Orientalism and Literature discusses a key critical concept in literary studies and how it assists our reading of literature. It reviews the concept’s evolution: how it has been explored, imagined and narrated in literature. Part I considers Orientalism’s origins and its geographical and multidisciplinary scope, then considers the major genres and trends Orientalism inspired in the literary-critical field, such as the eighteenth-century Oriental tale, reading the Bible and Victorian Oriental fiction. Part II recaptures specific aspects of Edward Said’s Orientalism: the multidisciplinary contexts and scholarly discussions it has inspired (e.g. colonial discourse, race, resistance, feminism and travel writing). Part III deliberates upon recent and possible future applications of Orientalism, probing its currency and effectiveness in the twenty-first century, the role it has played and continues to play in the operation of power, and how in new forms, Neo-Orientalism and Islamophobia, it feeds into various genres, from migrant writing to journalism.

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Cambridge Critical Concepts focuses on the important ideas animating twentieth- and twenty-first-century literary studies. Each concept addressed in the series has had a profound impact on literary studies, as well as on other disciplines, and already has a substantial critical bibliography surrounding it. This series captures the dynamic critical energies transmitted across twentieth- and twenty-first-century literary landscapes: the concepts critics bring to reading, interpretation and criticism. By addressing the origins, development and application of these ideas, the books collate and clarify how these particular concepts have developed, while also featuring fresh insights and establishing new lines of enquiry.

Cambridge Critical Concepts shifts the focus from period- or genre-based literary studies of key terms to the history and development of the terms themselves. Broad and detailed contributions cumulatively identify and investigate the various historical and cultural catalysts that made these critical concepts emerge as established twenty-first-century landmarks in the discipline. The level will be suitable for advanced undergraduates, graduates and specialists, as well as for those teaching outside their own research areas, and will have cross-disciplinary relevance for subjects such as history and philosophy.

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