

Elements *of* Orientalism

IN THE WRITINGS OF NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE,
HENRY THOREAU & WALT WHITMAN

A Study between the American Revolution and the Civil War

A photograph of a horse-drawn wooden cart on a rocky path in an autumnal landscape. The cart is pulled by a dark horse. The background shows trees with orange and yellow leaves, and a stone wall in the foreground.

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An attempt has been made in the following pages to study and explore "Orientalism in American Literature Between the American Revolution and the Civil War." American Orientalism is a lesser known and critically unexplored aspect of American literary studies simply because it has been overshadowed by the so-called British Orientalism, coming into broader and critically prominent focus because of Edward Said who emerged as one of the seminal literary critics and theorists of the last quarter of the twentieth century.

The book starts with a discussion of the nature of Orientalism in Edgar Allan Poe's works. The research engages to trace Edgar Allan Poe's mastery of historic characterization with specific references to the description of those elements which have been engraved with the pageantry and magnificence of the Orient. The study finds that in the writings of Edgar Allan Poe, the Middle East figures as an aesthetic principle. It also addresses the role of historical Middle East in the fictions of Nathaniel Hawthorne. It purposes to persuade the reader of nineteenth – century American literature to acknowledge the profundity of the East, which had been hidden from the American readership.



It discusses Walt Whitman's love for Oriental philosophy with special reference to his Passage to India.

The book also sheds light on Henry David Thoreau's description of aesthetical and spiritual writings.



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