Paul Poiret in 1910. Inspired by orientalist paintings and theater, Poiret's harem pants were originally a very controversial way of introducing trousers to womens' wardrobes. An issue of *Die Welt* from 1911 documents the excitement of passersby when they saw two woman strolling through the Tiergarten wearing "bloomers" that look remarkably similar to these pants. Stratigakos, *Women's Berlin*, 11.

[663] This photograph appears in a newspaper article published in 1958 looking back on the Moka Efti's legacy after the death of Eftimiades. It is worth noting the copper coffee pot the waitress pours from as well as the fact that she is the only woman in this photograph. Both guests as well as those working behind the bar are men. This photograph could have very well been taken in the mid to late 1930s when fewer women worked outside of the home due to rising conservatism or the brochure might very well just emphasize the female workers in the space. Elster, "So War Moka Efti."

According to the brochure, as opposed to the harem woman's experience of coffee, which consisted of her serving it to her master, the "*türkische modern Frau*," like the *Neue Frau*, now enjoys her "Fife o-Klock" cup of coffee with her friends. Importantly, she does this without a head covering and in European clothing.[664]

For the sake of the concerns of this chapter we will disregard whether or not such statements held any truth and instead focus on the potential use of such comparisons. The 1920s brought about the end of the Ottoman Empire, the demise of the Young Turks, and assassinations of figures like Talat Paşa, as well as a shift toward a Turkish nationalist movement led by Mustafa Kemal.[665] In Germany these events were covered extensively in the news. The image of the New Turkish Woman was often brought into these reports as a tool for conveying the progressive attitude of the Republic after the end of monarchical rule. The New Turkish Woman (in many ways like the German *Neue Frau*) was portrayed in propaganda as the harbinger of modernity in Turkey. New Turkish women were photographed "wearing Western clothes, attending educational institutes, working as scientists and artists in laboratories and studios, and playing sports."[666] As Anderson describes, the version of the new Turkish woman that seems to have been the most successful for both German and Turkish publics was the woman who did not wear a head covering, but also did not work outside the home. Therefore there could be no risk of prostitution, unwed motherhood, or women's low wages, seen to be debilitating problems in Weimar Berlin. Anderson understands such depictions as part of a backlash against the women's movement in Germany and as a foil to the increasingly problematic *Neue Frau*. The New

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[664] Beauty, "Moka Efti Equitable," 14.

[665] The War of Independence immediately followed Turkey's defeat in the First World War. Atatürk founded the Republic in 1923 and was President until 1938. During his presidency was a period of extensive Westernization and modernization. A central challenge of the modernization reforms was to grant women the same civil liberties as men. The Kemalist regime believed that this was crucial to achieving advances comparable to the West. Esra Akcan, "Civilizing Housewives versus Participatory Users: Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky in the Employ of the Turkish Nation State," in *Cold War Kitchen: Americanization, Technology, and European Users* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2009), 186, 188.

[666] "Recent scholarship, however, has complicated this perceived feminism of teh Kemalist elites because it is hard to claim that women were allowed to become the real movers and shakers of their history." Akcan, "Civilizing Housewives," 188. For the relation between architecture and women in the Kemalist agenda, see Sibel Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building: Turkish Architecture Culture in the Early Republic* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001); Gülsüm Baydar, ''Tenuous Boundaries: Women, Domesticity and Nationhood in 1930s Turkey,'' *Journal of Architecture* 7, no. 3 (Autumn 2002): 245–247.

Turkish Woman was held up in the German press as an example of liberated women who achieved their goals without activism.[667]

Yet, despite claims in the German press and Turkish propaganda regarding the feminist politics of the Kemalist elite in Turkey, the Moka Efti brochure essay notes how Turkish cafés, even modern Europeanized ones in the new Republic, remained spaces exclusively for men. But as with clothing and decor, soon, the author promises, Turkish women will become regular café patrons like their German counterparts and "will also obviously smoke cigarettes."[668] As discussed in previous chapters, in some venues cigarettes became symbols for pushing the boundaries of expectations for women's behavior and were associated with "liberation, power, and other important values for women."[669] The brochure essay seems to be tapping into these associations. It also seems to be framing the harem/home as a feminine space of the past that is replaced by the café-bar as a space whose masculine gendered connotations have, at least in Germany, been overcome.

The fantasy of liberation from gendered space was central to the imaginary sold to patrons of the Moka Efti. Similar aspirational dynamics are at play in Ernst Lubitsch's film *Sumurun* (1920), in which Pola Negri, embodying the *Neue Frau* type, paradoxically aspires to enter a Pasha's harem as a slave in order to attain higher social status. By contrast, within the same narrative, Sumurun, played by Jenny Hasselqvist, the Pasha's favorite, instead aspires to and ultimately leads an uprising that frees the women confined within the palace.[670] As Beatriz Colomina argues, modern architecture and interiors must be understood as forms of mass media, mechanisms of representation comparable to film and advertising, in which "space becomes detached from place."[671] Located not far from the oriental city constructed on the UFA Studios lot in Berlin Tempelhof, where *Sumurun* was filmed, the Moka Efti interiors operate precisely from such detachment: they create an imaginary world in which the *Neue Frau*, the harem

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[667] Anderson, "Down in Turkey, Far Away," 97.
[668] "Bald wird auch da die Frau einziehen und natürlich Zigaretten riechen." Beaury, "Moka Efti Equitable," 16.
[669] Amos and Haglund, "From Social Taboo to 'Torch of Freedom,'"4.
[670] Ernst Lubitsch, *Sumurun* (Germany: Projektions-AG Union [PAGU], 1920), film.
[671] James Donald, "Beatriz Colomina, Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media. Cambridge, MA/London: MIT Press," *Media, Culture, and Society* 18, no. 1 (1996): 161–162.

woman, and the modern Turkish woman can be juxtaposed and compared. Yet, viewed from a historical distance, these myths of emancipation, whether imagined in the café or on screen, reveal themselves as marketing tactics that ultimately reinscribe gendered hierarchies: the harem woman continues to serve, the *Neue Frau* to be commodified, and the modern Turkish woman to remain largely confined to the home.

The images of the *Neue Frau*, harem woman, and New Turkish Woman created in the marketing brochure, when taken together and compared, act as "receptacles" for various "projections, displaced fears and anxieties."[672] Beyond a mere response to the alienation of industrial modernity, as Kracauer described, I suggest that the Moka Efti's enmeshment of the imaginary orient into Weimar Berlin, a tumultuous and contested city in which notions of gender, class, center and periphery, domestic and foreign were constantly shifting, produced a mediated space in which these tensions were both negotiated and normalized. The imaginary harem that filled the Moka Efti invited patrons to imagine both a world beyond Berlin and a different mode of being within it. Yet the possibility of transformation remained confined to representation: the illusion of spatial and social mobility that the café offered depended on the repetition, not the dissolution, of the very hierarchies it appeared to transcend.

Conflations of Space

In the first essay included in the Moka Efti marketing brochure, the author describes how the goal was to emphasize an orientalist atmosphere, while, at the same time providing the comforts of home to guests.[673] Although paradoxical, this desire to feel 'at home' while also 'in the Orient' was not new, as we have seen in previous chapters, yet the Moka Efti presents an example of a semi-public space made to feel private. In the café's "Mohammedan," "Arab," and "Egyptian" rooms, interior decor which had, not even twenty years before, been accessible only to the most wealthy Europeans was transformed into popular architecture. The café interiors take the imitative impulses of middle-class Turkish cozy corner creators further, creating a harem tableau inhabitable, not by the nuclear family, but by the "salary earning masses." The Moka

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[672] Huyssen, "Mass Culture as Woman," 52.
[673] Urban Beaury, "Das Neue Moka Efti," in Urban Beaury, *Moka Efti Equitable: An Berlins Populärster Ecke* (Berlin, 1929), 3. While this essay is supposedly written by Beaury, I have not been able to find out any information on an individual going by this name. It could very well be a fake name, fake person, or moniker.

Efti's interiors emphasized and intersected with a broader domestication of public space taking place in early twentieth century Berlin that was necessarily gendered yet also a reaction to a very real physical and metaphorical lack of housing in the city.

Whereas many journalists and social commentators at the turn-of-the-century treated the increased visibility of women in the city as a sudden, jarring development, Hans Ostwald writes about this process in *Das galante Berlin* (1928) as a gradual domestication of public space. Ever the sensationalist, he describes the evolution of café and nightlife culture in Berlin to the expansion of the brothel into everyday spaces. For Ostwald this history began with the late nineteenth century *Mädchenkneipen* or *Kellnerinnenlokale* (literally translated "girl pub" or "waitress establishment"), where women first began working as waitresses serving drinks and food in Berlin establishments.[674] Ostwald goes so far as to say that, in 1905, Berlin *Tanzlokale* (dance venues) were nothing more than markets for prostitution.[675]

Ostwald calls these working women "*weiße Sklavinnen, die vollkommen rechtlos dastehen* (white slaves who are completely disenfranchised)," due to the fact that the money earned depended entirely on the whims of customers who mostly expected flirtation. Furthering the insecurity of such a job was the fact that such places were always opening and closing, popping up in new locations with new owners.[676] The women's movement in Berlin saw the *Mädchenkneipen* in much the same way, calling for the city to make such establishments illegal.[677] Ostwald cites a man named I. Werner who describes his night at a *Mädchenkneipe* in depth. Intriguingly the spatial image of the harem haunts his account:

> And how kindly one is received! Three to four young women compete for the honor of drinking a glass of wine to your health. Soon one is sitting on your lap…the second

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[674] Women were tolerated in serving drinks and food, but were paid solely on the basis of tips from customers. There were *Mädchenkneipen* available at every level of social stratification, from holes in the wall to working class and to bourgeois establishments. Often waitresses had to buy the drinks and food upfront as a sort of middleman before selling to customers who often came to the bar primarily due to the fact that women were there. Ostwald notes that, around 1900 in Berlin there were estimated to be between 4000 and 5000 establishments where women worked as servers. Hans Ostwald, *Das galante Berlin* (H. Klemm, 1928).
[675] Ostwald, *Berliner Tanzlokale* (Berlin und Leipzig 1905), 3,17, Cited in Wolffram, *Tanzdielen*, 12.
[676] Ostwald, *Das galante Berlin*.
[677] Eliza Ichenhäuser, *Was die Frau von Berlin wissen muß ein praktisches Frauenbuch für Einheimische und Fremde: unter Mitwirkung der berufensten Vertreterinnen auf den verschiedenen Gebieten der Frauenarbeit* (Berlin: Loesdau, 1913).

> brushes your hair, the third kisses your lips, and the fourth whispers quietly in your ear - sweet words: Another bottle of wine!...they encourage you and promise happiness…and it is so snug sitting on the red divan in the dim room. [...]

And, at the end of the night as he makes the journey home, he thinks of "his favorite…who lays and sleeps on the divan."[678] Such a description of "his favorite" sleeping on a divan, conjures imagery of oriental romance and the figure of the odalisque wherein Werner, the male bar patron, plays the sultan who has chosen his favorite concubine.

Ostwald's conflation of the brothel, harem, and home as inherently feminine, domestic spaces is symptomatic of discourse of the period that was highly reactionary to women's increasing claims to urban space. Yet the idea of women moving more visibly into public spaces as an expansion of the domestic interior was not far off from feminist activists' own strategic thinking. Reflecting on the 1904 Berlin Congress of the International Council of Women, Annie Furuhjelm, a Finnish suffragist, remarked that, "We perceive that the motor force of the whole movement is the intuitive comprehension of women that they have to go out of their individual homes in order to make the big world more of a home [...]"[679] Regardless of gendered connotations regarding a so-called domestication of public space, as single women in Berlin increasingly began working outside the home they required spaces to live, congregate, relax, eat, and work on a purely practical level.[680] Around 1900 cafés in the city began installing *Damenzimmer* (ladies' rooms) to accommodate this growing demand, one example including the *Damenzimmer* at the Café Kerkau which had previously occupied the Moka Efti's space.[681]

After the First World War, gender demographics in Berlin changed drastically due to the extreme loss of life engendered by the war. Taking the *Fruchtstraße*, a street that contained thirty-two bars and cafés, as a sample: out of 527 apartment tenants recorded to be living in the street in 1925, 176 were widows who did not work making them the largest demographic.[682] Accordingly, patrons to commercial establishments during these years were mostly women. Drawing from police records Smith notes that,

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[678] Ostwald, "Der rote Laterne," in *Das galante Berlin.*
[679] Weber, "Unveiling Scheherazade," 131.
[680] Stratigakos, *Women's Berlin*, ix - x.
[681] For example the *Damenzimmer* in the Café Kerkau which occupied the space previous to the Moka Efti.
[682] Niedbalski and Hochmuth "Kiez und Kneipe," 138, n. 23.

> Unlike Brecht's imagined secretaries, who visited the cinema accompanied by men, the women who visited Berlin's cabarets made up nearly three-quarters of the audience, which means that they were either unaccompanied or going out in groups[683]

By the 1920s, independent women living in the city had become everyday fixtures within public life in Germany and the need for segregated ladies' rooms in public spaces was mostly a thing of the past. Berlin establishments, like the Moka Efti, transitioned from including *Damenzimmer* to organizing the entire establishment around female customers.

Coffee Consumption, Gender, and the Home as Social Space

The Moka Efti's relationship to an ongoing domestication of public space continued a much longer entanglement between coffee, gender, social class, domestic space, and Ottoman influence in Europe. Since coffee's arrival in Europe in the seventeenth century, the stimulant had unsettled traditional class and gender roles as well as their spatial organization in society. In the Ottoman and Persian worlds, coffeehouses were (and in some areas continue to be) quintessentially masculine venues, while in Europe the beverage itself was sometimes described as dangerously feminizing. A pamphlet entitled "The Women's Petition Against Coffee" that was distributed in seventeenth century London claims that "our men" have become "crippled" and "impotent" after consuming that "Abominable, Heathenish Liquor called COFFEE." Coffee had turned "the Ablest Performers in Christendome" into "Eunuchs" who were "as fruitless as those *Desarts* [deserts] whence that unhappy *Berry* was brought."[684] Notably this was not the first time such an argument had been made as, in the 1590s, the "Persians also declared coffee, or *qahvah*, as perilous to men's virility."[685] As Mary Pierce argues, this reaction to coffee's introduction to England likely had more to do with anxieties about Ottoman influence in England than with the effects of the product itself. The increasing presence of coffee houses in the city provided visual evidence marking the infiltration of Ottoman culture into the city. In London

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[683] Smith, *Berlin Coquette*, 133.
[684] As Mary Pierce notes, the pamphlet's claim to have been authored by women is probably disingenuous. *The Women's Petition against Coffee, Representing to Publick Consideration the Grand Inconveniences Accruing to Their Sex from the Excessive Use of That Drying, Enfeebling Liquor* (Printed, 1674), Nineteenth Century Collections Online, https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/AXPGLS599306245/NCCO?sid=gale_marc&xid=672847d1&pg=1; Mary Pierce "Coffee Made Cuckolds and Eunuchs: Interaction with an Ottoman Drink in Seventeenth-century English Society," 6 no. 1 *Food Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* (2016): 53-54.
[685] Pierce, "Coffee Made Cukolds," 54.

alone, by 1700, there were around 2,000 coffee houses in the city. With some bearing names such as "Turk's Head" or "Sultan's Head," men of all social classes mixed. Some patrons even viewed visiting a coffee house as a full body experience, dressing in their idea of oriental garb and spending the majority of a day in conversation and drinking coffee.[686]

Like tobacco, coffee, a "typical colonial product," had been consumed by wealthy Germans at home since the mid-seventeenth century. The first German coffeehouse is generally said to have opened in Bremen in 1673 and was linked to merchants who were involved in trade with the Ottoman Empire.[687] Similar establishments soon appeared in Hamburg and Leipzig, following models already flourishing in London and Vienna.[688] Berlin's first coffeehouse, known as "the English coffee house," opened in 1721 under the patronage of King Frederick William I and catered primarily to men of the court, merchants, and intellectuals.[689] Coffee houses in Germany were thus understood as cosmopolitan, a combination of English and Ottoman Culture, importantly both linked to cultures of empire.

Early European coffeehouses were understood by contemporaries to be spaces where, unlike the tavern, the theater, or the street, protocol related to social hierarchy was not enforced.[690] Yet, like their counterparts in the Islamic world, these were deeply gendered spaces. In England, as historians such as Jürgen Habermas, Peter Stallybrass, and Allan White have argued, the coffeehouse became a paradigmatic site for the development of bourgeois political and intellectual consciousness, and it was an almost exclusively male space.[691]

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[686] Pierce, "Coffee Mad Cukolds," 54. Notably the first coffehouse opened in London in 1652 by Pasqua Rosée, an Ottoman subject. Tag Gronberg also describes the intellectual men who frequented Viennese cafés in the 19th century who were also described by the popular press as effiminate which some of the men actively embraced. Grongerg, "Coffeehouse Orientalism," in Charlotte Ashby ed., *The Viennese Café and Fin-de-Siècle* Culture (Berghahn Books, 2013), 71.
[687] Wierling, "German History as Global History," 73.
[688] Robert Liberles, *Jews Welcome Coffee: Tradition and Innovation in Early Modern Germany* (UPNE, 2012), 24.
[689] William H. Ukers, *All About Coffee* (The Tea & Coffee Trade Journal Company, 1935), 45.
[690] E.J. Clery, "Women, Publicity and the Coffee-house Myth," *Women: A Cultural Review* 2, no. 2 (1991): 170.
[691] Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (London: Methuen, 1985) 80-118; Jürgen Habermas, *Habermas and the Public Sphere* Craig Calhoun, ed., (Cambridge, Mass. and London: The MIT Press, 1992), 421-62. Exceptions were women who either owned or served food and drink in coffeehouses.

For women, on the other hand, consuming coffee was strongly tied to home and domestic activities. Early on, many women of genteel households "identified strongly with coffee" and enjoyed it together with tea at home. Until the twentieth century women were largely excluded from coffee houses as spaces of public sociability.[692] Coffeehouses circulated in European discourse as spatial images against which women measured and critiqued their own restricted participation in public life. Mary Montagu, writing in her *Turkish Embassy Letters* (1763), for example, described a public hammam in Sofia as "the women's coffee-house."[693] As discussed in Chapter 1, Montagu characterized the hammam as a space of democratic sociability, where social distinctions seemed to dissolve and where, as an outsider, she found it difficult to attribute class status to the bodies she observed. Her account helped shape European perceptions of the Turkish bath as an egalitarian social space and contributed to the image of the harem woman as a one who enjoyed coffee and tobacco within such settings. Montagu's observations thus played a formative role in shaping the spatial image of the harem as well as its close association with the hammam discussed throughout this dissertation as a site where sensual sociability and political possibility intersected.

Beginning in the late eighteenth century coffee consumption in Europe shifted dramatically. A growing middle class began to drink coffee, along with tea and chocolate, at home. Around 1800, German women began to identify with coffee in a significant way through *Kaffeekränzchen* or coffee circles. These were regular gatherings of women at home for conversation and refreshment.[694] Domestic interiors themselves evolved to accommodate them. Pastor Ress, a social critic writing in 1777, argued that the arrival of coffee transformed the design of the typical German house: it changed from a primarily functional structure into one centered around social space, with the parlor as its focal point. Ress, and others, were concerned about these changes. From the first introduction of coffeehouses to Germany, commentators were concerned about "the bad influence these establishments had on young people and women,"[695] despite the fact that they could not actually access them. Similarly to tobacco use, coffee's introduction in Germany led to a general anxiety about changing value systems, but

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[692] Liberles, *Jews Welcome Coffee,* xiii.
[693] Montagu, *Turkish Embassy Letters,* 113-114.
[694] Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Das Paradies, Der Geschmack Und Die Vernunft Eine Geschichte Der Genussmittel* (Fischer-Taschenbuch-Verl., 2010), 80.
[695] Liberles, *Jews Welcome Coffee*, 24.

unlike tobacco, consuming coffee was not taboo for "respectable" women. Rather it was the transformation of domestic spaces in which coffee was consumed that caused worry.

By 1900 coffee was mass produced and consumed across genders and by all social classes in Germany. This had largely to do with dramatic changes in coffee extraction and shipping logistics. Whereas coffee, as a consumer good, maintained a strong cultural connection to the Middle East, by 1880 coffee beans consumed in Germany were primarily harvested in the Caribbean, Central, and South America. As one result of this shift, Hamburg's free port had become the most important point of exchange for coffee to enter central Europe.[696] The transformation of coffee from a luxury import into a mass commodity accessible across gender and class lines in Germany also transformed the spaces in which it was consumed. As discussed in Chapter 3, coffee became a requirement for factory work with companies providing coffee free of charge to workers. Although not often discussed as such, coffee functioned as both a physiological stimulant and a social infrastructure for industrial modernity in England, Germany, and the United States.[697] The product shaped modern rhythms of labor, leisure, and urban life more generally. As coffee became an everyday part of urban life rather than a marker of elite sociability, cafés multiplied and diversified in form and clientele. Even as the material geography of coffee shifted from Middle Eastern origins to Caribbean and South American plantations, its consumption remained entangled with orientalist associations and with evolving ideas about gendered space. The café, no longer the preserve of elite men, became a stage on which anxieties about women's presence in public life were played out. These anxieties, often expressed through metaphors of domesticity and sexuality, are evident in early twentieth century German discourse such as Hans Ostwald's conflation of the brothel and the home.

Domesticity and Displacement: "Special Shelters for the Homeless"

A tendency towards the domestication of public space in Berlin can be understood not only through the dimension of gender, but also as a pragmatic reaction to the acute shortage of housing that affected much of the city's population. Alfred Stieler, reflecting in 1958 about the

[696] Wierling, "German History as Global History", 73.
[697] Schivelbusch, *Das Paradies, Der Geschmack.*

rise of the Berlin café scene notes that this development happened very differently than in Paris where the interior was disregarded due to Parisians who, for the most part, sat outside:

> The Berliner seeks in the café the home that was denied. This desire had to be addressed by creating homely or representative spaces.[698]

In the nineteenth century, a typical space for such a meeting would be in a *Kneipe* (pub) of which there were many in the city.[699] Yet coffee houses offered a new type of refuge that was better suited to the changing demographics of the city. Due to mass housing shortages resulting in part from the rapid growth of the city's population, as well as a growing number of office workers, additional spaces were needed for meeting with colleagues and friends as well as for rest.[700]

While Kracauer's designation of the Moka Efti as a "special shelter for the homeless" was meant in terms of an intellectual homelessness, it is no wonder that a home-like environment, accessible to a wide audience and open for most hours of the day would be popular given the very real precariousness of having a safe, much less comfortable place to sleep in the city around 1930. With a population of around 4 million in 1927, according to city records, in 1930 it was estimated that anywhere from 200,000 to 500,000 people in Berlin were homeless and this number would only increase drastically over the years of the Moka Efti's operation.[701] Since the 1860s, the so-called "Mietskasernen" or rental barracks (most likely the name Kracauer is playing with in his designation of the Moka Efti as 'pleasure barracks') became the norm in Berlin. These were densely packed, multi-story tenement buildings characterized by their monotonous facades and large footprints (Figures 4.62-4.64).

The inadequate hygienic conditions of these apartment buildings, along with cold, dampness, and darkness, created a harmful living environment, particularly in uninsulated basement and attic spaces. Despite this, tenants typically had to allocate 25 to 30 percent of their income to rent two- to three-room apartments. To cover these costs, extra rooms were frequently sublet, or tenants' own beds were rented to *Schlafburschen* or Schlafmädchen wherein several

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[698] Stieler, "Berliner Kaffeehäußer," 257.
[699] Although the tradition of taverns or pubs has a much longer history in the region. Ostwald, *Das galante Berlin*.
[700] Stieler, "Berliner Kaffeehäußer," 257.
[701] Wolfgang Ayass, "Vagrants and Beggars in Hitler's Reich," in *The German Underworld* (Routledge, 1988), 210.

individuals shared a single bed in shifts.[702] To demonstrate how widespread the issue of housing was, middle-class, working women presented one of the largest demographics who experienced issues finding apartments.[703]

Within the context of interwar Berlin the consumer demand for such a space provides insight into the desires and morphing spatial relations of the café going population. With homelessness and inadequate housing in the city presenting a very real problem, as with other "special shelters for the homeless," the Moka Efti offered a comfortable third space.[704] Open nearly twenty-four hours, the atmosphere of the Moka Efti, that the interior architect describes as "a modern, spacious coffee house…able to offer its visitors all the comfort and coziness of home," perhaps functioned as just that, a comfortable space that provided an alternative to those without access to a home-y environment.[705]

Amalgamation and Hybridity in German Orientalist Interiors

By the time the Moka Efti opened, in 1929, orientalist domestic interiors had largely fallen out of style in both Europe and the United States. Patrons to the café who had spent their childhoods in bourgeois households, like Kracauer, might have found the rooms to be reminiscent of rooms they had encountered in their childhood or late nineteenth century domestic spaces generally. Walter Benjamin describes the bourgeois, nineteenth-century domestic interior as both contractive and expansive. On the one hand interior decoration of the nineteenth century was an exercise in domesticating the exterior through collecting objects from "remote locales and memories of the past." On the other hand, "a carefully appointed interior is capable of

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[702] Werner Hegemann, *Das Steinerne Berlin: 1930 - Geschichte Der Größten Mietskasernenstadt Der Welt* (Birkhäuser, 2014), 281.
[703] Stratigakos, *Women's Berlin*, 54-55.
[704] Kracauer, *The Salaried Masses*, 91.
[705] Beaury, "Moka Efti Equitable," 3-4. On the prevalence of so-called *Ersatz* or *Surrogatcafés* in Germany during and after the First World War, see contemporary press discussions of *Ersatzkaffee* and substitute coffeehouses, where beverages made from roasted chicory, barley, rye, acorns, or dandelion roots were served in response to wartime shortages and later to inflationary pressures during the Weimar Republic. Such establishments were often described less as sites of consumption than as places of prolonged stay, offering warmth, newspapers, and sociability at minimal cost, particularly for those without access to stable domestic interiors. I am grateful to Karin Grohl and Paul Nolte for drawing my attention to this phenomenon and its relevance for understanding the broader ecology of Berlin's café culture in this period.

absorbing the world - or at last a reflection of it."[706] Some patrons might have drawn connections between the Moka Efti's interiors and spaces such as hotel lobbies, cigar lounges, or upper class train cars. That said, the majority of patrons to the café would have never previously encountered orientalist-style interiors firsthand. For most encounters with homes of the elite, not to mention ones that took on Egyptian or Arab "styles," if at all, would have been through pop culture.[707]

Although most customers would never have had access, the salons at the Moka Efti are reminiscent of so-called *Orient-Zimmer* (Orient-Room), also known as *Damaskuszimmern* (Damascus rooms). Not particular to German collectors, these were complete wooden rooms shipped from areas within Syria and Egypt and put on display at World's Fairs, added to museum collections, and installed in private homes. Known *Damaskuszimmer* that arrived in Germany include that bought by the director of the *Kunstgewerbemuseum* (Museum of Decorative Arts) in Düsseldorf in 1890, that bought in 1899 by Karl Ernst Osthaus which is currently on display at the *Museum für Völkerkunde* (Museum of Ethnology) in Dresden, and the "Arabicum" room at the Villa Gutmann, a private residence, in Potsdam (Figures 4.65-4.67). In 1926 Max von Oppenheim is also known to have installed wall and ceiling tiles from Damascus in his Berlin apartment which also served as a private museum.[708]

Damaskuszimmer, when on view to a museum-goers, were presented as carefully preserved relics of an Ottoman past. In Gutmann and Oppenheim's home decor there is a more transparent and playful mixing of genuine pieces from abroad with German made copies of Islamic decor as well as local touches.[709] Whereas earlier examples of *Wunderkammer* and *Turquerie* had been reserved for royalty and the very wealthy, by the turn of the century such interiors had become accessible to members of the professional bourgeoisie. Gutmann and Oppenheim, a businessman and a lawyer respectively, embraced this opportunity to cultivate

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[706] Fuss, *The Sense of an Interior,* 4-5.
[707] Anke Scharrah, "Damaszener Zimmer in Europa: Authentische und orientalisierende Raumkreationen zwischen 1880-1930," in *Gezimmertes Morgenland: Orientalische und orientalisierende Holzinterieurs in Mitteleuropa im späten 19. Jahrhundert* (Böhlau, 2021), 61-76.
[708] Scharrah, "Damaszener Zimmer in Europa," 61-76.
[709] Thomas Tunsch, "Die Syrische Innenraumdekoration in Der Ehemaligen Villa Gutmann in Potsdam. Untersuchungen Zur Herkunft Und Datierung," *Forschungen Und Berichte* 29/30 (January 1990): 129–47; Scharrah, "Damaszener Zimmer in Europa," 76.

taste, experiment with display, and share their knowledge of Islamic applied art with their guests.[710]

For students of applied and decorative arts, writers, and scholars of Oriental studies, the new museum collections of Islamic art and architecture that emerged across Germany after 1900 offered an unprecedented opportunity to study such materials firsthand, even if they could not afford to own them. Friedrich Sarre became the first curator for Islamic art at the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum and oversaw the establishment of a permanent Islamic department in 1904.[711] The Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe in Hamburg and the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich also expanded their holdings of carpets, ceramics, and metalwork from Islamic lands around the same time.[712] The 1910 Munich exhibition of Masterpieces of Mohammedan Art (*Austellung von Meisterwerken muhammedanischer Kunst*) is understood to have been the key exhibition for shaping the field of Islamic art history in the early twentieth century. The exhibition featured over 3,000 works of art and even the Ottoman Sultan, Mehmed V Reşad contributed by lending objects from the imperial collections in Istanbul. The exhibition displays and catalogue would influence a generation of artists, designers, and writers.[713]

A lengthy discussion could be had about the extent to which early exhibitions of Islamic art in German museums could be considered "authentic." More relevant here, however, are the interiors in which amalgamation and hybridity were deliberately employed as markers of taste, scholarly inclination, and personal engagement with the orient. This entanglement, of the import

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[710] While there is little to nothing written about Gutmann, there has been a bit of research into Max von Oppenheim. See Lionel Gossman, *The Passion of Max von Oppenheim: Archaeology and Intrigue in the Middle East from Wilhelm II to Hitler* (Open Book Publishers, 2013).

[711] Quite a bit has been written about Friedrich Sarre's contributions to the Berlin Museum collections as well as beginnings of the field of Islamic art history more generally. Patricia Blessing, "Friedrich Sarre and the Discovery of Seljuk Anatolia," *Journal of Art Historiography* (Glasgow) 11, no. 11 (2014): 1–20; Jutta Maria Schwed, "The Berlin Aleppo Room: A View into a Syrian Interior from the Ottoman Empire," *Studies in Conservation* 51, no. 2 (2006): 95–101.

[712] Funda Berksoy, "Art Exhibitions in Munich and Istanbul (1909–18): Cultural Events as Part of German Imperialist Policies," *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association* 7, no. 1 (2020): 173–204; Jasmin Holtkötter, "Zwischen Kunstgewerbe und Kulturgeschichte Austellungen islamischer Kunst im MK&G," in *Sammlungsgeschichte: Islamische Kunst im Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg (1873–1915)* (Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg, 2022).

[713] Nina Berman, *German Literature on the Middle East : Discourses and Practices, 1000-1989* (University of Michigan Press, 2011), 164. There is a broader topic at play here in terms of diplomacy between Germany and the Ottoman Empire in which art and cultural exchange was a crucial tool.

of Islamic art objects and architectural fragments, German scholarly study of Islamic cultures, and expanding commercial interests in Middle Eastern markets, became particularly visible in the early twentieth century.[714] This is exemplified by Herbert Gutmann's gradual acquisition between 1905 and 1910 of wooden wall panels, ceiling tiles, and other decorative elements to install in his Berlin apartment. During this period of collecting, Gutmann was the President of the Deutsche Orientbank in Istanbul and, in that capacity, traveled through Anatolia, Morocco, Egypt, Syria, and present-day Iran.[715]

In 1926, as part of a large-scale renovation of a second home on the *Bertinistraße* in Potsdam Gutmann enlisted the architect Reinhold Mohr to create an "Arabicum" room using already acquired pieces from his Berlin apartment as well as new ones. The room is a montage of at least two Damascus rooms interweaved with original designs by Mohr (Figure 5.69).[716] In a photograph from 1930, wall panels with a variety of treatments, patterns, forms/shapes, and inscriptions have been arranged in such a way as to give a 'busy' appearance. Niches of various shapes recede into the wall containing pieces from Gutmann's collections. These objects appear to come from a broad geography including northern Africa, India, and China. Low seating areas are seen as well as two western chairs, upholstered in a decorative fabric. The montage-like installation of the wall panels with an emphasis on creative juxtaposition rather than based on a knowledge of Islamic interiors is evident by the way in which Arabic inscriptions on the panels are cut off or installed upside down.[717] Guttman's eighty-room, twenty-thousand-square-foot home in Potsdam, known as *Herbertshof*, along with the "Arabicum" room, featured one of the first private film screening rooms known in Germany as well as a Turkish bath.[718]

Unlike Gutmann's "Arabicum," the salons at the Moka Efti do not feature such a montage wooden panels, archways, hanging carpets, and ceramic tile. Although the decorative walls might appear similar to Guttman's in black and white postcard photographs, in the Moka Efti decorative elements such as paneling, carpets, floral patterns, and more were recreated primarily through illusionistic wallpaper. In the marketing brochure, we learn that wallpaper

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[714] Berksoy, "Art Exhibitions in Munich and Istanbul."
[715] Tunsch, "Die Syrische Innenraumdekoration," 129.
[716] Anke Scharrah, "Damaszener Zimmer in Europa," 75.
[717] Tunsch, "Die Syrische Innenraumdekoration," 141-143.
[718] Simon Goodman, *The Orpheus Clock: The Search for My Family's Art Treasures Stolen by the Nazis* (Simon and Schuster, 2015), 264.

throughout the café was installed by the *Tapetengroßhandlung Hermann Hussack* located in Berlin-Neuköln and the designs come from their latest pattern book published in 1929.[719]

Likewise, other decorative elements in the Egyptian and Arab salons, including lighting, paintings, carpets, and more are likely German-made products. According to the brochure, light fixtures in the café were designed and installed by Paul Böhm & Co. in Berlin, paintings hung throughout the space were provided by Bütow & Grothe also in Berlin (this atelier also specialized in paintings for theater backdrops and displays for commercial exhibitions), and all carpets in the space were provided by Ludwig Ganz AG, located in Mainz.

The Ludwig Ganz AG is the only company included in the brochure which advertised both imported as well as German made objects. It is impossible to determine in photographs of the café which carpets might be imported versus locally made. A Ludwig Ganz advertisement included in the Moka Efti brochure emphasizes the comparable quality or exchangeable nature of German-made carpets vis-a-vis imported products. The advertisement consists of a photograph depicting a carpet merchant leading four camels loaded with goods through a desolate looking landscape (Figure 4.68). The packages on the top of the camels' backs have been doctored to display the company name including the cities of origin for the products being delivered. “Ludwig Ganz Mainz” can be seen twice sandwiching one package from “Konstantinopel” and another from “Smyrna” suggesting that the products from Mainz are perhaps in more demand than those from abroad.[720]

The example of the Moka Efti, when placed in the context of developments in private orientalist interiors for the elite and growing museum collections of Islamic art available to the public, allows for an examination of shifting translations in the social and aesthetic life of Islamic ornament in early twentieth century Germany. What had once signified connoisseurship, travel, and cultural capital, was, by the late 1920s, also reproducible through local industrial manufacture and available in commercial spaces. In the Moka Efti, the hand-carved wood panels and imported textiles of the museum and some domestic interiors were simulated by wallpaper, stage painting, and electric light. An emphasis on authenticity or creative montage is replaced by an emphasis on atmosphere. The Moka Efti thus serves as an example of how orientalist interiors

[719] Beaury, "Moka Efti Equitable."
[720] Beaury, Moka Efti Equitable."

were re-mediated for public consumption, yet still framed around the comforts of wealthy homes.

Nazi Appropriation and Afterlives

Most likely many factors contributed to Eftimiades' selling of the Moka Efti *Mitte* location shortly after opening. Perhaps most important to mention is the worldwide financial crisis in 1929/30 which caused most large dance venues in Berlin to close. This financial strain would only get marginally better around 1936 with the olympic games.[721] Newspaper coverage of the closing cites financial mismanagement on the part of Eftimiades and English investors, but racist tensions could be observed in commentary since the café's opening in 1929. One review in *Bauwelt* hopes for the Moka Efti's quick closure:

> The terrible kitsch of this Levantine establishment, which exhibits all the characteristics of Balkan fraud, may then perhaps completely collapse — to the delight of the German coffeehouse owners, who have long perceived the whole affair as cut-rate competition.[722]

Many clubs and cafés owned by foreigners and/or Jewish owners were sold to "ayran" Germans and this was also the case with the original Moka Efti location. When Eftimiades resurfaced three years later to open the location in the *Tiergarten* district it was in partnership with Gustav Steinmeier, a German businessman known as a "hardline Nazi."[723] For the times this most likely legitimized Eftimiades' continuing involvement in the Berlin entertainment scene. The details are murky as to when exactly Eftimiades left Berlin for Düsseldorf, but there is evidence that Steinmeier would also gain ownership of the original Moka Efti in the city center by 1935.[724]

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[721] Wolffram, *Tanzdielen*, 28.
[722] "Der furchtbare Kitsch dieser levantinischen gründung, die alle Eigenheiten des Balkanschwindels aufweist, wird dann vielleicht ganz zugrunde gehen-zur Freude der dueetschen Kaffehausbesitzer, die die ganze Geschichte schon längst als Schleuderkonkurenz empfanden." *Bauwelt* heft 23/1929. Cited in *Tanzdielen*, 78. Translation my own.
[723] "strammer Nazi, zugleich aber auch cleverer Geschäftsmann" Knut Wolffram, "Die letzte Band im Moka Efti," Fox auf 78, 15 (Herbst 1996): 16-18.
[724] Elster, "So war Moka Efti." See also Axel Jockwer, *Vom Jazz zur Neuen Deutschen Tanzmusik* (accessed September 6, 2024), 319. Contemporary accounts suggest that in February 1933 Eftimiades jointly took over the Café am Tiergarten with Steinmeier, while Steinmeier simultaneously assumed control of the Moka Efti on Friedrichstraße. The reopening of the Tiergarten location took place on February 12, 1933. Later secondary literature occasionally conflates the two sites, reflecting the overlapping ownership and transitional nature of the enterprise during this period.

Opened in 1933, the Moka Efti *am Tiergarten* was installed in a building designed by Oskar Kaufmann. This move, while most likely made out of economic necessity by Eftimiades, reflected the more general transition of Berlin nightlife from the *Friedrichstadt* west to the *Tiergarten* area. Whereas the *Friedrichstadt* had been the center of Berlin's entertainment district since the late nineteenth century, the *Tiergarten* district became the center of jazz and dance culture of Berlin in the 1930s and 40s.[725] On the corner of *Bellevuestraße* 11 and *Victoriastraße* 37 the first café to move into the ground floor of Kaufmann's building in 1926 was the Café am *Tiergarten*, followed shortly after by the *Café Schottenhaml* in 1927 and finally the Moka Efti in 1933. Kaufmann, well known for his work in designing theaters, opted for an Expressionist style for the interior spaces. The building had a very positive response upon opening and the interiors remained largely the same despite the changeover of café owners.

In this new Moka Efti location, the orientalist branded environment was no longer central. This shift may be explained in part by the continued operation of the original *Friedrichstadt* venue, which retained its established décor under new ownership until 1942. Writing in the *Vossische Zeitung*, Georg Hermann described the new space as "exotic," though in a markedly more abstract sense than its predecessor.[726] In the main room, known as the *Spiegelsaal*, the walls were covered in a variety of colored metals and large glass chandeliers hung from the ceiling (Figure 4.69). The room also featured a waterfall topped by a large exotic bird. The only explicitly orientalist decor was found in the *Alabaster-Tanzsaal* in which the columns were covered with generic illustrations of exotic plants and figures acting out a sort of Adam and Eve story (Figure 4.70-4.71). Other rooms included a *Seidensaal* done in red *Saffianleder* and a *Biedermeier Saal*.[727]

Despite the change from orientalist to expressionist style interiors, elements of the Moka Efti's original branding continue to appear albeit without a totalizing environment. The famous Moka Efti Orchestra at *Tiergarten*, for example, became known for their rendition of "The Oriental Express."

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[725] Along with Casanova, Palais am Zoo, Europahaus, Gourmenia, Delphi, Uhlandeck, Femina, and more. Wolffram, *Tanzdielen*, 22.
[726] Georg Hermann, article in *Vossische Zeitung*, 1933. See Wolffram, *Tanzdielen*, 31.
[727] Wolffram, *Tanzdielen*, 37.

> Der Orient-Expreß war eine stark gefragte Shownummer, Allabendlich wartete das Publikum darauf. Er war effektvoll...Das Licht war ganz aus, nur auf der Bühne war ein Blitzen als wenn Gewitterblitz ist - ein Zucken, und das Publikum war hell begeistert.[728]

Undated photographs also show advertisements traveling through the city in rickshaws led by ostriches and camels (Figure 4.72).[729]

The environment of the Moka Efti changed with the development of Germany under National Socialism after 1933. After the purchase of the *Tiergarten* and *Friedrichstadt* locations by Steinmeier, multiple sources report that the venue was a location for NSDAP parties. It does not seem to be the case that the orientalist decor was a deterrent or rationale for closing the Moka Efti. In 1933 Josef König, the Yugoslavian owner of the popular Café König that was well known as a central spot for serious chess playing, "wasted no time" emigrating with the rise of National Socialism given his Jewish ancestry. The Berlin Chess Association made a point after the abrupt closing of the café to announce that the Moka Efti on *Friedrichstraße* would serve as an alternative space for "Aryan-based chess."[730] Although historians of jazz have often emphasized the music's oppositional or subversive potential in nightlife venues operating in Berlin during the Third Reich, the case of the Moka Efti complicates that narrative.[731] Here, forms of cultural difference associated with orientalism, Blackness, foreignness, and modernity were not suppressed but staged, regulated, and profited from within a venue owned and operated by NSDAP aligned interests.

Taken together, these developments show that the Moka Efti did not represent a rupture between Weimar cosmopolitanism and National Socialism but rather a transformation of it. Through Aryanization and strategic partnerships, the café remained in operation as a site of leisure and orientalist environment. What changed was not the logic of the space but its political framing. A venue once marketed through foreignness, exoticism, and transnational flair was repurposed as a properly German entertainment environment, even as its orientalist branding persisted. The use of the *Friedrichstraße* Moka Efti as a designated space NSDAP gatherings and "Aryan-based" chess makes this shift especially clear: the café became a stage on which

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[728] Wolffram, *Tanzdielen*, 84.
[729] Clase BCN, "Moka Efti," marketing agency website, accessed September 7, 2021, https://clasebcn.com/tips/moka-efti/.
[730] Alan McGowan, *Kurt Richter: A Chess Biography with 499 Games* (McFarland, 2018), 101.
[731] Kater, *Different Drummers*.

exclusion, racialization, and national belonging were performed through everyday leisure. In this way, the afterlives of the Moka Efti under National Socialism reveal how popular entertainment spaces could absorb and normalize authoritarian ideology while continuing to traffic in fantasy, spectacle, and controlled difference. The café only ceased to function after the *Friedrichstraße* building was badly damaged by Allied bombing in 1942, a material interruption rather than an ideological one. This ending makes clear that the Moka Efti was not undone by political incompatibility but by the physical destruction of the city itself.

Conclusion

The Moka Efti offers a different but complementary perspective on the ways in which popular architecture deployed the spatial image of the harem in comparison to the domestic interiors and industrial architecture examined elsewhere in this dissertation. The Moka Efti staged the harem image as a fully immersive leisure environment embedded in the rhythms of modern urban life. Through its escalator, lighting effects, music, production of coffee, and Islamicate decor, the harem's spatial image created by the café became a sensory experience that could be consumed by Berlin's heterogeneous public, from white collar workers and tourists to women out on their own and the various members of the city's nightlife scene. The Moka Efti exemplifies how popular architecture made the orient experientially available as a branded, affective space.

Throughout this chapter I have argued that the Moka Efti mobilized the spatial image of the harem not as a faithful architectural reconstruction but as atmosphere. Orientalist motifs, architectural technologies, and advertising imagery worked together to produce an environment that promised comfort, excitement, and temporary suspension of social constraints. The escalator and train-like hallway framed the entry to the café as a form of travel, while lighting, music, and decoration simulated a space that was paradoxically characterized by the peculiarities of the city of Berlin, but was also, crucially, elsewhere. This resulted in the fantasy space within being deeply entangled with transformations in work, commodification of leisure, shifting gender relations of the city, and an acute homelessness problem. Marketing itself through the figures of the *Neue Frau*, harem woman, and Turkish modern woman, the café offered patrons the promise of emancipation, eroticism, and cosmopolitan belonging, even as these ideals remained dependent on the reproduction of inequality.

By situating the Moka Efti within the histories of coffee, domestication of public space, and Berlin's leisure and entertainment scene, this chapter has shown how the orientalist space functioned as a response to the reorganization of everyday life in early twentieth century Berlin. The café offered a third space between overcrowded homes and regimented workplaces as a setting in which new forms of sociability, gendered visibility, and consumer identity could be practiced and negotiated. The decor drew on the visual languages of bourgeois orientalist interiors and growing museum collections in Germany, but translated them into mass produced surfaces and lighting effects, replacing authenticity with atmosphere. Finally, the café's operation under National Socialism underscores a central claim to this dissertation: that orientalism in popular architecture is not inherently political or ideological, but rather such aesthetics are easily absorbed by competing agendas. The closure of the café in 1942 was the result of wartime destruction rather than ideological incompatibility. In the Moka Efti, the spatial image of the harem was a tool for organizing desire, belonging, and exclusion with the goal of accumulating capital, a function that persists across political regimes.

Figures



Figure 4.1 “Moka Efti Berlin, Rolltreppe,” ca. 1925. Postcard. Berlin Mitte Archiv, no. 00024530.



Figure 4.2 Scherl, Café Moka Efti, ca. 1930. Zoomed in fragment of a photograph. SZ Photo, no. SZT5170349.





Figure 4.3 (a) Christoph Morlinghaus (photographer), Moka Efti Set for Babylon Berlin, Backlot Studio Babelsberg. In "Schlagwort-Archive: Moka Efti," *Superlative - Made in Germany* (Hamburger Agentur fotogloria, May 15, 2018).

(b) Joachim Gern (photographer), Set of Moka Efti in Babylon Berlin, Theater im Delphi. In Alia Lübben, "Fotos von "Babylon Berlin" - Set" *Monopol Magazin* (December 31, 2018).



Figure 4.4 Max Müller (photographer), "Club mit Wohnzimmer-Feeling." Photograph of Interior. In Max Stolz, "Mit dem Moka Efti hat in Mitte ein neuer Club eröffnet," *Tip Berlin* (January 31, 2020).



Figure 4.5 “Moka Efti Kaffee,” ca. 1960s. Photograph. Berlin Police Archives via Getty Images.



Figure 4.6 Rudolf Pracht Verlag, "Moka Efti Mitte Berlin Friedrichstraße," 1925. Photograph. Zentral Landesbibliothek Berlin, Berlin-Sammlungen, Poka Kreu F 47.



Figure 4.7 Moka Efti am Tiergarten Schottenhaml, ca. 1930. Photograph, built 1926. Oskar Kaufmann architect. Archiv Berliner Geschichte, organized by Dr. phil. Jochen P. Ziegelmann.



Figure 4.8 “Berlin im Licht. Blick auf den mit Lichterketten hell erleuchteten Luna-Park am Halensee mit “Moka Efti" (Berlin in Light. View of brightly lit string lights at Luna Park at Halensee with Moka Efti), 1928. Photograph. Stadtmuseum Berlin, inv. no. IV 74/418V.



Figure 4.9 "Fassade des alten Stummfilmkino in Weißensee" (Facade of the old silent film theater in Weißensee), October 2021. Photograph, built 1921. Julius Krost architect. kinokompendium.



Figure 4.10 “Casanova Casino International - Berlin.” Postcard. Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin, Berlin-Sammlung, Postkartensammlung.



Figure 4.11 “ALT-Berlin, Wintergarten, 1898" (The "Wintergarten" in 1989). Postcard. Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin, Berlin-Sammlung, Postkartensammlung.



Figure 4.12 Anne Bruschke and Fabian Schotz, " Prachtsäle Alt-Berlin," Residenz-Casino, Ballhaus Resi, Residenz-Lichtspiele, Resi-Tonfilmbühne" (Model of the building at Blumenstraße 10). Architectural model, built 1908. Emilie Winkelmann architect. Stadtmuseum Berlin, inv. no. SM 2022-00528,1-3.



Figure 4.13 "Nächlicher Blick vom Potsdamer Platz nach Südosten in die Stresemanstraße mit dem Haus Vaterland" (Night view from Potsdamer Platz towards southeast into the Stresemanstraße with the Haus Vaterland), 1932. Photograph, built 1911-1912, remodeled 1927-28. Franz Heinrich Schwechten and Carl Stahl-Urach architects. Bundesarchiv, no. 102-13681.

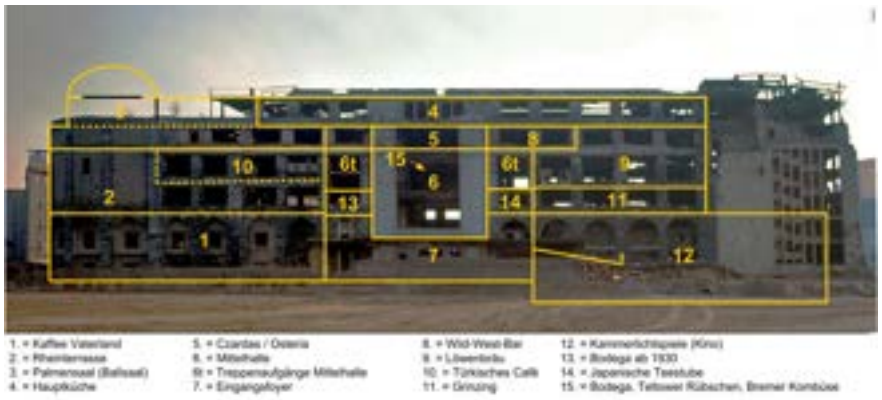

Figure 4.14 Hansjürgen Lindow, "Schnitt durch das Haus Vaterland mit Lage der Gaststätten" (Section of the Haus Vaterland in ruins with locations of themed rooms indicated, including Kaffee Vaterland, Rheinterrasse, Palmensaal (ballroom), Turkish Café, Japanese Teahouse, and cinema), 1976. Photo Montage. Collection of Klaus Lindow.



Figure 4.15 Wilhelm Greve, "Gruss aus Berlin, Friedrich-Strasse, Ecke Leipziger Strasse" (Greetings from Berlin), 1900-1908. Postcard. San Diego College for Women Postcard Collection, Berlin-33.



Figure 4.16 Waldemar Tizenthaler (photograher), "Leipziger Str./ Friedrichstraße Equitable-Versicherung, Café Kerkau" (Leipziger Str./ Friedrichstraße Equitable Insurance Building, Café Kerkau). Photograph, built 1887-1889. Schäfer & Hartung architects. In *Album von Berlin: 47 ansichten nach momentaufnahmen in photographiedruck* (Berlin: Globus Verlag, 1900), 21.



Figure 4.17 Roemmler & Jonas, Dresden (photographers). "Sitzungssaal im Equitable-Palast" (Meeting room in Equitable Palast). Photograph. In Wilhelm Cremer: *Der innere Ausbau.* (Wasmuth, Berlin 1892/1894), Plate 166.



Figure 4.18 "Wertheim Department Store on the Leipziger Str." Digitized Lantern Slide, built 1896-1906. Alfred Messel architect. In the digital collection *Art, Architecture and Engineering Library*, University of Michigan, LSO17054.



Figure 4.19 Ludwig Kirchner, *Straßenszene (Friedrichstraße Berlin)* (Street Scene), 1914. Oil on canvas. Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, inv. no. 2436.



Figure 4.20 "Musiksaal" in Café Kerkau, ca. 1901. Postcard. Interior designed by Bruno Paul. Ebay auction (accessed January 14, 2014).



Figure 4.21 “Liqueursalon” at Café Kerkau, ca. 1901. Postcard. Interior designed by Bruno Paul. Wikimedia Commons (accessed March 27, 2026).



Figure 4.22 "Außenansicht des Kerkau Palast in der Behrenstraße 48 in Berlin-Mitte" (Exterior view of the Kerkau Palast at Behrensraße 48 in Berlin-Mitte), ca. 1910. Photograph. Wikimedia Commons (accessed March 27, 2026).



Figure 4.23 “Der Stellkampf im Café Zielka Berlin" (Chess Match at Café Zielka Berlin), 1926. Illustration. *Volkszeitung* (25. November 1926): 1.



Figure 4.24 Group Picture in the Moka Efti am Tiergarten, Giovanni Eftimiades is the second from the left with the cigar, 1933. Photograph. In Knud Wolffram, *Tanzdielen Und Vergnügungspaläste: Berliner Nachtleben in Den Dreissiger Und Vierziger Jahren: Von Der Friedrichstrasse Bis Berlin W, Vom Moka Efti Bis Zum Delphi*, 3. Aufl (Hentrich, 1996), 76.



Figure 4.25 “Kaffeehaus Moka Efti." Menu. In *Berliner Tageblatt und Handelszeitung* (31. März 1926).



Figure 4.26 Reichtagsgebäude, 1896. Color Print, built 1884-94. Paul Wallot architect. picture-alliance / akg-images.



Figure 4.27 “Berlin. Potsdamer Platz mit Haus Vaterland” (Berlin. Potsdamer Platz with Haus Vaterland). Postcard. Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin, Berlin-Sammlung, Postkartensammlung.



Figure 4.28 Entrance escalator at the Moka Efti. Photograph. Ullstein Bild, no. 00196575.



Figure 4.29 “Moka Efti Express Berlin Moka,” 1929. Postcard. Berlin-Mitte Archiv, no. 00005407.

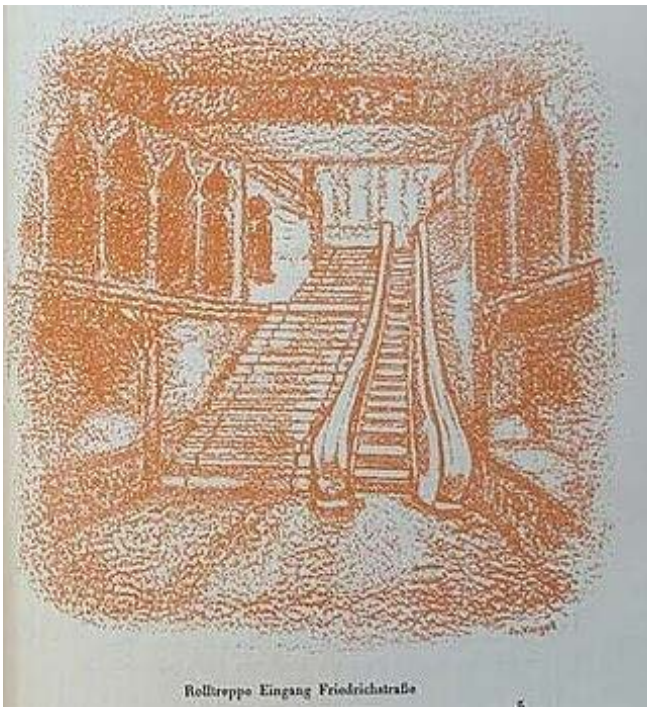

Figure 4.30 Urban Beaury, “Rolltreppe Eingang Friedrichstraße” (Escalator Entrance Friedrichstraße). Illustration. In *Moka Efti Equitable: An Berlins populärster Ecke*, marketing pamphlet (April 1929), 5. VÖBB, Special Collections, Oc 485:SEBI.



Figure 4.31 C. Stadler/Bwag, “Paternoster von Anton Freisler, 1910,” 2019. Photograph. Wikimedia Commons (accessed March 27, 2026).



Figure 4.32 Film still from *Metropolis*, directed by Fritz Lang (1927).

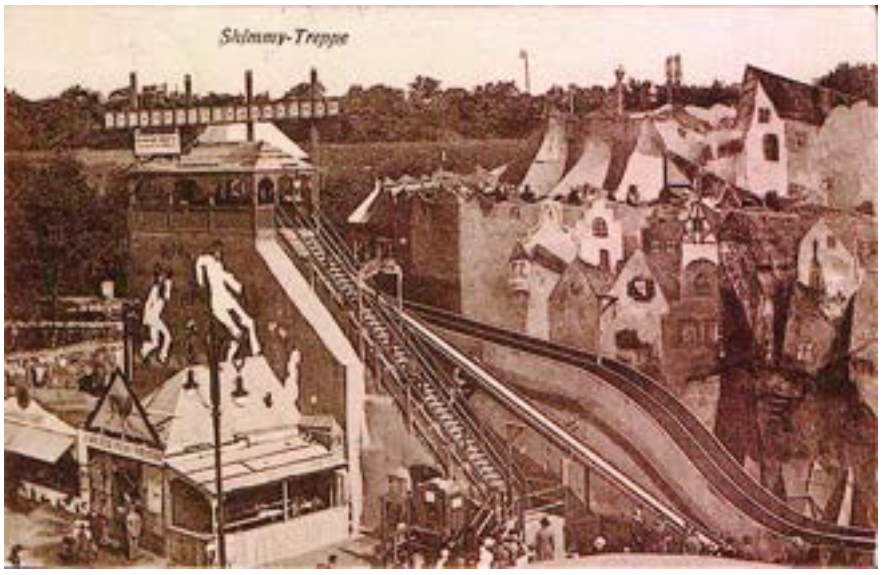

Figure 4.33 The "Shimmy Treppe," at Berlin's Terassen am Hallensee, later renamed Luna Park, ca. 1904. Postcard. Wikimedia Commons (accessed March 17, 2026).



Figure 4.34 “Moka Efti, Berlin. Bar,” 1931. Postcard. Berlin-Mitte Archiv, no. 00006157.



Figure 4.35 Urban Beaury, “Kaffeebar,” (Coffee Bar). Watercolor. In *Moka Efti Equitable: An Berlins populärster Ecke*, marketing pamphlet (April 1929): 7. VÖBB, Special Collections, Oc 485:SEBI.



Figure 4.36 Urban Beaury, “Motive aus der Kaffeebar" (Scenes from the Coffee Bar). Illustration. In Moka Efti Equitable: An Berlins populärster Ecke, marketing pamphlet (April 1929): 9. VÖBB, Special Collections, Oc 485:SEBI.



Figure 4.37 Hanns Martin Elster, “So War Moka Efti,” *Telegraf* (April 12, 1958). Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin, Berlin-Sammlung, Newspaper Clippings.



Figure 4.38 E.H. Schröder, "Moka Efti Berlin - Arabischer Salon" (Arab Salon), ca. 1920-1930. Postcard. Berlin Stadtmuseum, no. SM 2022-02515.



Figure 4.39 “Moka Efti Ägyptischer Salon und Kaffeebar.” Photograph. In Knud Wolffram, *Tanzdielen Und Vergnügungspaläste: Berliner Nachtleben in Den Dreissiger Und Vierziger Jahren: Von Der Friedrichstrasse Bis Berlin W, Vom Moka Efti Bis Zum Delphi*, 3. Aufl (Hentrich, 1996), 79.



Figure 4.40 Urban Beaury, “Durchgang im Konzertsaal" (Passageway in the Concert Hall). Illustration. In Moka Efti Equitable: An Berlins populärster Ecke, Marketing Pamphlet (April 1929): 18. VÖBB, Special Collections, Oc 485:SEBI.



Figure 4.41 Urban Beaury, “Panorama am Aufgang Leipzigers Straße" (Panorama at the Leipziger Straße Entrance). Illustration. In *Moka Efti Equitable: An Berlins populärster Ecke*, marketing pamphlet (April 1929): 21. VÖBB, Special Collections, Oc 485:SEBI.



Figure 4.42 Urban Beaury, “Türkische Ecke" (Turkish Corner). Illustration. In *Moka Efti Equitable: An Berlins populärster Ecke*, marketing pamphlet (April 1929): 11. VÖBB, Special Collections, Oc 485:SEBI.



Figure 4.43 Urban Beaury, “Zierbrunnen —Durchblick zur Kaffeebar” (Ornamental Fountain - View into the Coffee Bar). Illustration. In *Moka Efti Equitable: An Berlins populärster Ecke*, marketing pamphlet (April 1929): 15. VÖBB, Special Collections, Oc 485:SEBI.



Figure 4.44 Ernst Gränert, "Im Café Moka Efti in der Friedrichstraße wurde eine Zweigstelle des Postamtes 8 eröffnet" (A Branch of the Post Office has been Opened in the Café Moka Efti on Friedrichstraße), 1932. Photograph. bpk/ Kunstbibliothek, SMB, Photothek Willy Römer, inv. no. WR_01650_05.



Figure 4.45 Ferdinand Victor Eugène Delacroix, *Women of Algiers in Their Apartment* (*Femmes d'Alger dans leur appartement*), 1834. Oil on canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. 3824; LP 679.

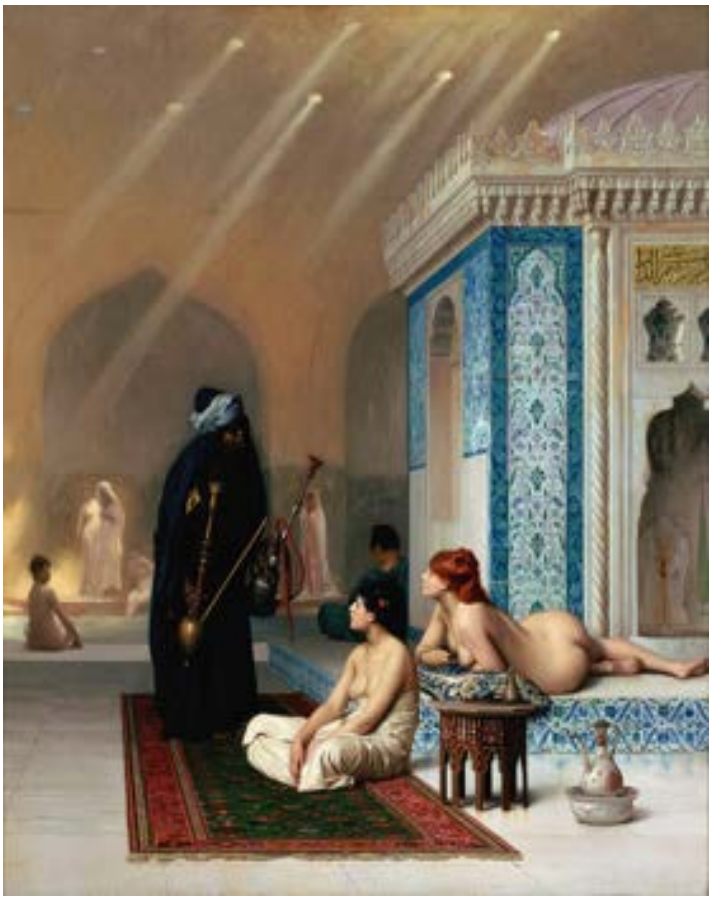

Figure 4.46 Jean-Léon Gérôme, *A Pool in a Harem* (*Une piscine dans le harem*), ca. 1876. Oil on canvas. State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, no. 37799.



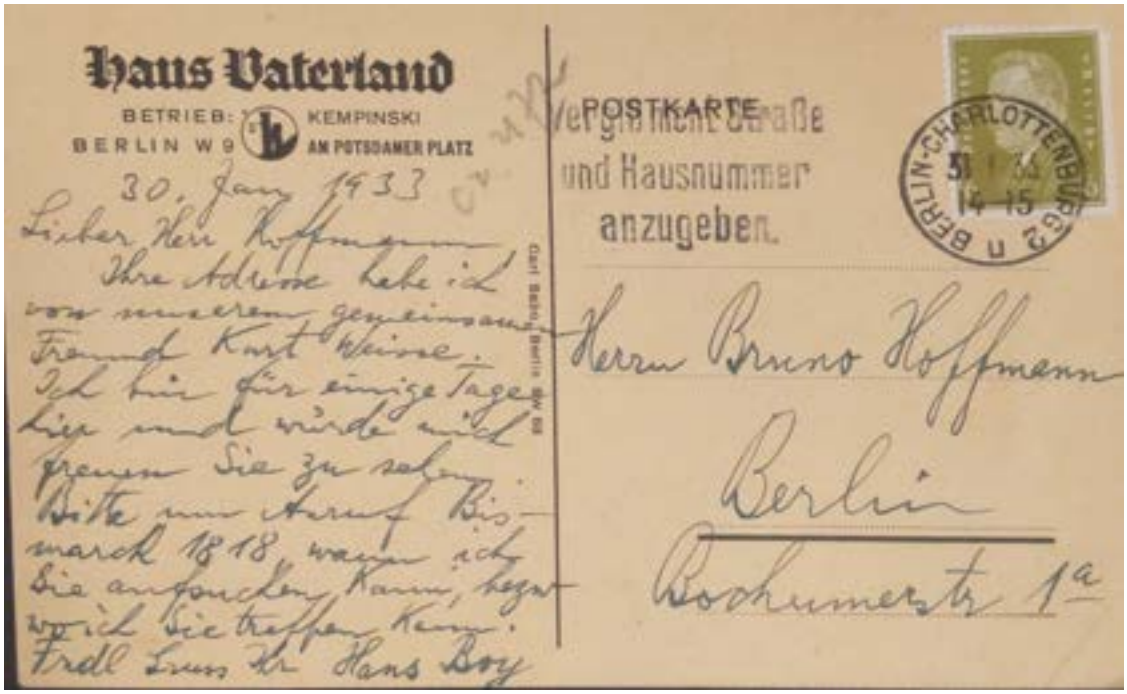

Figure 4.47 "Rheinterrasse - Haus Vaterland," Postcard. Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin, Berlin-Sammlung, Postkartensammlung.

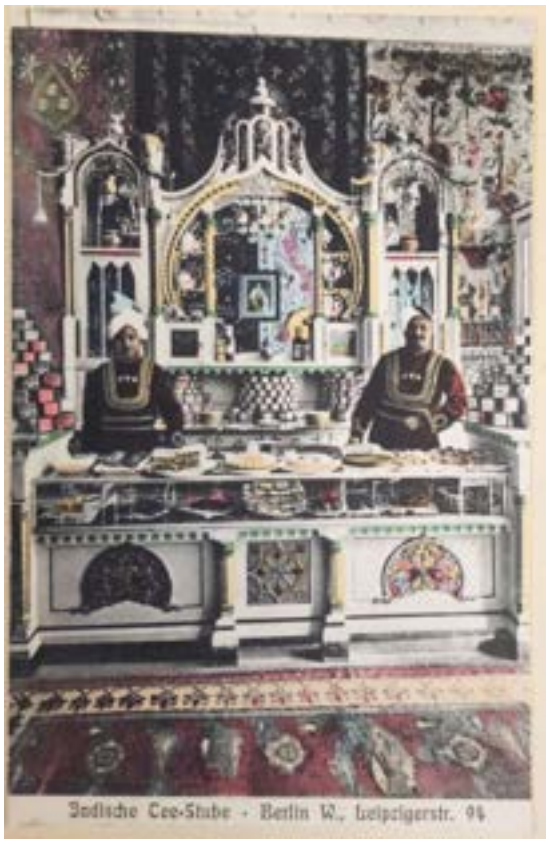

Figure 4.48 "Indische Tee-Stube - Berlin W., Leipzigerstr. 94" (Indian Tea House). Postcard. Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin, Berlin-Sammlung, Postkartensammlung.



Figure 4.49 "Erven Lucas Bols, Amsterdam, gegr. 1575 - Berlin W. Friedrichstr. 169," (Erven Lucas Bols Amsterdam, founded 1575). Postcard. Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin, Berlin-Sammlung, Postkartensammlung.



Figure 4.50 "Walterhan's Ballhaus- Japanbar." Postcard. Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin, Berlin-Sammlung, Postkartensammlung.

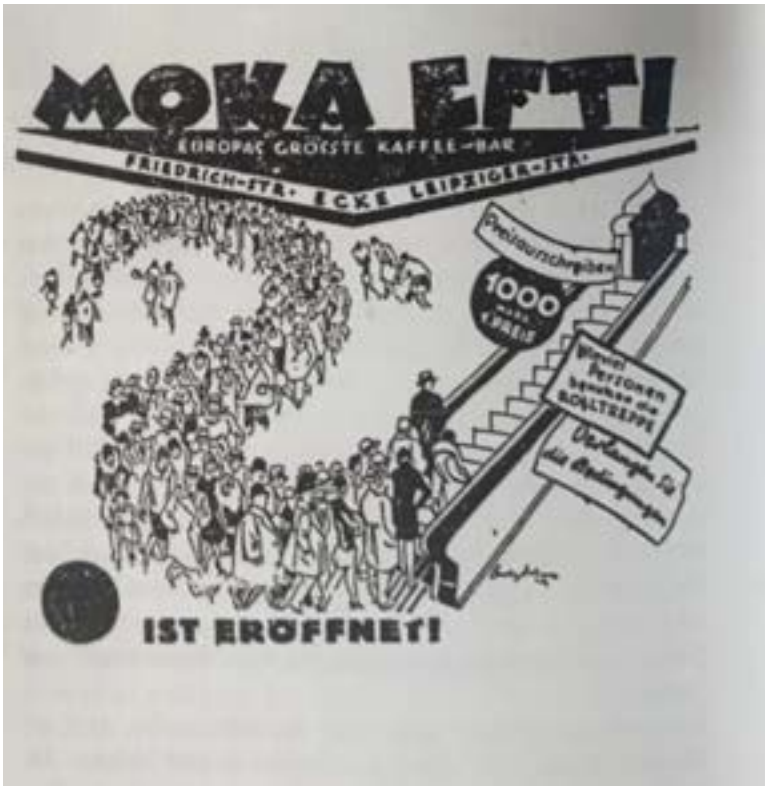

Figure 4.51 "Moka Efti- Europa's Grösste Kaffee-Bar - Ist Eröffnet!" (Moka Efti - Europe's Largest Café-Bar is Open!), ca. 1929.Poster. In Knud Wolffram, *Tanzdielen Und Vergnügungspaläste: Berliner Nachtleben in Den Dreissiger Und Vierziger Jahren: Von Der Friedrichstrasse Bis Berlin W, Vom Moka Efti Bis Zum Delphi*, 3. Aufl (Hentrich, 1996), 78.



Figure 4.52 Ludwig Deutsch, *The Tribute*, 1909. Oil on canvas. Private Collection.



Figure 4.53 "Chocolate Kiddies im Zentral-Theater," ca. 1925. Newspaper Advertisement. Image reproduced by Ulf Lundin, "The Ellington Galaxy: Jig Walk," (Dec. 21, 2016), https://ellingtongalaxy.org/2016/12/21/jig-walk/ (accessed March 28, 2026).



Figure 4.54 Julius Gipkens, Sarotti Chocolate Wrapper, ca. 1920s.



Figure 4.55 Julius Gipkens, Sarotti/ Drei Mohren Mischung, 1920. Paper Box. Werkbundarchiv - Museum der Dinge, Berlin. inv. no. O 9368.



Figure 4.56 "Theater des Westens, Josephine Baker, Bitte einsteigen," (Theater des Westens, Josephine Baker, Please Enter), 1928. Playbill and photograph. In Michele Ferm, "Revealing Representations of Jazz in the Weimar Republic," *The Social Science Journal* 45, no. 2 (2008): 248.

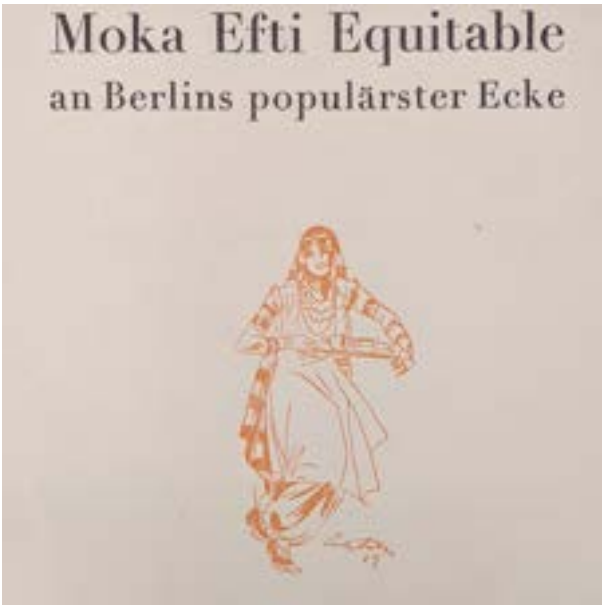

Figure 4.57 Urban Beaury, Depiction of a Harem Woman. Illustration. In *Moka Efti Equitable: An Berlins populärster Ecke*, marketing pamphlet (April 1929), title page. VÖBB, Special Collections, Oc 485:SEBI.



Figure 4.58 Werbepostkarte der Firma AEG für den Staubsauger Vampyr (Advertising Postcard from the AEG Company for the Vampyr Vacuum Cleaner), ca. 1929. Postcard. Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin, inv. no. PK 98/75.



Figure 4.59 "Miranda's Dream Cigarettes." Tobacco tin. In Rima Chahine, "Das orientalische Plakat Westeuropas, 1880-1914" (PhD Diss., Carl von Ossietzky Universität, 2013), 223.



Figure 4.60 "4 Uhr Tanz-Tee" at the Moka Efti in der Stadtmitte. Advertisement. In Knud Wolffram, *Tanzdielen Und Vergnügungspaläste: Berliner Nachtleben in Den Dreissiger Und Vierziger Jahren*, 3. Aufl (Hentrich, 1996), 84.



Figure 4.61 Comparison of harem woman and waitress serving coffee. Illustrations. In *Moka Efti Equitable: An Berlins populärster Ecke*, marketing pamphlet (April 1929) title page, 9. VÖBB, Special Collections, Oc 485:SEBI.



Figure 4.62 Heinrich Lichte, “Küche in einer Mietskaserne in der Seestraße 27 im Wedding,” 1908. Photograph. Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek, bpk, Bild-Nr. 20001532.



Figure 4.63 Archi-de, “Entwicklung der Grundstücksbebauung durch Mietskasernen,” 2007. Wikimedia Commons.

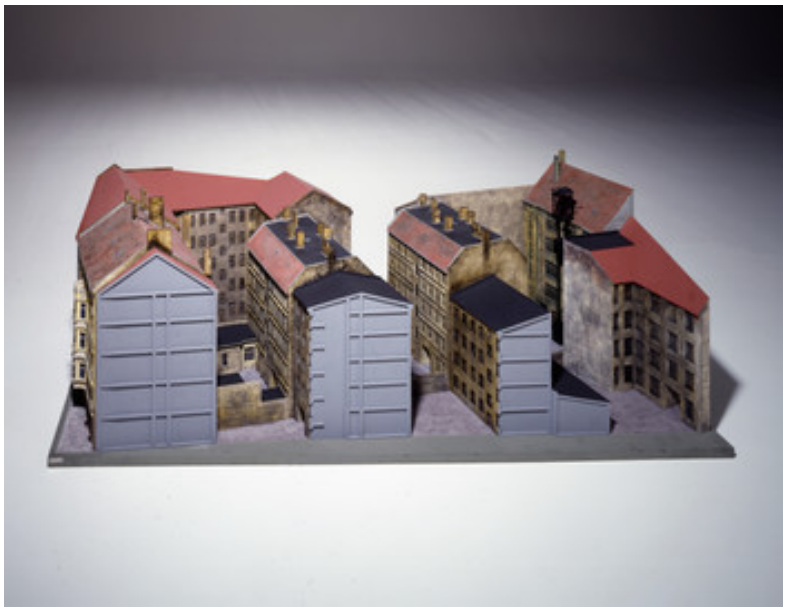

Figure 4.64 Rainer Bartzsch. Modell einer Berliner Mietskaserne mit drei Hinterhöfen (Prenzlauer Berg, Kastanienallee) Model of a Mietskaserne in Berlin with Three Courtyards, ca. 1900. Deutsches Historisches Museum, inv. no. HI 82/157.



Figure 4.65 “Damaskuszimmer” (Once installed at the Kunstgewerbemuseum (Museum of Decorative Arts) in Düsseldorf), ca. 1890. Photograph, built ca. 1820. In Anke Scharrahs, "Damaszener Zimmer in Europa: Authentische und orientalisierende Raumkreationen zwischen 1880 und 1930," in Julia Rüdiger and Maximilian Hartmuth, eds., *Gezimmertes Morgenland: Orientalische und orientalisierende Holzinterieurs in Mitteleuropa im späten 19. Jahrhundert* (Böhlau, 2021), 69.



Figure 4.66 Interior of a Damaskuszimmer (Damascus Room) installed at the Museum für Völkerkunde Dresden, Japanisches Palais, Dresden, after 2022. Photograph, built 1810-11. Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden.



Figure 4.67 Martha Huth (photographer). “Arabicum” room, Villa Gutmann, Potsdam," ca. 1930. Photograph. Landesarchiv Berlin, F Rep. 290-05-01 Nr. 278.



Figure 4.68 Ludwig Ganz AG, “Orienttepich-Großimport, Eigene Knüpferei, Deutsche Teppiche” (Oriental Carpets Wholesale Import, In-House Weaving Workshop, German Carpets). Photomontage. In *Moka Efti Equitable: An Berlins populärster Ecke*, marketing pamphlet (April 1929). VÖBB, Special Collections, Oc 485:SEBI.



Figure 4.69 "Interior - Moka Efti am Tiergarten" Photograph. In Knud Wolffram, *Tanzdielen Und Vergnügungspaläste: Berliner Nachtleben in Den Dreissiger Und Vierziger Jahren*, 3. Aufl (Hentrich, 1996) 33.



Figure 4.70 "Interior - Moka Efti am Tiergarten," ca. 1933. Photograph. Knud Wolffram, *Tanzdielen Und Vergnügungspaläste: Berliner Nachtleben in Den Dreissiger Und Vierziger Jahren*, 3. Aufl (Hentrich, 1996), 82.



Figure 4.71 Alfred Stieler, "Café Schottenhaml/ Spiegelsaal mit Wasserkunst" (Mirror hall with water feature). Watercolor. In “Berliner Kaffeehäußer von heute,” *Westermanns Monatshefte* 149, no. 891 (1858): 257–64.



Figure 4.72 Willy Pragher, Straßenwerbung mit Strauß (Street Advertisement with Ostrich), 1938. Photograph. Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, no. 001696a.

Conclusion

Words won't do justice to the harem's labyrinth. So picture perhaps the cells of a honeycomb, the curved arrangement of intestines, the insides of a body, the canals of an ear; spirals, dead-ends, appendixes, soft rounded tunnels that end just here, at the entrance to a secret chamber.

— Olga Tokarczuk, *Flights* (2023)

In March 2016 First Lady Emine Erdoğan noted at an official event in Ankara: "The harem was a school for members of the Ottoman dynasty and an educational establishment for preparing women for life." Although seemingly straightforward, her comments struck a nerve when considered alongside a controversial speech her husband had delivered the day before on International Women's Day: "for me a woman is above all a mother"; birth control is akin to "treason;" capitalism "enslaves" women for profit. The couple's remarks provoked heated debate on Twitter, and protestors in Istanbul took to the streets to express their disdain.[732] Two years earlier, in the twenty-fifth anniversary edition of Alev Croutier's *Harem: The World Behind the Veil* (1989/2014), the author reclaims the word "harem" for the twenty-first century: "I like the idea of it [harem] becoming women's private space to reflect, to grow - 'a room of one's own,'

[732] "Turkey's First Lady Praises Ottoman Harem," BBC News, March 10, 2016, sec. Europe, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35773208; "Turkish First Lady Praises Ottoman-Era Harem for 'preparing Women for Life" Deutsche Welle, October 3, 2016, accessed October 29, 2020, https://www.dw.com/en/turkish-first-lady-praises-ottoman-era-harem-for-preparing-women-for-life/a-19105787. A few examples of the debate on twitter: "Those who mention harem do not send their daughters to anything less than American universities," tweeted @kizmonot, pointing to the fact that both daughters of the Presidential family had been educated at Indiana University. "If the Ottoman harem was a scholarly institution then why were the men who worked there castrated?" tweeted @anlam75. Ceren Kenar, a pro-government journalist, defended the First Lady tweeting, " [*sic*] harem was a school for ladies, contrary to what European Orientalists' imagination [*sic*]."; Agence France-Presse, "Recep Tayyip Erdoğan: 'A Woman Is above All Else a Mother,'" World News, *The Guardian*, March 8, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/08/recep-tayyip-erdogan-a-woman-is-above-all-else-a-mother-turkish-president.

legislated by women."[733] Fifty-five years after Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch* (1970),with its famous comparison of American women in their homes to African eunuchs in Ottoman imperial households, feminist think pieces on Greer's claims continue to appear online.[734] In recent years, popular television series have attracted hundreds of millions of viewers to dramatized depictions of Ottoman palaces and court culture as gendered sites of power, struggle, and desire.[735] Olga Tokarczuk's novel *Flights*, which won the 2018 Man Booker prize in translation, draws on the complexity of harem imagery in one vignette to explore desire for trust, enclosure, interiority, and protection alongside the need for escape. Even though the Ottoman imperial harem ended roughly a century ago, it is apparent that harem discourse continues to occupy a powerful place in the global popular imagination.

These contradictory images of harem spaces that include an educational institution for women, a prison or space of enslavement, an arena of women's sovereignty and power, a space of fantasy and wealth, a site of excessive sexual energy and depravity, a realm of oppressive male dominance, and a space of negotiation for conflicting needs and desires reflect long-standing strains of harem discourse in Euro-American contexts dating back to at least the sixteenth century.[736] Taken together, these contemporary invocations of the harem point not to a stable historical referent, but to the endurance of a powerful spatial and visual imaginary. This

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[733] Croutier, *Harem: The World Behind the Veil* (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 2014), 21.
[734] Germaine Greer, *The Female Eunuch*, (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1970). Some examples of think pieces: Claire Messud, "Before the Feminist Revolution, This 'Messy Experiment' Nurtured Female Talent," *The New York Times* (May 19, 2020). Lucy Sweeney Byrne, "The Female Eunuch: This book should be taught in every school to every student," *The Irish Times* (July 18, 2020); Hadley Freeman, "What Germaine Greer Saw," *Prospect* (October 7, 2020); Geraldine Doogue, "The Female Eunuch at 50," *ABC RADIO* (October 17, 2020).
[735] Elif Batuman, "Ottomania: A Hit TV Show Reimagines Turkey's Imperial Past"*The New Yorker* (Feb. 10, 2014). https://www-newyorker-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/magazine/2014/02/17/ottomania. Turkish historical television dramas such as *Magnificent Century* (*Muhteşem Yüzyıl*, 2011–2014), which depicts the life of Hürrem Sultan, an enslaved concubine who rose to become the wife of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent, have reached audiences in more than 70 countries and attracted hundreds of millions of viewers. The show's global success has inspired a wave of similar productions that revisit Ottoman palace life through romantic and domestic storylines. These "neo-Ottoman" dramas, including *The Ottoman* (*Kuruluş Osman*), continue to revive the harem as a site of fascination, power, and spectacle for contemporary viewers.
[736] Leslie Peirce and Gülrü Necipoğlu have shown how the imperial Ottoman harem held considerable political power and actively lobbied the sultan to influence Ottoman strategies of conquest. Leslie Peirce, *The Imperial Harem: Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 3; Gülrü Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power: The Topkapı Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries* (New York and Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991);

dissertation has argued that such contradictory understandings of the harem have circulated in Euro-American contexts for centuries, not primarily as descriptions of Ottoman social reality, but as spatial images that organize thinking about gender, power, intimacy, labor, and control. I have shown how popular architecture at the turn of the twentieth century was integral to the development and persistence of harem discourse, structuring ideological negotiations through space, through interiors, atmospheres, and built forms that condensed these competing meanings. In doing so, the dissertation has also demonstrated how popular architecture more broadly can function as sites where abstract ideas, fantasies, and social anxieties are rendered spatially legible. Through processes of commodification, the examples of popular architecture explored in the preceding chapters translated abstract ideas about gender, power, and difference into spatial experiences that were consumable, reproducible, and widely legible within modern capitalist culture.

The Harem, Spatial Images, and Popular Architecture

The harem is a particularly productive spatial image through which to trace these processes because it is a powerful image that is spatially overdetermined. The term itself collapses person and architectural interior, referring at once to a category of women and to the domestic spaces they inhabit, and thereby binding gendered difference and hierarchy to a specific type of space. In Euro-American discourse, the harem is rarely understood as a complex social institution in its own right. Instead, it is imagined through exoticized bodies and architecture, as a domestic enclosure composed of thresholds and rooms as well as the furnishings, textiles, decorative art and objects that together constitute spatial images of the harem. Because spatial images of the harem are not composed from a single architectural style or form, but of a reconfigurable assemblage of interiors, bodies, objects, and atmospheres, it is especially well suited to tracing how images translate across media. Following the spatial image of the harem over time shows that popular architecture depends on the strategic reuse of familiar images whose meanings are neither fixed nor universal. As the harem's cultural resonance shifted, so too did the architectural forms and interiors through which it was expressed, revealing popular architecture as a dynamic practice that responds to changes in technology, media environments, consumer expectations, and structures of power.

Throughout the dissertation, I use the term *spatial image* to describe a recognizable configuration of architectural space, material culture, and embodied practice that acquires cultural meaning through repetition, circulation, and recognition. Spatial images describe not only physical, inhabitable space, but also take shape in two-dimensional, visual and narrative forms that invite viewers and readers to imagine space. What distinguishes a spatial image is not its attachment to a single medium or site, but its recognizability as a recurring spatial configuration that can be abstracted, reproduced, and reassembled across different contexts and media. Because spatial images function as a form of cultural shorthand, they do not require extensive explanation in order to be effective. Their power lies in their capacity to activate dense clusters of associations quickly and to circulate through successive iterations, becoming copies of copies that retain recognizable features while accruing new meanings in different contexts. While not all spatial images include visible human figures, they presuppose bodies. In some cases, the implied body is that of the viewer, whose position completes the image. In the case of spatial images of the harem, the figure of the harem woman often explicitly completes the spatial image, but sometimes this figure is replaced by the public, as in iterations in popular architecture. Forms of popular architecture provide a particularly revealing lens for examining spatial images, as they are designed to render spatial configurations highly recognizable in order to appeal to broad publics and attract consumers to specific products, experiences, or brands.

Focusing on *popular architecture* rather than more well known or elite architectural and art historical discourses enables the chapters of this dissertation, when taken together, to trace how spatial images circulate in everyday visual and spatial experience. While architectural history has often privileged permanence, formal innovation, and individual creative vision as markers of significance, popular architecture is characterized by repetition, mediation, and collective production, as well as by its responsiveness to changing tastes, media environments, and consumer cultures, offering insight into how architecture operates under the conditions of everyday life under capitalism. Popular architecture is inherently provisional, continually adapting its forms and references in response to shifting social, cultural, and economic conditions. By attending to fictional architecture, domestic environments, entertainment spaces, and architecture that functions as advertisement designed to be seen, used, and/or consumed by broad publics, the dissertation foregrounds architectural forms that are often dismissed as derivative or superficial, yet which play a central role in shaping how space is imagined and

experienced. Taken together, these approaches foreground women not simply as subjects represented or merely as consumers, but as central to the production, circulation, and reception of spatial images and popular architecture.

Tracing the harem in this way shows how orientalism is sustained through repetition and adaptation within capitalism, where its meanings remain unstable but its capacity to generate legible, marketable spatial experiences persists. As the examples detailed throughout the dissertation demonstrate, spatial images of the harem were repeatedly mobilized within popular architecture less as claims about the East than as ways of organizing space, bodies, and social relations in forms that are immediately legible and commercially effective. These case studies show how orientalist spatial images become embedded in everyday environments, where they can naturalize hierarchies while presenting them as pleasurable, immersive, and consumable. At the same time, each example also contains moments of dissonance that unsettle normative social relations, opening space for critique and reorientation.

Chapter Contributions

Chapter 1

The majority of academic work exploring Euro-American women's understandings of and relationships to orientalism and harem spaces in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries looks to women's writing and fine art. This includes analyses of travelogs, memoirs, novels, feminist philosophy, and oil painting. My first two chapters build on these studies through expanding the field of analysis to include architecture and interiors produced by women in Europe and the United States. Existing studies also almost always begin with the figure of Lady Mary Montagu, for good reason, as a crucial reference point. Therefore, I too begin with literature as a primary site where the harem's spatial image is elaborated in Euro-American contexts and with Montagu's written architecture as blueprints for later spatial images of the harem. I treat two instances of written architecture in popular fiction as examples of popular architecture.

The first chapter considers the ways in which Sydney Owenson (Lady Morgan) and Harriet Beecher Stowe leverage architectural and spatial description of harems in their novels in three important ways. First, they recognized that the harem sells. Harem romance had proven to

be extremely popular, especially amongst female readers. Both authors recognized that including allusions to the harem would be a powerful method for attracting and holding readers' attention allowing both books became best-selling novels while also being overtly political. Second, the authors use architectural description not as mere backdrop, rather the built environment is central to the narratives of both novels. I argue that the fictional forms of Islamic architecture and harem spaces constructed in both novels are important architectural sources. Third, Owenson and Stowe set their novels in Greece and the American South, respectively, in modes that complicate notions of a straightforward orientalism. By embedding spatial images of the harem within their narratives, both authors created politically charged parallels between the imagined orient and their local contexts.

Chapter 2

The second chapter transitions from literature to examples of the harem's spatial image as it was integrated within domestic spaces in the late nineteenth-century United States. The Turkish style cozy corner, a popular interior design trend, serves as the core case study through which to understand how the harem's spatial image could circulate as a recurring configuration of a set of recognizable objects. I show how interior design publications and department store catalogs were central to the dissemination of the spatial image, both its components and as a completed space, facilitating its virality as a popular trend. I argue that cozy corners carried the many and varied connotations attached to Islamic applied art and harem spaces that women would have encountered in literature, popular culture, missionary work, world's fairs, and public spaces such as department store displays. The move from the first to second chapter also traces the process through which the harem's spatial image becomes commodifiable.

I also argue that the cozy corner demonstrates a way in which the harem's spatial image could be appropriated for American women's self-presentation. Repeatedly copied with seemingly endless variations, cozy corners consisted of a distinct set of objects and furniture that could be arranged and rearranged, reflective of the owner's taste and therefore their identity. Photographs of women in their cozy corners, their comportment, dress, and staging, provide insight into how these spaces made explicit contemporary American anxieties about women's labor and rest as well as the gendered, spatial negotiations taking place in turn of the century American homes.

Chapter 3

Chapter three moves from the late nineteenth-century, American context, across the Atlantic to the first decade of the twentieth century in Germany. Through the central example of the Yenidze Tobacco Factory in Dresden, designed to appear like a mosque, this chapter explores how the convergence of the building's orientalist outer skin, enveloping a modern factory space, occupied primarily by women laborers offers a particularly sharp lens through which to examine how the harem's spatial image migrated into the architecture of modern industry. The building exhibits a striking duality between its orientalist exterior and women's labor in its interiors, carrying connotations of a longer eroticized discourse in Germany about women's factory labor in the nineteenth century. Although the modern interiors might have been intended to work against these earlier characterizations by social reformers of women's work in factories in terms of the harem's spatial image, the building's reference to an imaginary orient forecloses this rupture.

I also consider the laborers at the Yenidze as active agents in the design of the factory. Taking into account the details of the *Zigarettenarbeiterinnen* strike of 1905, just two years before the Yenidze's construction began, I interpret the welfare spaces in the factory as a response to women's labor unrest. Located within the most explicitly orientalist facet of the building, its large glass dome, these spaces suggested a potentially powerful demographic of women laborers should lounge and rest. The chapter also considers the labor of the bodies of imagined harem women as they appear in advertisements for the Yenidze's products. Working in tandem with the factory's facade, these brand characters were integral to advertising psychology and strategies developing in the early twentieth century and upon which the Yenidze achieved much of its success.

Chapter 4

The fourth chapter extends the dissertation's analysis of the harem's spatial image into the sphere of urban leisure culture in early twentieth century Berlin. Through the case of the Moka Efti, it demonstrates how popular architecture mobilized the harem as a fully immersive, commercialized environment embedded in the rhythms of metropolitan life. I argue that the café exemplifies how popular architecture invited patrons as participants into a spatial image of the harem and made the orient experientially available as a branded, affective space. Orientalist

motifs, architectural technologies, and advertising imagery worked together to produce an atmosphere that promised comfort, excitement, and temporary suspension of social constraints. Framed as a form of travel through its escalator, spatial sequencing, lighting, music, and Islamicate decor, the Moka Efti staged the harem as a space that was both distinctly Berlin and crucially elsewhere, offering heterogeneous publics access to cosmopolitan belonging and leisure consumption.

By situating the Moka Efti within histories of coffee, the domestication of public space, and Berlin's changing demographics, the chapter shows how the harem's spatial image could be mobilized to function as a response to the reorganization of everyday life in the modern city. The café operated as a third space between overcrowded homes and workplaces, where emerging forms of sociability, gendered visibility, and consumer identity could be practiced and negotiated. Drawing on the visual languages of bourgeois orientalist interiors and museum collections, but translating them into a branded space, the Moka Efti simulated wealthy, luxury, and comfort not through architecture, but through atmosphere. Its continued operation under National Socialism underscores a central theme of the dissertation: that orientalism in popular architecture is not inherently ideological, but rather a flexible aesthetic that can be absorbed by competing political and economic regimes in the service of organizing desire, belonging, and exclusion.

Cross Cutting Themes

Across four chapters that explore four distinct examples of popular architecture's deployment of spatial images, the harem appears less as a stable icon than as a flexible, highly mediated way of orientating (and sometimes disorientating) norms of gendered space, social difference, desire, and consumerism within a developing Euro-American modernity. The following thematic threads run throughout and clarify broader contributions of the dissertation.

Alternative Genealogies of Orientalism and Women's Spatial Practices

This dissertation expands the scope of previous research exploring women's orientalisms. One central contribution is to show that the built environment, and specifically interior space, registers alternative genealogies of orientalism that are not captured by studies centered on literature, travel writing, fine art, academic knowledge production, or even monumental

architecture and infrastructures, alone. Montagu's dissemination of architectural knowledge and spatial descriptions in her *Turkish Embassy Letters* offer an early model of how a not-yet-commodified spatial image of the harem could become a comparative device for thinking about gendered space and its constraints and possibilities. Chapter 1 traces how women writers mobilized that device through architectural description, atmosphere, and interior detail in novels sold to large, Euro-American audiences. Chapters 2 through 4 extend this lineage into built spaces that continue to carry these earlier connotations of the harem as ripe for projection and comparison, yet in a distinctly commodified and increasingly abstracted form: The amateur and professional practices of furnishing, photographing, and circulating the Turkish style cozy corner; the industrial interior shaped equally by an orientalist style exterior and competing discourses about women's work; and the leisure interior of the Moka Efti that packaged the conflation of the *Neue Frau*, harem woman, and Turkish New Woman as consumable experience. In each case, women's writing, collecting, designing, decorating, curating, laboring, and consuming emerge as practices that shape architecture and interiors and that both reflect and actively remake the meanings attached to spatial images of the harem.

The Ambivalences of Feminist and Feminine Orientalisms

A second cross cutting theme is the dissertation's insistence on ambivalence, and on distinguishing between feminist and feminine orientalisms as they manifest spatially. In this dissertation, feminist orientalism refers to explicit political deployments of the harem as comparative device, while feminine orientalism describes more embodied, atmospheric, and often pleasurable engagements with orientalist space that do not necessarily oppose dominant structures but, for the most part, work within them. Chapter 1 shows how Morgan and Stowe manipulated the harem's spatial image to intervene in women's rights, anti-slavery, and anti-imperialist political debates, yet their interventions remain entangled in racialized and eroticized conventions that make the harem legible to a Euro-American audience in the first place. That tension manifests in spatial organization and an embodied way in Chapter 2, where the cozy corner enables experimentation with an assertion of feminine space, right to work and to rest, and curated self-presentation, while also drawing on visual economies that sexualize the reclining body and commodify a range of objects, furniture, and their arrangements as an accentuation of cultural difference. The example of the Yenidze factory in Chapter 3 sharpens

the issue by relocating the harem's spatial image to the factory floor, wherein sensational descriptions by reformists echo the eroticism of the worst of harem discourse even when authors claim to be exposing exploitation. Chapter 4 then shows how the promise of emancipation or cosmopolitan openness can itself become a product, as the Moka Efti stages deviant behavior, liberation, and gender mixing within an older spatial fantasy of feminized interiority, the harem, to do its work.

Media, Technology, and Mass Circulation

The harem's spatial image gains its force through circulation and that circulation is inseparable from developments in media and technology over the long nineteenth century. The novels in Chapter 1 depended on improvements in print technology to reach unprecedented numbers of readers as well as traditions of ekphrasis that translated textual description into widely shared, mental images of architecture and interiors. Chapter 2 traces how illustrated magazines, catalogs, photography, and advertising made the cozy corner a popular trend and an endlessly reproducible spatial image. Chapter 2 also addressed the growing consumer demand for Islamic and Islamicate applied art, a demand that relied on global networks and infrastructures as well as the development of local skills to reproduce these objects at lower cost for wider consumption. Chapter 3 demonstrates an early, successful example of how the factory itself could function as product advertising, working together with print and packaging to create an advertising world or expanded brand image. Photographs and films of industrial interiors meant for the public, at the same time, smoothed labor into pleasurable images that underscored the respectability of this greater brand image. The example of the Yenidze also speaks to women's perspectives on the move from home-based labor to factory work in the tobacco industry and how their wants and demands shaped innovations in modern factory design. Chapter 4 pushes the issue of technological orientalism further by considering the escalator, lighting, wallpaper, décor, and printed ephemera such as postcards depicting the Moka Efti as affective technologies that turned a gendered interiority into a mass experience. Taken together, these four chapters show that popular architecture is not only built form, but also a media system, one that relies on circulated images to stabilize, extend, and multiply architectural experience beyond the physical site.

Gendered Labor and Rest

A final thematic thread concerns the relationship between gender, labor, and rest, and how the harem's spatial image becomes a space of negotiation at a moment of accelerated industrialization. Across the long nineteenth century and into the interwar period, new regimes of mechanized production, expanding consumer markets, and developing logistical infrastructures reorganized everyday rhythms. They reconfigured women's everyday lives, as paid work, domestic labor, and public leisure increasingly overlapped and came under new forms of scrutiny. The harem, imagined as a space of women's idle lounging, dangerous leisure, and recumbent sensuality, becomes meaningful not because it represents rest alone, but because it offers a charged space through which to negotiate anxieties about who works, who rests, and under what conditions women's bodies may be visible, mobile, or still.

Chapter 1 foregrounds this dynamic in the sphere of cultural production, where Morgan and Stowe mobilize the harem as a comparative device by performing the labor of writing popular architecture for mass audiences. In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, orientalist motifs and references to Islamic architecture are used to describe spaces of violence and moral corruption, framing elite interiors as sites of decadence and degeneration sustained by enslaved labor. Stowe further sharpens this contrast through the figure of the sickly, reclining woman, whose bodily stillness and excessive leisure evoke the harem woman and stand in deliberate opposition to Tom's figure as industrious, Christian, and morally upright. Chapter 2 shows how the Turkish style cozy corner framed rest as a gendered spatial practice within the home, entangling the fantasy of the harem woman in repose with women's labor as homemakers and, in some cases, as professional designers and photographers. This negotiation unfolded alongside medical and moral discourses that pathologized women's reclining bodies as improper, unproductive, or erotically suspect, at precisely the moment when women were increasingly organizing, writing, and advocating collectively for expanded rights, suffrage, and professional recognition. Chapter 3 renders the problem most explicitly through reformist writing on women's factory labor, where harem tropes were repurposed to render women's work hypervisible as spectacle while displacing the material realities of underpayment, bodily harm, and structural inequality within industrial production. Chapter 4 turns to interwar Berlin, where the Moka Efti depended not only on women's labor within the café but also on branded figures of the harem woman and the Neue Frau, whose stylized images performed affective and symbolic labor for the café's marketing while masking

the precarious conditions that structured both service work and the broader economy of sex work.

Limits and Future Directions

A final consideration concerns the limits of this dissertation's scope and methodology. The analysis engages primarily with English and German language sources, a focus that made it possible to sustain close, comparative readings of a specific set of examples across the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This emphasis, however, necessarily excludes other important linguistic and cultural contexts, most notably French language material, which played a central role in the formation and circulation of orientalist discourse and would further complicate the genealogies traced here. While there is evidence of substantial dialogue and exchange between Euro-American and Middle Eastern women, a fuller engagement with these conversations lies beyond the scope of the dissertation and points toward important directions for future research. The available source material also tends to privilege designers, owners, and intellectuals, making it difficult to access the perspectives of laborers, consumers, and everyday users of the spaces under discussion. Further targeted research is needed to better reconstruct those perspectives. While the dissertation attends closely to women's labor and spatial practices, it only partially addresses other demographics, for example masculine brand characters in tobacco advertising, Black figures in spatial images of the harem, and Ottoman Greek laborers in Dresden. Finally, the project's geographic focus on Germany and the United States reflects the demands of scale and coherence within a single dissertation, even as it points toward the value of a wider comparative framework for understanding how orientalist spatial images traveled, adapted, and accrued meaning across transnational contexts.

In my original proposal, the dissertation included two additional chapters: one on the Victorian Turkish bath as a phenomenon in the United States and Europe in the nineteenth century, and another on the reverberations of the harem's spatial image in Republican Turkey in the mid-twentieth century, which would have explored how former imperial harem spaces were reconfigured as popular architecture. Malcolm Shifrin has written a foundational volume on the Victorian Turkish bath phenomenon (2015). There is still significant work to be done in paying due attention to women's relationships to these spaces, which were seen by many to be inherently modern and diplomatic. My immediate next step in developing the dissertation into a book will

be the addition of the Turkish bath chapter, as it brings together many of the project's central themes while also enabling a broader international scope. Incorporated into the book project, along with Chapter 1, the example of Turkish baths would help situate the existing case studies within a more explicitly transnational framework. Additionally, a chapter after the introduction could further explore the concept of spatial images and would theorize it more explicitly, allowing for a sustained engagement with visual theory and media history that exceeds the scope of the dissertation format.

I have many ideas that might also become chapters in a forthcoming book or stand-alone articles including a comparative look at Cairo streets at international world's fairs, representations of women in tobacco advertising, Islamic architectural references at Luna Parks across Europe and the United States, a look at representations of the harem in early twentieth century film through an analysis of the UFA studios oriental city built near Berlin, examples of German companies mechanically producing Islamicate objects such as carpets, and the harem image as it manifested in stage designs for theater. The dissertation has also piqued my interest in a second book project focusing on the architecture of the German tobacco industry. This would begin in the mid-nineteenth century with the home as workplace followed by the move to factory work. It would allow me to include a range of communities across Germany where tobacco was central to local economies. It would also allow for me to explore topics such as the Ottoman Greek community in Dresden, understandings of economic colonialism, and architecture and industry as facilitator of diplomacy, etc. I would end with a look at the Reemtsma company which became the largest tobacco company in Germany in the 1930s and continues to exist today in Hamburg.

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