



# Mutual Othering: Islam, Modernity, and the Politics of Cross-Cultural Encounters in Pre-Colonial Moroccan and European Travel Writing

*Ahmed Idrissi Alami*

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## **Mutual Othering: Islam, Modernity, and the Politics of Cross-Cultural Encounters in Pre-Colonial Moroccan and European Travel Writing** Ahmed Idrissi Alami

*Explores interactions between Europeans and Moroccans on both sides of the straits in the latter half of the nineteenth century.*

For the first time, readings of Moroccan travel writing in Arabic are juxtaposed with French and British writing about Morocco in a critical exploration of nineteenth-century concepts of modernity. Ahmed Idrissi Alami investigates the complex dynamics concerning colonial expansion, military conflict, and societal values. *Mutual Othering* sets out to rethink generally accepted concepts of European modernity by critically examining its production and contestation within a subaltern context in which the native other—in this case, religious scholars or *imams* accompanying political missions to Paris and London—presents aspects of European culture to elite members of the Moroccan imperial court. This work also connects the arguments of these texts to the rethinking of tradition and modernity, the rhetoric of reform, democracy and the Arab state, and the compatibility of Islam with the West and secular values in the post-9/11 world. The inclusion of citations in the original French and Arabic, alongside English translations, allows a range of readers to enjoy this critical addition to the fields of literature, travel writing, North African studies, history, international relations, and philosophy, as well as cultural and religious studies.

“This is a superbly organized and clearly argued work of comparative analysis, with an excellent theoretical foundation and insightful readings of a variety of texts.” — Roger Allen, University of Pennsylvania

“This is a groundbreaking and beautifully written book. The author’s persuasive study opens a new venue for discussing the complex discourse of modernity within cross-cultural encounters and conflict.” — William Granara, Harvard University

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