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Oriental Fantasies of the American Advertisement Industry during the Late 19th-Early 20th Century: A Reading of the Recurring Images of Cigarette Marketing

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Abstract

The "Orient" with its so-called exotic, mystified and mythicized elements has been a crucial staple for the Western imagination. For centuries, Western artists have imitated and (re)constructed idiosyncratic elements of the East in different ways, such as Turquerie or Arabesque. On the other hand, the predominantly "decorative Orientalism" of the pre-modern period transformed into an element of a Euro-centric political discourse, following imperialistic expansions in the 19th century. In this respect, Western fantasy over "the other" is not a monolithic, but a multi-layered phenomenon that simultaneously creates and reflects the ideological boundaries. American advertisement industry during the late 19th/early 20th centuries did not ignore this phenomenon and used Orientalist images, especially on standard market products, such as cigarette packs. The scope of generic images on the cigarette marketing varied from landscape to mystic themes. Aiming to analyze the cultural/regional/gendered (re)constructions of the American advertising industry in the turn of the century, this paper focuses on the ways how the advertisers fantasized about the Orient through cigarette marketing. The survey concentrates mainly on the ways how the designers portrayed a stereotypical "Orient" by contrasting the Eastern and Western values, which generic images they made use of, how the cultural features gained new connotations

in advertisement context, and to what extent they contributed to the Orientalist literature.

Keywords

Orientalism, cigarette advertisements, tobacco

Özet

"Şark" söz konusu muhayyel coğrafyaya atfedilen egzotik, esrarengiz ve masalsı öğeleriyle Batı imgeleminin başlıca besleyici unsurlarından biri olagelmiştir. Bu düşlemin ürünü olan "Şark cazibesi" yüzyıllar boyunca *Turquerie* ve *Arabesque* gibi formlarla taklit edilmiş ya da farklı biçimler verilerek yeniden yorumlanmıştır. Öte yandan, modern-öncesi dönemde ağırlıklı olarak "dekoratif" bir niteliğe sahip olan "Şark" 19. yüzyıldan sonra Batı-merkezli politik bir söylemin tamamlayıcı unsurlarından birine dönüşmüştür. Bu açıdan, "öteki"yi konumlandıran Batılı düşlemi, tekil bir yapıya sahip olmaktan öte, hem ideolojik sınırları yaratan hem de bu hiyerarşik ayrımı yansıtan çok-katmanlı bir olgudur. Bu olguya seyirci kalmayan Amerikan reklamcılık endüstrisi 19. yüzyıl sonu ile 20. yüzyıl başlarında, sigara gibi genel tüketim ürünlerinin pazarlanmasında Oryantalist imgelerden yararlanmıştır. Tütün ürünlerinin pazarlamasında kullanılan görsel malzemeler, yerel manzaralardan Ortadoğu mistisizmine kadar uzanan geniş bir yelpaze sunuyordu. Yüzyıl dönümünde Amerikan reklam endüstrisinin kültürel/bölgesel/cinsiyetçi temsillerini irdeleyen bu makale, sigara paketleri ve reklamlarında yer verilen görsel materyallerin ortaya koyduğu Doğu düşlemine odaklanmaktadır. Makalede, ağırlıklı olarak, söz konusu tasarımlarda Doğu'nun nasıl temsil edildiği, sıklıkla kullanılan imgeler, Doğu'ya özgü kültürel unsurların daha geniş bağlamlarda kazandığı yeni anlamlar ve bu tercihlerin Oryantalist literatüre ne ölçüde katkıda bulunduğuna değinilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Oryantalizm, sigara reklamları, tütün

None of us is completely free from the struggle over geography. That struggle is complex and interesting because it is not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and imaginings. (Said 1993, 7)

As French-born art historian and archeologist Oleg Grabar points out in *Noble Dreams, Wicked Pleasures* (2000), all cultures nurture myths and fantasies, either with paragons or visions of evil, and the psychological necessity of these myths is satisfied by contrasting one's own world to different realms (3). Such reasoning in either positive or negative extremes often culminates in a notion of otherness, a speculative problem in social sciences which has references to the issues such as cultural politics, identity, religion, race, gender, post-colonialism, etc. However, Grabar's partly valid but simplistic notion of contrast does not present the essence of the "othering" process. Rather, the process is a recognition of self *through* and *in* the other instead of a mere contrasting: Hegel's dialectic of identification suggests that, in its encounter with the other, self-consciousness sees the other as both self and not-self. That is, self-consciousness "does not see the other as (another) essential being, and originates in the exclusion of everything outside itself" (Brons 69). While this self-identification in the individual level does not necessarily refer to a hierarchical categorization, the term "other" in the group/culture level has been linked with a dominator-dominated binary, especially in the post-colonial scholarship. During the discursive/ideological process of othering, a dominant in-group (self) constructs out-groups (other) by stigmatizing a true or imagined discrepancy. This "simultaneous construction" is then materialized in a mutual and unequal opposition through identification of some desirable characteristic that the former has and the latter lacks or *vice versa* (Stazsak 44; Crang 61). Setting up such a superior/inferior relation, the assumed hierarchical categorization locates the self or native culture as the reference point.

In this dualistic context of self versus other, Oriental fantasies have been a staple of the Western imagination (and the process of self-definition) since medieval times.[1] In view of the perpetual representation of the exotic, overtly mystified and mythicized social spheres and territorial spaces, the West necessarily located itself as the

anti-thesis of the Orient[2] with its peculiar institutions or indigenous life-styles. As well as having a political meaning, this classification between "enlightened" West and the Orient as an idea had a socio-psychological utility: Western fantasies of the exotic provided a getaway from the stratified social/cultural bounds of the Victorian age and the Near East[3] emerged as an anti-thesis to Victorian restraints. The Oriental outlook also reflected an interest in the so-called "primitive" forms as a reaction to early modernism. Hence, the idea of a "pure" and "primitive" Orient attracted a number of Western authors, artists and designers and some unique cultural/geographical/religious particularities of the Near East were imitated/reproduced/(re)constructed in different media such as in harem literature, Moorish architecture, Turquerie or Arabesque prior to the modern age. Consuming these exotic fashions became markers of an elite status in the society and a modern cosmopolitanism (Galt 147). However, this predominantly literary or decorative Orientalism in applied and fine arts turned into a political discourse especially after the imperialist expansionism in the 18th and 19th centuries. Arguing that Orientalism was mainly a British and French imperial enterprise (as well as being a German and Dutch intellectual/academic interest), Edward Said suggested that during the European imperialistic expansion, "European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self" (Said, *Orientalism* 3-4) emphasizing the psycho-politic utilization of the Orientalist outlook. However, not constructed in equal terms, this identification highlighted the colonial and cultural superiority of the West over the East (Rosenblatt 52), which is in accordance with the before-mentioned binary logic of othering. In this respect, Western fantasy over the Orient has not been a monolithic structure, but an ideological mode (Lowe 5-8; Said, *Orientalism* 1-3) in which originally neutral vocabulary or visual elements could be easily transformed into certain kinds of representation as discursive imagery. From this perspective, as Xypolia suggests, the manipulative usage of the images or misrepresentation in an ideologically oriented attitude elaborates Gramsci's concept of hegemony (Xypolia 24-43).

1. Consuming the "Other": Commercializing the Orient in the United States

After the proliferation of mass-production and subsequent consumerism in the United States during the second half of the 19th century, the advertising industry emerged as a major force in the markets by manipulating the consumer habits or reflecting the existing social trends. Unsurprisingly, American advertisers did not ignore the potentially best-selling phenomenon of the Orient and the creative agencies used Orientalist clichés on standard market products, such as cigarette packs, thus performing a new kind of box-art. The variety of images used in this strategy had a broad scope ranging from the fauna and flora of the Near East to the mystic and seductive Oriental women or lascivious sultans abusing concubines in their harems. Responding to the traditional portrayals of orientalist representations in artistic production, the advertisements guided American people through a new frontier opening to unknown lands. After the end of the Western frontier in the late 19th century, the Orient could be interpreted as a new, fantasized frontier that replaced the adventurous nostalgia of the American West.

Aiming to demonstrate the cultural/regional/gendered (re) constructions of American tobacco advertising, this paper focuses mainly on the ways how the American advertisers fantasized about the Orient in the early 20th century, which recurrent images they made use of, how images like the harem, the fez, glittering accessories, banquets or belly dancing gained new connotations in tobacco advertisements, and to what extent they contributed to the Orientalist literature (or how the literature contributed in turn). Obviously, the recurring representations could connote to some greater contexts, such as the objectification of the Oriental woman as well as the direct correlation between the Orient and irrationality that refers to magic, romance or spiritualism.

The Orientalist discourse in American marketing worked in the greater ideological contexts of Capitalism in the Gilded Age, when a rapid economic growth and industrialization transformed the United States. However, under the surface of the "gilded"[4] representation, it was also an era of social and economic inequality when "one is filled with vague longings; when one dreams of flight to peaceful islands in the remote solitudes of the sea" (Twain & Warner 317). During the turn of the century, consumerism became a cult with far reaching impacts

on the collective thought of American society and utilized certain forms responding to basic discursive narratives. This social fact presented an indoctrination model through material culture as well as easing the social psyche. In such a cultural-economy model, the imagined "other" became the focal point of the cycle in which market forces both created the demand and supplied the consumers' needs in return. The demand-supply correlation presented the "commodification of the fetish," a (post)Marxist notion which followed the Marxist theory of "commodity fetishism" (Marx 165). Describing the word "fetish" as an "irrational obsession," David Ciarlo suggests that Western obsessions with Eastern cultures amount to a kind of fetishism, which, in this frame, insistently encapsulates the Orient as an exotic setting (26). Undoubtedly, such a fetish operating within the Western mindset represented the "ontological and epistemological distinctions between the Orient and the Occident" (Said 1978, 3), and the materials' popular or exchange values were well beyond their labor values.

During the late 19th and early 20th century, American advertisers took advantage of the Orientalist trend. However, in a mutually effected relation, their campaigns also helped to construct Raymond Williams's late notion of "structures of feeling" (132), in the *fin de siècle*-America and thus reinforced the idea of a monolithic Near Eastern society.[5] In other words, advertisement strategies contributed to the hegemonic discourse in the West by totalizing the extrinsic cultures and employing the Eurocentric knowledge of the Orient. From this perspective, the recurrent Oriental representations in early American advertisements operated as Barthesian cultural myths and these visual mythologies served as texts, making sense of unarticulated forces (Jarmakani 4). At this point, the imagery in the designs connoted specific meanings within the cultural context in which they were created rather than conveying consensually fixed meanings.

However, the commodification of the Orient was not a new strategy launched by advertisers' efforts. The organized marketing of the exotica in the United States dates back to the 1876 Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition and 1901 Pan-American Exhibition, when both the local entrepreneurs and attending governments attempted to attract the American customers. Having a "colonialist nature," these exhibitions presented the "external reality" as the most common object and the great signified (Mitchell 226-227). Near Eastern exhibits' most important success was "to cater

to an American audience that was receptive to centuries old images of the Orient in the United States" (Williams 75) with reproductions of some Eastern scenes, for example, snake charmers on the streets or reconstructed Eastern harems. Advertisement and entertainment industries of the following decades utilized the same Oriental stereotype strategy that resonated in American perception. They also consolidated and diversified the established idea by addressing a wider audience in various ways; hence, the commodification of the Orient became both a strategy and redefined/restyled the object for their audiences at the turn of the century.

2. Cigarette Pack Designs & Advertisements as Manifestations of Orientalist Discourse

The late 19th and early 20th century cigarette pack designs and advertisements were also practical tools manifesting the Orientalist discourse through a similar strategy. The generic images covering the packs and advertisement illustrations often reflected the traditional prejudices. Utilizing a vocabulary of stereotype and fantasy, these advertisements were rich symbols for manipulation as signifiers of gender, race, class and sex (Edwards 206; Jarmakani 116-7). They were practical props in view of the product's accessibility by all spheres of the society, which was not limited to space and time. Moreover, cigarette advertising was an easy playground, responding to various concerns of the time. This social/cultural nature of cigarette advertising would also be manifested in diversified issues, ranging from the female liberation movement when the "little white slaver" was marketed as a "torch of freedom" to the status-conscious, middle class portrayals during the Jazz Age.[6] The early 20th century cigarette advertisements would also exploit the social/political tendencies and fashions with images referring to patriotism, entertainment, space, masculinity and sex, etc.– all demonstrating that smoking was not just puffing a cigarette.

Following the hypothetical construct regarding Orientalist connotations of the cigarette pack designs or advertisements in the late 19th and early 20th century, it is vital to look at the main problem, which seeks the ways in which these were applied. Instrumentalization of cigarette advertisements could be formulated broadly as a process, principally, (1) constructing the notion of "otherness," which

necessarily depended on extreme terms. This notion was constructed (2) by employing a totalized *exoticism* expressed by such marginalizing representations as being (a) an antithesis to *fin de siècle* American decadence with distant, mystic landscapes; (b) an antithesis to American progress with peculiar institutions, despotism, barbarism, irrationalism, de-urbanization; and (c) an antithesis to Victorian ethics by transforming the exotica into Oriental erotica. These positive or negative representations were the primary ideological apparati defining power relations and cultural superiority in Orientalist discourse. Following earlier ideas, the advertisement materials were easily attainable substitutes to the exotica of high Oriental art by directly addressing lower or middle classes' imagination and self-identification.

In the early Orientalist cigarette advertisements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the exotic land had no borders and local particularities were diminished to insignificant puzzle elements of a homogeneous territory that was standardized by the outsiders. According to the popular perception, the distant lands of the Orient were not culturally diversified. Such totalized/monolithic perceptions, which ignored the localities, invited assumptions that the whole Orient was mysterious or superstitious and deprived of West's rationalism. The reduction of different cultures into one single definition as a "counter-other" indirectly provided the Western powers with a logic to manipulate and exert power over them. From this perspective, the Orient was a "Western-constructed geo-fantasy rather than an actual geographical location" (Teo 2). The recurrent fusion of Egyptian, Turkish and Arabic elements in the cigarette advertisements for Western convenience was best exemplified by popular Turkish blends of *Murad* and *Helmar* from the early 20th century.[7] In their advertisements, "Turkishness" was defined with mostly Egyptian elements, such as pharaohs, sphinxes and Ancient Egyptian temples as well as colorful *khat*s and *nemes*es (striped head clothes) the pharaoh and the nobility wore, although the captions celebrated the "Turkish origin." One *Helmar* advertisement of 1916 series states, "the mildest tobacco for cigarettes is Turkish, the best tobacco for cigarettes is Turkish" (SRITA)[8] with the oxymoronic image of a pharaoh flanked by two Ancient Egyptian monuments on the box. Another *Helmar* text of the 1919 series says: "Quantity can never take place [sic] of quality. Tobacco that is not Turkish can never take place [sic] of the 100% pure Turkish" with an image of an Ancient Egyptian woman with a colorful *khat*, huge rings and a cloak which reminds its

1916 slogan "Queen of Turkish cigarettes" (SRITA). In return, another "Turkish" blend, *Rameses*, with the expected themes, such as the images of scarab beetles or Rameses II's actual temple in Abu Simbel displayed on the box, labeled itself as "the aristocrat of cigarettes" (SRITA). *Murad* designs were all inclusive or reductionist in this respect: Its slogan was "Turkish blend;" its accompanying brand image was a scene from the Ancient Egypt and the depictions in advertisements generally portrayed the Mughal life-style. These depictions, all of which were irrelevant to Turkish ethnic society[9] that was emerging as a significant politically conscious ethnic group *per* se and landscape of the period, were multi-dimensional. As Ciarlo points: "they included not only the power of perceptions, but also the power of the image over the perception" (152).

The distant lands portrayed on cigarette advertisements responded to a psychological discontent during the early modernity. In the recurring images ancient pyramids and huge palm trees were arising in the wilderness, the rural was blessed, women were satisfying their master's pleasure or belly dancers were performing in bewildering environments. These popular representations exposed a sense of missing something on the part of the West, which the Orient supposedly had. From this perspective, as William Leach argued, Orientalism was symptomatic of social changes in Western society, which symbolized a longing for a more satisfying life than traditional Christianity could endorse (105). Hence, the fabricated exoticism provided Western culture with a lower-self indulging into the closed lines and the application of such a foil identity satisfied the higher-self (Said 1978, 3; Akman 44). Amira Jarmakani points out that traditional notions of distance shifted considerably as Orientalist images suddenly traveled to spectators; therefore, the Orientalist representations in advertising industry served the paradoxical purpose of enabling American consumers to experience the Oriental mystery while simultaneously presenting the boundaries that defined the Orient as distant and exotic (106). In that perspective, "packaged exoticism" or "fabricated exoticism" with the generic images, offered travelling to distant/mystical lands by means of ordinary consumption (Ciarlo 152-153).

As well as being an imagined/enviable environment, the "distance" was rooted in American fantasies as being a reminiscence of the past. During the early 20th century when the American society witnessed a rapid industrialization and business expansion, "the appeal of the Orient was a nostalgic desire for a constantly receding natural

and innocent past" (Jarmakani 112), as seen in the last line in an *Omar*[10] visual of 1919 series reading "Wilderness were paradise enow" (SRITA). This representation is particularly salient for the United States in the early 20th century, partly because it includes a sense of nostalgia for pastoral landscapes. Historically, this nostalgic sentiment possibly responded to the industrialization, urbanization and transformation of the landscape (especially in the American West which had been traditionally referred to as "wild" and the South where agrarian idealism disappeared to some extent). In the illustration, the master and his *odalisque* balance the rural and the urban life "as they enjoy the paradise of wilderness while the comforts of progress await them in the distant palatial setting" (Jarmakani 130). Moreover, these generic images of an untouched nature with palm trees and wide territories resembling the American West represented a lost past or frontier experience in American imagination. This was symptomatic of the popular psyche when various groups struggling under the pressures of urbanization and industrialization sought for alternative modes of living. Here the Orient becomes the world of fantasy, escapism and the unexpected as Eric Davis points out:

> With the increasing regimentation of middle class life as Americans moved from self-sufficient agriculture to urban white and blue collar employment with its attendant time clocks and industrial discipline, the Middle East was a realm of fantasy in which the populace could escape the tedium of daily life. (370)

However, for other segments of the society and political mechanisms, the prevailing designs illustrated a political/economic/cultural hierarchy through marginalization of the Orient: They basically illustrated how the exotic was an antithesis to American progress by "self-idealization and other demonization" (Jarmakani 122). Indeed, in the aftermath of the Civil War, the United States made an unprecedented progress with rapid industrialization, urbanization and economic upheaval, while the Near East was in political and economic chaos at the turn of the century. Therefore, the Orient became a distant screen upon which the American values could be projected (Edwards 17). However, this was a general mode of American perception, not confined only to the Near East, following the emergence of the "American Empire" after the Spanish-American War in 1898. In this paternalist perception, the fantasies over the Far East/Pacific justified the concept of benevolent

imperialism and unprecedented "great aberration"[11] in American history. In other words, the "certain negative characterization of the East corresponded to the necessity of colonization" (Reynolds 61) which promised saving and civilizing through domination.

The West has traditionally identified the Eastern societies as static or undeveloped, and the negative characterization (laziness and indolence) corresponded to "the necessity of colonization" (Reynolds 61). This notion of laziness/anti-progress was represented in the cigarette designs in two-ways: (1) Contradictions with the Western/ American work ethic and (2) undemocratic institutions, both of which were seen responsible for the backwardness. The East was generally portrayed in cigarette marketing in the turn of the century as a realm of earthly pleasures and leisure with recurrent images such as the fashionistas of the period enjoying an easy life and smoking masters serenading or strolling amidst the palace gardens. In these designs, there was no reference to any kind of production or producing classes. Most exemplary brand of such representation, *Omar's* 1915 advertisement caption includes a verse reading "but still a Rubi gushes from vine – and many a garden by the water blows" (SRITA), reflecting a comfortable life with enjoyment of the nature, love affairs and other pleasures instead of any kind of production or public service. After World War I, while many other brands utilized patriotic visuals and themes, such as the American war effort, new technologies and collective progress, *Omar*'s protagonist in the 1920 series of advertisements goes for a walk in the moonlight with his mistress, chanting "moon that looks for us again – how oft hereafter will she wax and wane" (SRITA). A 1923 design of *Murad* is a perfect allegory of the notion of American progress vs. Oriental backwardness: a Western woman rides a giant turtle that was stylized like a camel in a desert-like environment. She dominates and whips the slow going/lazy creature – all can be interpreted in terms of a so-called "progressive imperialism," depending on the idea that civilized societies have the right to intervene in backward regions' internal affairs.

The representation of despotism with references to political mechanisms or state-citizen/subject relations was also integral to the anti-progress theme. Not a modern product of the advertising industry, the "despotic East" had been one of the most utilized strategies in cultural politics to emphasize moral and political supremacy as seen in the works of prominent Western theoreticians, such as Montesquieu.[12]

The thematization of "the Oriental despotism" on the cigarette packs was mostly communicated through similar generic images of Oriental masters/rulers, who were depicted wearing armors, carrying swords and abusing the harem women, all reminiscent of their barbarous nature and oppressive behavior. In this frame, the land was generally represented by portraits of imaginary sheikhs or sultans (as seen in a 1915 *Mogul* advertisement), reducing the region to be identified by the leader cult – an oddity for Americans in a progressive period when democratic or civic rhetoric was celebrated. Harem depictions also illustrated the subordination of the imperial/tribal subjects, which was a direct contradiction with the individual rights in American political thought. Indeed, this narrative was not a fantasy to a great extent, but rather a style of politics providing empirical information (Curtis 68). However, the depictions again fell into the trap of totalizing the whole region and not differentiating between existing governmental structures (absolutist despotism, constitutional monarchy, totalitarianism or bureaucratic autocracy). For example, the autocratic characteristics of the late 19th century Ottoman government had parallels with its imperial contemporaries' strong hand policies in Europe (Deringil 30), which disappears in the Western eyes. It is true beyond all question that various aspects of the Ottoman social and political life were restrained by regulations or arbitrary treatments; however, as İlber Ortaylı argues, it would still be an anachronistic interpretation to equate 18-19th centuries' autocracy to the 20th century totalitarianism, which basically ignored the inalienable rights of life and property (47).

The manipulative display of opulence in Orientalist cigarette advertisements was another integral part of the general process of exoticism. In the turn of the century, the cigarette consumption was attributed to luxury and application of such splendor to position Turkish blends as luxury products was a smart strategy responding to this perception. Therefore, the designs both manipulated the Orient and consolidated the products' image with emphasis on wealth. For example, the lady of Liggett Myers Co.'s *Fatima*, another popular early Turkish blend of 1910s, represents the classical Oriental wealth with imperial banners, emerald-studded turbans, glittering jewels of different kinds and ornamental veils. *Murad*'s 1915 advertisement series also shows excessive indulgence with servants, pearls, colorful costumes studded with jewels and exotic fruits served on gold trays. Moreover, *Murad*'s visuals generally have a giant peacock image, which traditionally

symbolizes happiness and prosperity in Eastern mythologies. These portrayals were re-telling the earlier narratives of pre-17th century Eastern courts, where the markets of diamonds, rubies, sapphires and other precious stones attracted the Western observers (Curtis 69). However, in reality, the representation was undoubtedly misleading: When the cigarette packs or advertisements marketed Oriental luxury, the Ottoman Empire had been already labeled as "the sick man of Europe" since the second half of the 19th century and other parts of the Near East were colonized by European powers. Hence, what had actually been marketed was the concept of luxury and possibility for the consumers to be a part of it. Indeed, these images sold the notion of leisure and opulence to American lower and middle classes, which were constrained by demands of conservative ethics and spirit of capitalism in the early 20th century (Jarmakani 124).

Possibly the most evident indicator of Oriental exoticism on cigarette packs and advertisements is their sexual representation, which reinforces the idea of "feminized East," which is negatively contrasted with the masculine West (Said 1978, 65-67). In the 19th century, cigarettes were regarded as visible indicators of a gendered social space; symbolizing masculinity, tobacco consumption of various forms encompassed the male fantasy and was linked with sensual pleasures or sublimated sexual desires (Elliot 103; Tinkler 679-680; Bowman 53). In other words, smoking was already connoted with male dominion over women or control/possession of the female body prior to the marketing era, famously exemplified by Rudyard Kipling's description of the cigarette as a "harem of dusky beauties" (Bowman 71; Tinkler 680). Advertisers utilized this perception and seductive women were one of the central themes in cigarette marketing in the late 19th century. However, in order not to threaten the conception of ideal American womanhood,[13] representations of exotic Oriental women decorated early American tobacco advertisements. Therefore, the Western fantasy over the fantastic settings was replaced or accompanied by harem women, generally represented in seductive poses and wearing low-cut outfits like dance costumes. As Reina Lewis points out, epitomizing Orientalist discourse perfectly, the harem's supposed atmosphere represented a "voyeuristic sexual sphere" (13) where lascivious desires were satisfied. Frequent scenes in harem or public baths, etc. were partly responsible for "the equation of Orientalism with the nude in pornographic mode" (Tromans 136). Thus, Oriental polygamy and similar fantasies became

the premier embodiment of an exotic eroticism with the perception of ever-available orgiastic pleasures. These feminized scenes in the illustrations signified passivity, availability and exotic sexuality to the customer (Jarmakani 125).

It also should be noted that harem women in *Omar* or *Murad* illustrations deliberately imitated the poses of nude figures in earlier Orientalist paintings: The women reclined in exactly the same fashion as the nudes in Romantic paintings (such as Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres's *Odalisque with a Slave* or Jean-Léon Gérôme's *Harem Pool)* or they altogether circled a male figure, in a way implying the orgiastic/polygamist harem life with homo-erotic content, as seen in *Murad*'s 1920 advertisement series. This is exactly how the Oriental subject was reduced to a "colony, concubine and indolent heathen betraying the complex attitudes of an entangled imperialist" (Edwards 11). These images implied two issues in American Orientalist clichés: Eastern women were abused, thus Western men should save them and the "freed" Oriental women would be pleased to serve Western men (Akman 42). Indeed, there was also a social-economic argument behind these implications on the masculine hero and the Oriental servant: Such clichés obviously surrounded the sex labor in the United States at the turn of the century, reaping the benefits of racism and economic inequalities. As well as fantasizing about the exotica, Western men "colonized the Orient by prostituting sex from Oriental women" regarding them as commodities in the service of them (Taylor). In other words, the supposed superiority of the masculine West over the feminized Orient was not only manifested in representation, but also was staged in the sex business in which the "white males felt more powerful and masculine when they juxtaposed themselves against women of other cultures" (Taylor).

Apart from the reclining, half-nude women in the harem, perhaps the most salient feature of the American advertisements in this context is the representation of veiled female sexuality, as shown in the main image of *Fatima* boxes. In this composition, the veil suggests mystery, wonder, appeal of forbidden adventures and seduction. In a 1914 advertisement series, the poster lady of *Fatima* was portrayed in front of a red curtain reminiscent of the cabaret stages; her veil was so transparent that it only suggested a negotiable/promising distance between her and the viewer. The woman with dark eyes and traditionally styled eyebrows (in accordance with the traditional

"Oriental woman" representation) is directly staring at the viewer and her glance symbolically encourages a confident approach from men. This is a good example of Reina Lewis' problem on how the Oriental gaze is "racialized and sexualized at the point of both production and perception" (142). Moreover, the accompanying advertisement text reads, "It gives better satisfaction. Have you had the pleasure?" (SRITA), inviting the customer to imagine himself to *unveil* the hidden pleasures *Fatima* appears to offer (Jarmakani 120). *Omar*'s sexually connoted designs were more explicit, combining all Oriental elements with romanticism and sexual desire. In these designs, generally a flirtatious couple was portrayed instead of an attractive single lady. Following the "Omar-mania" or "Omar craze" of the time, the captions were quoted from *Rubaiyat* verses, thereby increasing the sphere of intimacy and romance, such as in: "Look to the blowing rose about us" in a 1915 design (SRITA). In one of the advertisements of the 1910 series, a half-nude maiden is reclining towards her lover's bosom but seems to avoid direct contact. The composition is reinforced by the lines, "and this reviving herb whose tender green fledges the river – lip on which we lean" (SRITA). A second illustration of the same series shows "an angel shaped" maiden who appears at the door of her lover who greets her by chanting "and lately by the tavern door agape, came shining through the dusk an angel shape" (SRITA). In another 1910 design, the maiden appears as a belly dancer displaying sensuous moves while Omar sighs, "and then came spring and rose in hand. My threadbare penitence apieces tore" (SRITA), implying he would not be able to stand against the seduction and sin. Referring to this composition, it should be noted that belly dance was already a marginal narrative of gender in American culture. As Laura Osweiler points out, the movements, style and explicit femininity provided the belly dancers with control over their bodies, which was seen as improper to upper-class American women. Therefore, 19th century narratives about belly dancers generally contributed to the stereotype of "a hypersexual, low class dancer who performs for men and money" (70-76). Another and perhaps one of the most provocative advertisements of *Omar* with sexual implications emphasizes the appeal of adventure as well as invitation. In this 1915 design, a maiden with a low-cut dress, partly revealing her upper body, stands at a doorstep opening to a dark room. She asks the man who is lounging on a court bench: "Why nods the drowsy worshipper outside?" (SRITA). This scene possibly implies an indirect invitation to an adventure inside. Such iconography consolidated the "stereotypical

sexualization of the Orient with the loose clothing and unorthodox styles" (Breskin 99) and provided the viewers with a sense of freedom from rigid morality of the era. Therefore, the Orient could be reshaped into an embodiment of a male-dreamed up world in which the American men could fantasize.

Although the sexualization of the Orient in cigarette advertisements was replaced by the sexualization of American women during the 1920-30s (following the 1920s when taboo of female smoking was broken and female sexuality was expressed more openly), the Orientalist charm (or manipulation) as a *strategy* in the cigarette advertising resurrected in recent years with several *Camel* designs. Instead of traditional stereotypes, *Camel*'s 2000-2003 campaigns utilized a mixture of historical motifs and modern designs, such as attractive American women of the new millennium wearing the fezzes and having tiny nose-studs with backgrounds extending from palm trees to onion-domed towers and minarets. *Camel Turkish Gold* series was marketed as "Exotic Turkish blend," but it again did not differentiate the geographical particularities such as architectural styles, and it disregarded the fact that fez-like props are just nostalgic touristic attractions in modern Turkey. However, *Camel*'s revitalization of the Oriental scenes is possibly not a political Neo-Orientalist outlook which can be defined as "a supplement to enduring modes of Orientalist representation" (Behdad and Williams 2012), but a postmodern "pastiche" imitating a peculiar, idiosyncratic style without ulterior motives (Jameson 17). These modern ads which only address to the nostalgic interests obviously imitate the exotic content of the early 20th century in the new millennium when the exotic flair of the East faded away to some extent and the idea of "exotic Orient" has been replaced by other political/cultural concerns, such as terrorism or fundamentalism in the Middle East.

3. Conclusion

Advertising strategies shape mass behavior and desires that are driving forces in a consumer economy. Being conditioned to form certain attitudes which include a "logical or cognitive component (beliefs about benefit) and an affective component (emotions that energize behavior)," consumers buy products because of the psychological and

social meaning they represent to them (Sivulka xiii) as well as necessities and other reasons. By the late 19th century, a market-driven culture of consumer capitalism emerged in the United States, which responded to this formula. This new culture depended on demand-supply correlation and the producers had to take the different backgrounds, future visions and fantasies into consideration to convert individual/social concerns into cash. At the turn of the century, "Orient" and anything related to the Oriental theme came into vogue as a popular culture phenomenon that could provide such generous income, and American businesses soon acknowledged the marketing value of the exotic charm.

The American cigarette industry in the late 19th-early 20th century responded to this opportunity in advertisements by portraying a consistent set of Orientalist perceptions rooted in Western collective thought. "Turkish" blends *Helmar*, *Omar, Murad, Fatima* and others represented American fantasies over the "other" exploiting the clichés evolving around the exotica. What was represented in this process actually was a set of characteristics that have their origin in the former artistic productions, literature and individual/social imagination – altogether contributed to the Orientalist discourse as an ideological mode. However, rather than having a necessarily colonial nature like French and British Orientalism, American Orientalist outlook was initially a response to the nostalgia for the early American experience. Moreover, the idea of the undeveloped/exotic East was a constructive other at a time when collective American identity was still in a crisis and the United States was striving to take its place in the developed league. From this perspective, cigarette designs were transformed into easy-found mediators of (re)constructing processes of power relations through knowledge and experience. But, this power relation would narrate an anti-conquest notion (apart from an aberration in the beginning of the 20th century) contrary to the European experience, which justified the American cultural/economic expansion after the world wars. From this perspective, it can be said that American Orientalism served as a therapeutic mechanic whereby people construct models of society and then adopt new spaces of power that they themselves had built (Edwards 17).

Notes

[1] Muslim conquests in the 7th century established a sharp opposition between the medieval Europe and the Islamic world. Especially the Crusaders and travelers contributed much to popularize the Orient as an idea. This proto-Orientalism principally was embodied in the portrayal of Mohammed as a disseminator of false revelation and "the epitome of lechery, debauchery, sodomy (and) treacheries" (Said 1978, 62). However, the production of the Orientalist knowledge in its modern usage generally dates back to the age of exploration and colonialism (Lockman 89).

[2] From this perspective, the terms "East" and "Orient" could not be identical. According to Edward Said, the Orient is an "idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence *in* and *for* the West" rather than being a physical entity which is an inert fact of nature. Said also notes that Orient, as an idea of representation, is "a stage which the whole East is confined" (Said 1978 5, 363).

[3] Throughout the paper, the term "Near East" is used to refer to the geographic area where "the Orient" had been designated/fantasized, instead of modern usage of the term – the "Middle East." According to Roderic H. Davison, until World War II, the term "Near East" referred to the maximum extent of the Ottoman Empire (areas centered around Turkey and the eastern shore of the Mediterranean) and the "Middle East" meant the area from Mesopotamia to the Far East (Davison, 665-70). American naval strategist Alfred Thayer Mahan used the term in 1902 for the area between Arab territories and India (Koppes 95-98; B. Lewis 9). United States government used the term "Middle East" in the 1957 for the first time in official documents to define the area lying between Libya-Pakistan on east-west axis and Syria/Iraq-Arabian peninsula on north-south axis (Davison 669). Therefore, "Near East" could be a more accurate historical reference to the 18th-20th century Oriental designations.

[4] The era from 1870s to early 1890s is the only period of American history commonly known by a derogatory name, "the Gilded Age," after the title of the book (1873) by Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner. "Gilded" means covered with a layer of gold, but it also suggests, "the glittering surface covers a core of little real value and is therefore deceptive." Referring not only to the economic boom in this period, the

authors highlighted the corruption, dominance of corporates in politics and to the oppressive treatment of those left behind in the scramble for wealth. According to the book, the decades' slogan was: "Get rich, dishonestly if we can, honestly if we must" (Foner 656).

[5] Williams defines "structures of feeling" as a common set of perceptions actively lived, felt and shared by a particular generation.

[6] The phrase "little white slaver" was coined by Henry Ford in his *Case against the Little White Slaver* (1916). This book, which was Ford's personal attempt to thwart the public's growing love affair with cigarette, features various testimonials from famous persons giving their opinions on the evils of cigarette. Contrasting the enslavement argument, the phrase "Torches of Freedom" was used to encourage women's smoking during the women's liberation movement in the United States. This term earned its fame after Edward Bernays's sensational public relations campaign when women paraded through the Fifth Avenue (New York) while smoking their "torches of freedom" in 1929. The parade was a significant moment for fighting social barriers for women smokers.

[7] *Murad* and *Helmar* were popular brands of the Turkish-Egyptian tobacco market during the turn of the century. Originally produced by the New York based Greek tobacconist Soterios Anargyros, *Murad* was acquired by P. Lorillard in 1911. *Helmar* was first produced in 1902 by the Egyptian Ideal Cigarette & Tobacco Works and sold to Anargyros in 1907.

[8] Stanford Research into Tobacco Advertising; abbreviated as SRITA from this point on.

[9] Despite of the traditional "Turkish" designation of the West, which generally referred to the whole Near East, the Turkish population of the Ottoman Empire had significant differences from other ethnicities in the region in view of the local architectural styles, the role of the religion in everyday life and customs, etc. An "imperial nationalism" pursued by the Ottomans could justify this designation partly prior to the 19th century. However, a politically conscious Turkish society emerged in the second half of the 19th century after the failure in Ottomanism efforts that tried to maintain a homogenous Ottoman supra-identity. Especially after the Balkan Wars (1912-13), Ottomanism was replaced by Turkish or Turkish-Islam nationalism. Moreover, not only the Turks, but also Arab population of the empire had no emotional or intellectual links with polytheistic ancient legacy of the region, which was depicted in the advertisements. For more about Ottomanism, Ottoman imperial

nationalism and Turkish nationalism *see* (among many others): Kemal H. Karpat, "The Transformation of the Ottoman State, 1789-1908" (1972); Selim Deringil, "The Invention of Tradition as Public Image in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1808 to 1909" (2007); Stanford Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey* (1977).

[10] The American Tobacco Company introduced *Omar* in 1911. The brand was named after the medieval Persian poet Omar Khayyam, reflecting an "Omar-mania" fad in 1900-1930s. In *fin de siècle*-America, there was a long list of scholarly publications pertaining to Omar Khayyam. However, the "Omar craze" was not limited to academic interest. It was seen in artistic productions and advertisements of many everyday items (for example, bookplates, coffee, chocolate, perfume, pottery, postcards and crossword puzzles etc.) that derived their names and attraction from the Persian poet (Potter, 205). Eminent authors like Rudyard Kipling and Mark Twain had also turned his quatrains into parodies. The "Omar craze" began to fade away in the 1920s. "Khayyam, Omar, Impact on Literature and Society in the West."

[11] Historian Samuel Flagg Bemis argues that Spanish-American War expansionism was a short-lived imperialistic impulse and "a great aberration in American history" as a different form of territorial growth than that of earlier American history (463). However, Walter LaFeber suggests the period was "a continuation of currents rooted deeply in the American experience" (xvii).

[12] Montesquieu's notion of despotic rule was essentially Oriental. Defining the nature of the governments in terms how the power was used, he asserted that the republic found its example in ancient Athens and Rome, monarchial regimes in England, and despotism in the Orient. Following his predecessors, his stereotypical portrayal of the "Oriental prince" was an absolute despot who could perform most brutal passions in his seraglios, pursuing capricious extravagance (Curtis 80; Boer 31).

[13] As an eroticized prop contradicting with "ideal femininity," cigarette's explicit contribution to sexual pleasure was anathema to Victorian womanhood, because the ideal female in the 19th century and early 20th century "was classically associated with sexual innocence and absence of sexual feelings" (Bowman 53, Elliot 105).

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