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Disorienting encounters : re-reading seventeenth and eighteenth century Ottoman miniature paintings = Desoriënterende ontmoetingen : een herlezing van zeventiende- en achttiende-eeuwse Ottomaanse miniaturen

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Publication date
2008

Link to publication

Citation for published version (APA):
Firat, B. O. (2008). *Disorienting encounters : re-reading seventeenth and eighteenth century Ottoman miniature paintings = Desoriënterende ontmoetingen : een herlezing van zeventiende- en achttiende-eeuwse Ottomaanse miniaturen*. [Thesis, fully internal, Universiteit van Amsterdam].

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CHAPTER 2: The Intimate Look: Seeing, Touching, and Gazing at the Female Body

In this chapter, I look at an eighteenth-century miniature painting, entitled *Woman bathing in the Hamam*, which has different qualities than those of the other miniatures discussed in this study. It depicts a naked woman sitting on a wooden bench in a Turkish bath. She holds a bowl above her head and pours water as if she has just started washing herself. A large garment covers her knees. Next to her is a round marble basin (*kurna*) filled with water falling from a two-headed brass tap. A grayish, floral-patterned frame surrounds the tap and the niche above the basin.

This miniature falls under the category of what Mieke Bal calls "expository painting," which exposes, lays bare, the body of a female figure (1996, 256). As such, its subject matter sets it apart from the other miniatures I discuss. It shows its female protagonist in a banal, everyday context. In addition, it is a single-leaf miniature that is not conceived as a part of a book. Accordingly, it does not provide a visual representation of a text prefiguring the image, be it a historical account (such as "Sultan Ahmed III's procession" introduced in the third chapter and the "King Timur" miniature discussed in chapter 5) or a religious story (such as "The Fall," analyzed in the previous chapter). In these respects, *Woman bathing in the Hamam* allows me to engage with two interrelated major shifts that emerged in the tradition of miniature painting in the mid-seventeenth century: a growing interest in depicting scenes of ordinary life, and a move away from the material and structural constraints of the book.

The shift towards *genre* painting not only brought everyday scenes to the fore but also put women, who had mostly been excluded from representation under the reign of imperial patriarchy, back in the picture. However, in this chapter I will argue that the representational itinerary of the woman in the *hamam* miniature gives us an even more nuanced story: this miniature is an appropriation of Orientalist images from costume albums produced by European artists, which in turn became a collective blueprint for the works of local miniaturists working outside the imperial atelier. *Woman bathing in the Hamam* appropriates the style and content of these miniatures and blends them, as it were, with the conventions of "courtly" taste. I propose that the appropriation of the Orientalist idiom is made tangible in a contemporary souvenir that bears the reproduction of the miniature with the

superimposed caption “sultan’s address book”—a caption that promotes an Orientalist gaze by locating the miniature within an Orientalist narrative. This reading, stimulated by the added text, engages with the miniature by bringing into play a set of stereotypical images that allegedly constructs the “Oriental woman.” By so doing, the souvenir underlines a potential Orientalist reading that would taint the contemporary viewer’s encounter with the miniature. This mode of looking, in its potentiality, discards the critical transformative potential of works of art by subordinating the miniature to a racial and gendered reading. Such a reading, I contend, entails what Roland Barthes calls “reading the same story everywhere.” As an alternative to such a non-communicative way of reading, Barthes proposes rereading, a process that bears critical and potentially subversive implications, “for it alone saves the text from repetition” (Barthes, S/Z: 15–16; quoted in Boer, 2004: 17). Rereading is a form of play in which we “*immediately* reread the text [….] in order to obtain, as though under the effect of a drug, not the *real* text, but a plural text: the same and new” (Barthes, S/Z: 16; quoted in Boer, 2004: 17).

The new text that accompanies the same old one emerges from the process of what I call an “intimate encounter”—an alternative to the distanced, voyeuristic, and almost rapist reading enabled and indeed encouraged by the Orientalist gaze. In this chapter I will delineate distinct instances of this encounter in which the relation between viewer and image is performed in terms of intimacy. I propose that the miniature encourages a spatial, embodied, haptic, and erotic intimacy that plays on the boundaries between knowing and not-knowing the other’s body. In this capacity, the encounter with the miniature challenges the notion of the intimate as involving a profound knowledge of the other as well as a state of being in oneself, experienced away from the gaze of the others. As such, the miniature, while proposing an intimate look as a mode of engagement, simultaneously encourages us to reconsider the concept of intimacy. Ultimately, I will set in contrast two diverse understanding of the intimate advanced by Gérard Wajcman and Hamid Dabashi and argue that the miniature promotes an instance of intersubjective intimacy in which the image looks back at and touches the viewer.

This chapter thus performs what Inge Boer calls a “palimpsestic reading.” Boer suggests “palimpsestic reading” as a reworking of Barthes’ notion of rereading (2004), stressing that in her use of the metaphor she does not locate “the palimpsest inside the object under consideration, be it visual or textual, but instead in readings

that partially overlap as the process of interpretation is traced" (19). In this sense, the metaphor allows her to "maintain a reading that reads the same story everywhere *in addition to* reading the plural text" (19). Boer's understanding goes beyond Barthes' differentiation between reading and rereading. Boer critiques Barthes' notion and its presupposition that "we can get rid of ourselves of the conventional modes operating during interpretation and turn in an unmediated fashion to the plural text, without being influenced by what is already in us" (19).

I intend to demonstrate in my analysis that once the conventional mode of interpretation and looking in the initial encounter with the image is acknowledged, this gives way to an intimate yet critical assessment of images so as to see "better," up close and yet from a critical distance.

The Fall from the Book: The Woman in the Hamam

A naked woman sits solemnly on a wooden bench (Figure 10). Holding a bowl in her left hand, she pours water over her head while she strokes her hair with her right hand. Her long, straight black hair is loose and has been combed back to reveal the full extent of her face. It falls over her shoulders and reaches her waist. Her fingernails and toenails are painted red, most probably with henna. Her heels are adorned as well with red henna. She wears a jeweled ring, a bracelet, and an armband on her right arm. Her earrings, at least the one on her left ear, match the rest of her ornaments. Compared to her rather large hips, her breasts are small. A blue, shawl-like fabric drapes over her thighs and knees in folds, leaving her shaved genitals visible.

She sits straight in a three-quarter position while keeping her right leg under the left and showing, with such a pose, the sole of her right foot. Following the posture of her torso, her face is turned away from the viewer. She has long black eyebrows, almond eyes, small pink lips, and a stressed chin. Her face is almost expressionless. Her eyes are directed somewhere outside the miniature.
Next to her we see a round marble basin (*kurna*) filled with water falling from the two-headed brass tap. A grayish, floral-patterned frame surrounds the head of the basin. The water that pours out of the tap to be collected in the basin must have been painted silver, which has blackened over time. The floor of the bath is covered with white tiles.

The title of the miniature, *Woman bathing in the Hamam*, tells us that the place is a *hamam*, also known as Turkish bath, a public steam bath. The left corner of the miniature bears the signature of Abdullah Buharî and the year, which is marked 1154 according to the Muslim calendar. This corresponds to 1741-42 in the Gregorian calendar. Buharî worked during the reign of Sultan Mahmut I (r. 1730-1754) and produced miniatures between 1728 and 1745, most of which are single-leaf miniatures. He was a bookbinder by trade, yet gained part of his fame as a miniaturist of single figures of men and women. He also painted floral still-lifes and lacquer landscape paintings on book covers. These paintings are now considered the forerunners of the Ottoman mural landscape compositions which became popular in the later half of the century (Tanındı, 1996: 61; Mahir, 2004: 80). [46]

Comparing the figures of Levnî and Buharî, Renda argues that the latter's renditions convey "more volume, definition, and weight" (Renda, 1995: 65). In her view, "Buharî succeeded in freeing them [figures] from representational prototypes" by "appropriately placing his modeled figures in space" (65-66). Banu Mahir proposes that Buharî may have used a real-life model in making his single-figure miniatures (2004: 80). Although this might have been the case, the miniature is not a portrait of a woman with a known name. She, like the women in other miniatures of Buharî, is an unidentified woman who just happens to be bathing herself.

The anonymity of the depicted figure points at how radically different this miniature is from the rest of the images I analyze here. In contrast to the other miniatures, it is an independent single-leaf miniature that is not bound in a book. In addition, it does not illustrate a story that predates the image. Conventionally, miniatures were parts of books; they were confined by the limits and the structure of the medium and enjoyed a symbiotic relation with the textual.

[46] Some of other miniatures by Buharî are collected in an Album (ca. 1740, IUL, T. 9364) also (Topkapi Museum, H. 2143 Y.Y.1042; Y.Y. 1043). Another single-leaf miniature of Buharî (Topkapi Museum, YY 1086) depicts a semi-erotic love scene. Another copy of the same miniature is in the private collection of Edwin Binney (n. 67).

Figure 10. ***Woman bathing in the Hamam*****, Abdullah Buharî, 1741-2, single-leaf miniature, Topkapi Museum, (H.Y.Y. 1043), 16.2x10.8 cm.**

The intimate relationship between the miniature and the book was broken in the early seventeenth century when artists began increasingly to paint miniatures as stand-alone works rather than to create them as illustrations for books (And, 1987: 97). Even though these single miniatures gained a certain autonomy from the book, they nonetheless retained the dimensions of the page. Additionally, such single miniatures were compiled in albums called *murakka*, in which they "could be more easily and more exclusively enjoyed than miniatures which are a part of a larger whole or manuscript" (And, 1987: 97). I suggest that these albums demonstrate an attempt to keep these miniatures, by now semi-autonomous, within the traditional order of the book. Even though they are not taken from albums, two miniatures discussed in this study confirm that such efforts were made. As it was initially conceived, the miniature "The Expulsion of Adam and Eve," analyzed in the previous chapter, was not meant to be part of a book. However, together with other miniatures, it was later bound in the book *Falname*. Likewise, the portrait of Sultan Ahmed III discussed in Chapter 4 was executed as an independent single-leaf miniature. The miniatures of the *Kebir Musavver Silsilename*, from which the portrait is taken from, were completed before the poet Munib wrote the book's text in the nineteenth century (Irepoğlu, 1999: 78; 2000: 380). Such collections operated as a means of controlling the viewer's encounter with the miniature by subordinating it to a regime of reading.

The woman in the *hamam* miniature, however, is not bound as most of the single-leaf miniatures were. The miniature is mounted on a cardboard sheet ornamented with marbling (*ebru*). In this respect, it does away with the structural confines of the book and exists as an independent image in its own right. Because it is easily transportable, the viewer's position is not strictly defined in advance. It is also free from the textual framing set in place by a literary source, as there is no readily apparent textual counterpart that could explain the work. A miniature's traditional function was to visually explain certain aspects of a literary story or a historical event; accordingly, the text enabled the viewer to identify the figures as specific people or characters from history or literature. However, such close proximity of word and image does not mean that miniatures simply illustrated the text. As Bal suggests, each image overwrites the previous text (1991: 34). I would like to transcribe Bal's arguments to the realm of miniature painting and argue that miniatures are not "a retelling of the text but a use of it; not an illustration but,

ultimately, a new text" that proposes for "the viewer's consideration a propositional content, an argument, an idea, inscribed in line and color, by means of representation" (Bal, 1991: 34-35). Yet, as Bal notes, reading the image without the words can lead to hilariously erroneous interpretations. Therefore, she suggests, "text and image, even when presented as a whole, do not match, do not overlap; they can neither do with nor do without each other" (34).

The chapter entitled "I am a Tree" from Orhan Pamuk's novel *My Name is Red* (1998) illustrates the complex relationship between word and image as it manifested itself in miniature painting. In this chapter, the image of a tree "hastily sketched onto nonsized, rough paper" tells the story of how it fell out of an illustrated manuscript prepared for Sultan Ibrahim Mirza and found its way to Istanbul, where it was used as a wall prop by a master storyteller. "As a tree, I need not be part of a book," the tree contends, then adds: "As the picture of a tree, however, I'm disturbed that I'm not a page within some manuscript" (57). The tree believes that it should have been part of a story but since it fell "like a leaf in autumn" it does not know to which story it might have belonged. It says:

> I know nothing about the page I've fallen from. My request is that you look at me and ask: "Were you perhaps meant to provide shade for Mejnun disguised as a shepherd as he visited Leyla in her tent?" or "Were you meant to fade into the night, representing the darkness in the soul of a wretched and hopeless man?" [….] I would've wanted to shade Alexander during the final moments of his life on his campaign to conquer Hindustan as he dies from a persistent nosebleed brought on by sunstroke [….] Ah, to which story was I meant to add meaning and grace? (59).

The humble tree concludes its story by thanking Allah that it has not been drawn in the new "decadent" style that follows that of the Frank painters: "Not because I fear that if I'd been thus depicted all the dogs in Istanbul would assume I was a real tree and piss on me: I don't want to be a tree, I want to be its meaning" (61). Extending the metaphor of the fall used by Pamuk, we may consider the miniature of the woman in *hamam* as enacting a fall from the book, and doing so without any anticipation of returning home. As the tree makes clear, the fall from the book is not merely material but is, above all, a textual fall. If the woman in the *hamam* could

speak, she could just as well wonder which story she belonged to, if in fact she belonged to any story at all. Perhaps *Woman bathing in the Hamam* was used as a wall prop just as Pamuk's tree was supposed to have been. In the absence of any documentation—historical and scholarly alike—concerning the miniature of Buharî, we cannot assess the ways in which this woman in the *hamam* was originally conceived and consumed.[47]

Even though we cannot definitively know the ways in which the miniature was appropriated in its original context, it is plausible to argue that the miniature falls under the category of genre painting that emerged in the mid-seventeenth century. Genre-painting images not only displayed scenes of everyday life but also brought representations of women into the picture. I shall propose that this new style of painting, although it may not be able to provide *Woman bathing in the Hamam* with a "correct" textual reference, nonetheless provides a story that can help us contextualize the miniature.

The Return of the Everyday: Putting the Woman in the Picture

In her book *Scheherazade Goes West: Different Cultures, Different Harems* (2001), Fatima Mernissi wonders about the identity of women painted by Muslim men in miniatures (167). She concentrates on the case of Shirin, the female protagonist of the story of Persian origin *Khusraw* and *Shirin*, found in poems of *Shahnama* by Fuzuli. Shirin was one of the most popular literary heroines depicted by Ottoman miniaturists, taking her place alongside Leila, Huma, and the other female characters (often notorious) from religious stories such as Eve, Mary, the mother and daughters of the Prophet Mohammed, Belquis (the Queen of Sheba), and Zuleikha (Potiphar's wife).

However when we inquire into the works dealing with Ottoman history, one of the major fields in which figural illustration played an important role, there seems to be a gendered gap. For instance, the miniatures of the *Sûrname-i Vehbi*, discussed in the next chapter, neglect to show royal women in circumcision festivities, even

[47] In fact, Banu Mahir argues that a few miniatures from the seventeenth century were used for what she calls "picture recitation." (1999). This coincides with Irepoğlu's suggestion that the single-leaf miniatures of Levnî might have been used for such recitations for the sultan (1999: 168).

though they include (though scarcely) common women.[48] This absence, however, is not incidental. As Gülru Necipoğlu states, "official Ottoman historians mostly avoided the subject of women," as "the central figure of their narratives was always the sultan" (1991: 159). As the power to be represented was always considered to be male, imperial women were conceived through "concepts of privacy and propriety." Consequently, the miniatures that illustrated official Ottoman history texts "concentrated on the royal image of the sultan and his male court and, with very few exceptions, omitted women, who had no part to play in public court ceremonies" (159).[49]

In the seventeenth century, the depiction of women figures increased, as miniaturists working outside of the imperial atelier often depicted the everyday lives of ordinary people. Günsel Renda suggests that the expansion of themes represented after the seventeenth century "brought about a change in figural representation," as miniaturists "became aware that subjects other than the activities of the sultans or their martial victories could also be rendered in miniatures" (1995: 64). She adds that the female figure, "rarely encountered in previous centuries, had now became a subject in its own right" (64).[50] In fact, in the eighteenth century, the female figure became well-established in the works of Levnî and Buharî. Levnî prepared an album (Topkapi Museum, H. 2164) consisting of "male and female figures exhibiting various costumes in elegant poses; drinking while reclining, combing their hair, playing musical instruments, and binding their turbans" (Renda, 1995: 65). Similarly, Buharî's works were collected in an album (IUL T.9364) that brought together various miniatures of single female figures dressed in the garments of their time.[51]

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[48] In order to compensate, or better, to further emphasize this gendered exclusion the headquarters of the Archers Guild, which hosted the women of the seraglio during the festivities, is depicted right above the imperial tents in the beginning of the visual account (Folio 10b and 12b). These buildings testify to a wider and disquieting representational absence in the tradition of miniature painting of the womenfolk of the palace.

[49] Even though royal women were mainly absent from the representations of public rituals, a few of the depictions of *majlis* (a gathering that takes place in a garden or terrace, for the sheer pleasure of conversing together) in the palace showed female figures as entertainers and musicians (Micklewright, 1997).

[50] The style and the subject of these miniatures were brought into the Ottoman palace with the compilation of single-paged miniatures in the so-called "Album of Ahmed I" (Topkapi Museum, B408) (And, 2002: 373). The album, brought together by *Kalender Pasha*, who also assembled the miniatures of the *Falname* discussed in the previous chapter, consists of miniatures depicting different instances of Ottoman everyday life taking place within house interiors, bazaars, and *hamam* buildings.

[51] See Mahir (1998) for a discussion of the ways in which Buharî's works can be read as reflecting the

According to Metin And, both artists were "devotees of the cult of the female breast" and represented women with "half-exposed breasts, of which the only purpose is obviously to increase the appeal of the nude" (1987: 15). As And argues, in spite of the excessive prudery of Ottoman society, the tradition of miniature painting included erotic and nudist themes (14). He explains that the consumption of miniatures was a private matter, thus allowing an underground circulation of books such as *bahnames* that included numerous illustrations of positions of intercourse.[52] Sultans "could own or commission such works without challenge from anyone and regardless of courtly prejudice, since the Ottoman Sultan was at the same time Caliph, that is the leader of all Islamic world" (14). Similarly, outside the court, "patrons could conceal illustrated manuscripts in the privacy of their houses" (14).

While semi-pornographic images enjoyed an underground popularity, miniatures depicting naked bodies and erotic themes were widely established by the eighteenth century. Metin And adduces two factors that facilitated the endorsement of such images. The first has to do with the subject matter of the miniatures to be illustrated. Poems and stories on themes of love and religion sometimes necessitated and justified the depiction of nakedness.[53] Second, And suggests that by the late seventeenth century, Ottoman society had become more liberal and permissive, and held "a new awareness of a life of luxury and dalliance, and the appealing treatment of the female form became a common artistic skill of many eighteenth-century miniaturists" (14). Similarly, Tülay Artan suggests that widespread transformations in Ottoman society were reflected in the miniatures that display "women with décolleté dresses entertaining themselves in the presence of men in intimate [*mahrem*] spaces from baths [*hamam*] to houses" (1993: 92). However, this does not mean that naked figures did not exist prior to the seventeenth century. Metin And notes that in addition to the few extent nude miniatures from the earlier periods, more

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fashion of the century.

[52] The word *Bahname* is originally Arabic: *bah* means "coitus, lust, concupiscence, desire, libido" and "sexually related" and *name* means "book," hence "Book of (Sexually-related Subjects)"—or Book of Sexology. These types of books (which contain recipes for aphrodisiacs, recommendations for sexual health, contraceptive measures, and positions of intercourse) became especially popular in Istanbul during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

[53] The expulsion of Adam and Eve from paradise (see Chapter 1) and Khusraw spying on Shirin bathing are two such stories that were represented in miniatures over the centuries.

might still exist if only they had not been "destroyed by fanatical puritans, or even by the owners themselves" (1987: 14).

An additional factor causing the propagation of the female figure, be it naked or not, in art was the fashion of costume albums. These albums consisted of single figures depicting diverse prototypes drawn from different strata of Ottoman society. The production of such albums was triggered by a growing demand from European customers who were interested in Ottoman cultures of attire. Initially, they were "produced by European painters coming to Turkey but were later executed by local artists as well" (Renda, 1995: 65). The major manufacturers of such albums were the so-called bazaar painters, who produced miniatures for private customers in their own workshops.[54] Because their works were market-oriented, these artists were encouraged by the demands of their customers to experiment and break out of the rigorous imperial limitations regarding which subjects could be depicted; this new context enabled everyday scenes to infiltrate the visual idiom. These miniaturists drew on established pictorial modes developed by European painters in the sixteenth century so as to make their works more appealing to their European customers. Interestingly, as epitomized by the two eighteenth-century manuscripts entitled *Hamse-i Atayi* and *Hubânnâme and Zenânnâme*, among others, the imperial atelier appropriated the new language and style of the bazaar artists.

It can be argued that the woman in the *hamam* miniature carries the traces of this double influence, as the work seems to follow the style of costume albums produced for European travelers who bought these albums as souvenirs of their visits to the Ottoman Empire. A miniature from a seventeenth-century costume album, now in the collection of the British Museum (1928, 0323.046), can be considered the precedent of the miniature in question (f.134b [121]). According to Norah M. Titley, this painting depicts the interior of a *hamam* where a woman is seated on a stool washing her hair at a basin. Adorned with bracelets and a necklace, she is unclothed except for a towel draped over her knees. There are two brass taps with water running out of them. (Titley, 1981: 7). This "bazaar" miniature, which is one of the first miniatures to depict a woman in the *hamam*, might have inspired Buharî's *hamam* scene. [55]

[54] The term "bazaar painter" was coined by Metin And (1985; 2002: 15-17).

[55] Bağci, Çağman, and Renda make a similar argument (2006: 273).

Leslie Meral Schick argues that costume books appealed to Europeans because they functioned as "guidebook[s] to Ottoman society," which had become "paradigmatic of the 'other.'" As the representative of the other, the Ottomans and their habits needed to be "documented" and "domesticated" (1999: 626-27). Another seventeenth-century costume album held in the British Museum (BM, 1974, 0617.013), entitled *A briefe relation of the Turckes, their Kings, Emperors or Grandsigneurs their conquests, religion, customes, habbits at Constantinople, etc*, explains the documentary function of the costume albums (Sinemoğlu, 1996: 172). The manuscript, probably executed by a bazaar artist, includes miniatures depicting various imperial and common-folk figures and could have been used as a blueprint for the album in question. It bears the initials P.M., giving the impression that it was produced for the traveler and author Peter Mundy. His comments on *A briefe relation of the Turckes* prove the authentic documentary value of such albums. He wrote: "For the several habits at Constantinople, where most officers and Nations are distinguished by their habits, I have a little book, only of that particular, painted by the Turcks themselves in anno 1618, although no great art therein, yet enough to satisfy concerning that walter" (Sinemoğlu, 1996: 172).[56]

As Mundy's account attests, miniatures produced by local artists exerted the authority of authenticity. Even though they were not regarded as great art as Europeans knew it, they were good enough to satisfy, at least visually, the curiosity of their beholders. The genealogy of the *Woman bathing in the Hamam* miniature—its being influenced by the work of a bazaar artist who replicated the style and the content of the early European costume albums—demonstrates that the themes that intrigued European viewers and invited their gazes ultimately became appealing to the Ottomans themselves. In this capacity, the woman in the *hamam* miniature can be considered an "Oriental" appropriation of the Orientalist gaze that was directed upon the Ottoman Empire as a paradigmatic instance of the other.

Most of the costume albums are now kept in different European museums and continue to gratify the museumgoer's gaze. Nowadays, contemporary souvenirs seem to fulfill their authentic function of satisfying the tourist's curiosity. I suggest

[56] For more on the book in question see Bağci, Çağman, and Renda (2006: 235-236).

that one such souvenir, bearing the reproduction of the woman in the *hamam* miniature, helps us to locate where the miniature might "fall" from the book.

The Sultan's Souvenir

Figure 11.The Address Book.

The story of the fallen tree reminds us that the destination of some images might end up being severely different than what their creators had intended for them. The woman in the *hamam* miniature takes a path that is by no means less adventurous than that of Pamuk's tree. Consider this reproduction of the miniature mounted on the cover of an address book, which can be purchased in any souvenir shop in Istanbul (Figure 11). In the contemporary market for tourist souvenirs, reproductions abound of miniature paintings used in such a way; they seem to reinstate for the contemporary tourist the function of previous keepsakes, such as costume albums.[57] They operate as "authentic" objects reminiscent of a past exotic experience in the "heart" of the former Ottoman Empire, the seat of the Orient. In this respect, the

[57] I came across this address book at the Topkapi Museum's retail store during my research. It is worth noting that the miniature in question is not on display at the museum but rather kept in the museum library—like almost all the illustrated manuscripts—which is not open for public visits unless one has the right documentation for research provided by the Ministry of Culture. In the absence or invisibility of the originals, it is through souvenirs, such as calendars, postcards and bookmarks, that the miniatures gain public visibility. I have presented two papers on the function of such souvenirs on two occasions: *The Thought of the Eye*, organized by the International Visual Sociology Association, in San Francisco, USA, in August 2004, and *Technologies of Memory in the Arts*, held in Nijmegen, The Netherlands, in May 2006.

address book is far from being an innocent commercial product. Rather, it is a theoretical object, provoking questions as to how the contemporary viewer might exert her own constructed vision upon the miniature. I have suggested that the miniature is a local appropriation of Orientalist images. The souvenir makes this link quite obvious by its caption, "Sultan's address book." It proposes that the sultan is the ultimate possessor of the notebook, the miniature, and the woman in the image. Additionally, the caption juxtaposes the position of the sultan with that of its potential owner. As such, the souvenir lays bare not only the woman's body but also a latent Orientalist gaze that informs the contemporary viewer's encounter with the miniature. [58]

As is well known, in *Orientalism* (1978), Edward Said discusses discursive productions that constitute the Orient as a discrete geographical, racial, political, cultural and economic entity so as to reveal the discriminatory assumptions and ideological investments that inform them. He states that, as a discourse, Orientalism does not have a definite origin. "Every writer on the Orient [….] assumes some Oriental precedent, some previous knowledge of the Orient, to which he refers and on which he relies" (20). Belatedly, the souvenir participates in the tradition of pictorial Orientalism and reproduces a discourse in which gender, race, and power ovelap in a complex manner.[59] Malek Alloula suggests that nineteenth-century colonial postcards, which display Algerian women who were unveiled by force, are not simple souvenirs but instead are "the poor man's phantasm." They are "everywhere, covering all the colonial space, immediately available to the tourist," producing stereotypes "in the manner of great seabirds producing guano" that fertilize the colonial vision (1986: 4).

Even though the "Sultan's address book" operates in a different context than that governing the colonial postcards, I suggest that it nonetheless seems to fulfill the function of the previous colonial souvenirs, albeit with a contemporary twist. In her book *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (2001), Susan Stewart argues that a souvenir involves the displacement of

[58] As the caption is written in English, we may assume that the address book targets mainly, albeit not exclusively, the "occidental" tourist.

[59] For the articulation of sexual and cultural difference produced and signified in the discourse of Orientalism as constitutive of "Occidental" subjectivity, see Meyda Yeğenoglu, *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

attention into the past by enveloping the present within the past (151). Though capable of such a temporal transformation, the souvenir is always incomplete, as it is an allusion to a "now-distanced experience" which it "can only evoke and resonate to, and can never entirely recoup" (136). Incomplete in itself, the souvenir requires an accompanying narrative furnished by its possessor to fill in that which is missing. It is a point of origin for a subjective narrative that fills in the void between past and present (136).

Similarly, the cover of the Sultan's address book initiates a subjective narrative, but not because it enables its hypothetical possessor to recollect having been in Istanbul or at the Topkapi Palace. Rather, it is a theoretical souvenir, invoking a particular narrative to fill in that *which is missing*, namely, the missing story of the woman in the *hamam*. As in the case of the literal souvenir, the invoked narrative belongs not to the object but to the beholder; and what is exhorted is the story of the Orientalist gaze.

From the Orientalist Gaze …

In her groundbreaking essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1975), Laura Mulvey sketches out the ways in which gender and power operate in narrative cinema by dwelling on the notion of the gaze.[60] For Mulvey, "pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female," a division that gives the male subject the capacity to cast a voyeuristic look (1989: 19). Women, on the other hand, perform "their traditional exhibitionist role" in which they are "simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness" (1989: 19). This schema imposes the male gaze as a mode of looking that objectifies, reifies, and dominates the female body.[61]

[60] The notion of the gaze is a much-traveled concept in the humanities. For its itinerary, see Norman Bryson's introduction to *Looking in: The Art of Viewing*, and Mieke Bal's chapter "Concept" in *Traveling Concepts*.

[61] Mulvey's account discards the possibility of the female spectator's pleasure in looking. Mary Ann Doane develops an understanding of the female gaze overlooked in Mulvey, suggesting that to gain the necessary distance for voyeuristic pleasure (the male experience in film viewing), the female spectator constructs a "masquerade of femininity," which is an excess of feminine traits adopted to distance her from the filmic image and avoid to over-identification. See Mary Ann Doane (1982).

Norman Bryson suggests that even though Mulvey's account concerned the positioning of the movie spectator, it "answered exactly to the growing awareness of gender as primary dimension of social life and of visual representation" in art-historical inquiry into spectatorship (2001: 7). Simultaneously, her arguments on voyeurism, objectification, fetishism, and scopophilia, articulating the woman as the object of male pleasure and bearer of male lack, have received a great deal of criticism. According to Bal, this model of voyeurism "tends to reduce looking to power only, to an absolute subject-object relation, wherein the viewer/receiver has total power and the object of the look does not even participate in the communication" (1996: 262).[62]

In her effort to develop a communicative model in the realm of painting, in which images would "speak back" to the viewer, Bal appropriates Bryson's differentiation between the gaze and glance developed in *Vision and Painting* (1983). The gaze is the look that fails to recognize the work of representation. It takes what is seen as the "real" thing. As such, "the work of art disappears behind the object represented" (Bal, 1992: 142). In this mode of looking, the viewing subject disembodies and ahistoricizes herself, and she objectifies, controls, and fixes the work of art. As opposed to the gaze, the glance is a mode of viewing anchored in the body, temporality, and desire. Accordingly, it recognizes the representational character of the work of art. Rather than being a fixating, mastering look, the glance has a "flickering, ungovernable mobility" that disunites and decomposes the image (Bryson, 1983: 121).

However, these two modes of looking should not be conceived as either mutually exclusive or culturally specific.[63] As Bal proposes, they are "viewing attitudes or modes proposed, encouraged, but not enforced, by the work" (1991: 142). Even though they can be taken up alternatively before the same work or combined within the same looking-event, the choice between one mode or the other is not totally arbitrary: "the actual viewer is addressed by positions offered for identification" (143).

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[62] This non-communicative model has been challenged by feminist art historians who underlined the instances when the "nudes" intervened and negated the patriarchal tradition of the nude by challenging, resisting, and reverting the male gaze.

[63] Bryson suggests that the glance, as a mode of viewing, has been suppressed by the gaze, which according to him is the logic of western oil painting. The Japanese ink painting, in contrast, invites the glance as a mode of engagement with the image (1988).

The tradition of Orientalist painting invited the gaze as the position in which identification was enforced. As Linda Nochlin contends, the genre of Orientalist painting put forward two ideological assumptions about power: "one about men's power over women; the other about white men's superiority to, hence justifiable control over, inferior, darker races" (1991: 45). In these paintings, "the (male) viewer was invited sexually to identify with, yet morally distance himself from, his Oriental counterparts depicted within the objectively inviting yet racially distancing space of the painting" (45). The discourse of transparent realism was one way of securing this distance. According to Nochlin, Jean-Léon Gérôme's Orientalist oeuvre "tries to make us forget that his art is really art, both by concealing the evidence of his touch, and, at the same time, by insisting on a plethora of authenticating details, especially on what might be called unnecessary ones" (1989: 38) The attempt to suppress the work of representation and the application of excessive details were both directed toward displaying the real Orient and the Oriental woman according to "the needs of the absent and controlling Western viewer" (Lewis, 1996: 112). These paintings helped to map the Orient visually by exposing the sexually objectified feminine body as the most prominent signifier of the oriental otherness, made available for the reification, fixation, and intrusion of the voyeuristic male gaze.[64]

I propose that the caption "Sultan's address book," superimposed on the image of the woman from the *hamam* miniature, initiates and encourages an Orientalist reading and subsumes it under the reign of the Orientalist gaze. As any title would, the caption frames the image in a certain manner. It is an "epistemological indication" that carries "circumstantial evidence" (Boer, 2004: 79). The word "sultan" evokes a whole array of stereotypical images of the figure of the despot that was dominant for centuries in Western representations of the Orient.[65] As imagined, this figure provoked fear and terror in those around him, and he was given the unrestricted earthly pleasures of his harem, the secluded space where the women who were allegedly in his possession resided. The caption on the miniature creates a direct relation between the figure of the sultan and the woman from the miniature,

[64] However, these paintings, as any other, are not homogenous artifacts offering only one potential way of reading. Rather, they are tainted by multiple ambivalences. In *Disorienting Vision* (2004), Inge Boer focuses on the semiotic plurality intrinsic in French Orientalist texts and images by addressing them from the position of the glance.

[65] See Boer (2004: 27-48).

who is subordinated to being his possession.[66] Drawing out the implications of the title, we may argue that the sultan not only "addresses" the woman in the *hamam*, it encourages her identification as an Ottoman woman from the imperial harem.

As I noted earlier, the most significant figure of Orientalist images—such as Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres's *La Bain Turc* (1862), Jean-Léon Gérôme's *Un Bain Maure - Femme Turque au Bain* (1870), *Scène de Bain* (1881), *Le Bain des Femmes* (1889), *Le Bain de Vapeur* (1889), *Allumeuse de Narghilé* (1889), *Bain Maure* (1880-5), *Les Baigneuses du Harem* (1901), and Jean-Jules-Antoine Lecomte du Nouy's *L'Esclave Blanche* (1888)—was the exotic exoticized Oriental woman. Within this tradition, the depiction of the harem, and in particular the figure of the odalisque, occupied a special place: a genre within the genre. As Boer notes, the odalisque "comes to stand for the harem of which she is considered part and parcel through a metonymical relation of substitution of many for one" (2004: 6). Similarly, Reina Lewis argues that even though European Orientalism was a heterogeneous phenomenon, the "cult of the harem was central to the fantasies that structure Orientalist discourse" (1996: 111). Various representations of the harem reinforced two main trajectories: "the fulfillment of seeing the forbidden faces and bodies of Muslim women; and the fantasy of one man's sexual ownership over many women" (112). Accordingly, the emblem of feminine space in the Orientalist imagination was the Turkish bath, which served as the site for the unveiling and the sexualization of the odalisque wherein she was revealed as the lavish and voluptuous Oriental woman *par excellence*.

The setting of the miniature, though devoid of excessive detail to feed the imagination, provides the viewer with signs that encourage the reading of the scene as taking place in an Oriental bath. The marble basin, the floral ornamentation around its upper frame, the jewelry of the woman, henna tattoos on her feet, and the colorfully patterned drapery might all be read as synecdoches of the Orient. These indexical signs specify a certain location and offer the viewer ways to recognize the painting. They lead her "towards … initial acknowledgement, to subscribe to an a priori set-up in the act of interpretation" and recognize the scene not as a regular bath

[66] Delacroix's *Death of Sardanapalus* (1827) refers (via Byron) to the ancient Assyrian ruler Sardanapalus who, upon perceiving the inevitability of defeat in battle, destroyed all his possessions and had all his wives and mistresses killed so that they would not fall into the hands of the enemy. The women in this painting are just that—possessions. See Boer (2004) and Nochlin (1989).

but as the Turkish bath (Boer, 2004: 79). This reading of the miniature is neither natural nor neutral. It is conditioned by an a priori set-up produced by European illustrated travel accounts, etchings, engravings, paintings, and sketches—constructing what Nochlin called the "imaginary Orient" (1989). These diverse images produce a visual discourse of the Orient, not necessarily directing and dominating but nonetheless informing the contemporary viewer's gaze.

I suggest that the caption of the souvenir invites such an intertextual reading of the miniature and subordinates it to an Orientalist gaze, which turns the woman into an odalisque in the exoticized space of the *hamam*. The viewer intervenes in this snug, intimate atmosphere without the woman being aware of it as she turns away from the spectator. T. J. Clark argues that a nude "could hardly be said to do its work as a painting at all if it did not find a way to address the spectator and give him access to the body on display" (1985: 132). According to Clark, in many nude paintings "this was sometimes done simply by looking: by having the woman's eyes and face, and her whole body, address themselves to the viewer" (132). However, the act of *not* looking at the viewer is also a powerful way of inviting him or her into the image. The woman in the *hamam* has her dreamy eyes affixed somewhere outside the image; she is entirely unaware of the viewer's presence while she bathes. She seems as if she is lost in her own thoughts and too busy with herself to be bothered by any distraction. This self-contained attitude invites the viewer to adopt a peeping-tom position. The voyeur can stand in front of the image and stare at the woman's body, which is exposed to the spectator without any visual obstruction. She will not notice the gaze of the viewer, let alone be disturbed by it.

The miniature depicts little more than the basin and the nude to reflect upon. The viewer is thus given the opportunity to concentrate on the nakedness of the woman. Her smooth and white skin fondles, so to speak, the viewer's gaze. Her small breasts, rendered with pink overtones, and her broad hips emphasize her voluptuousness. The garment that drops over her legs exposes her genitals in such a way that gives the impression that it has just fallen down so as to leave them bare. Since her genitals are devoid of pubic hair, her labia, marked with a pink scratch, are laid bare for the gaze of the viewer. As John Berger suggests, in the European visual tradition the convention of not painting the hair of a woman's body appeals to the male viewer. It enhances his sexuality by minimizing the woman's sexual passion so that the spectator may feel that he has a monopoly on such passion (Berger, 1977:

55). Similarly, the hairless genitals diminish any potential sexual threat that the nude might present and transfer such potentiality to the viewer. In addition, they give visual access to the intrusion of the gaze and invite the viewer inside the woman's body.

If we keep in mind the Orientalist narrative I introduced earlier, the potential voyeur of this bath scene is none other than the Sultan himself. He catches a glimpse of the woman as if the door of the *hamam* has been left ajar to invite his gaze. The viewer identifies not only with the Sultan's point of view but also his position, as suggested by the caption of the address book. The woman is not just bathing but cleaning herself for the sultan and, by extension, for the viewer's potential visual penetration. The deep dark(ened) hole of the basin and the black aperture on its head encourage such a visual intercourse. Moreover, the water falling from the phallic-handled tap intensifies the almost rapist gaze of the viewer.

This reading of the miniature as a theoretical souvenir fills in the void left by the absence of a prefiguring text by recalling stereotypical Orientalist notions and putting them in conjunction with a possessive, intrusive, and almost rapist mode of gazing. The textual intervention triggers this reading and invites the viewer to come to terms with a latent Orientalist gaze that informs her act of looking. As Bal would argue, such a reading of the miniature for the male gaze is based on non-communication (1996: 262). It imposes preexisting paradigms of looking on the miniature without acknowledging its singularity. It insists on seeing "the same story everywhere," to recall Barthes' argument about the process of reading.

Letting the artwork look back entails a process of relooking that goes beyond the recognition of what one already thinks and knows. Such an engagement brings about an intimate relation between the viewer and the image seen. This does not mean, as Boer reminds us, that the Orientalist reading and the gaze as a mode of addressing should be erased from the process of interpretation. Rereading, or relooking, involves casting a different look at the image to see its difference. I propose that to see the alterity of the miniature, the viewer should engage in what I call an "intimate encounter." In what follows, I discuss the ways in which such an encounter unleashes the transformative potential of the miniature.

… to the Intimate Look

According to the *OED*, "intimacy" has five distinct meanings: close familiarity; a euphemism for sexual intercourse; closeness of observation or knowledge; close connection or union; and the inner or inmost nature, an inward quality or feature. In this sense, the relation I propose is blatantly opposed to one of distance, both in the physical and cognitive senses of the word. As I will discuss in Chapter 5, the encounter with the miniatures requires getting physically close to them because of their relatively small size. In addition, the book as a medium calls for a spatial closeness. Such proximity is accompanied by intellectual and psychological closeness, as the viewer is encouraged to scrutinize the image. This closeness of looking, however, does not give rise to a conventionally possessive and intrusive viewing process. On the contrary, as Catherine Lord suggests, "the adjective 'intimate' nuances the noun relevant to the terms of friendship," in which "each party develops a profound knowledge of the other, even if this should lead to disagreement, or require a compromise of positions" (1999: 6). According to Lord, one of the forerunners of such an intimate process occurs in Plato's *Phaedrus*, "in which both member of the dialogue shift position; each enables the interlocutor the opportunity to re-produce the idea and opinions of the other in a re-invented form" (6). Similarly, the intimate look purports to be a process in which the viewer participates in a dialogue with the image so as to think along with the artwork.

I propose that the *Woman bathing in the Hamam* miniature produces, represents, and exposes intimacy and calls for an intimate look as a strategy for visual analysis. It does so on different, yet interconnected levels. It depicts an intimate space; exposes the body as the locus of the intimate; encourages an erotic and haptic look; and invites the viewer to see the innermost parts of the miniature without ever letting her "in" the woman's body. Ultimately, the encounter enables us to reevaluate the notion of intimacy, moving it from "the state of being with oneself" toward an intersubjective state of "being alone with the other."

As I mentioned above, the title of the miniature tells us that the woman is situated in the *hamam*. Even though the title is based on an art-historical interpretation, it is plausible that the space is indeed a Turkish bath, since in the eighteenth century, Ottoman houses did not have private bathrooms. However, contrary to both Mernissi's image of the *hamam* as a public space, "often overrun

with dozens of noisy children" (2001: 102), and nineteenth-century depictions of the *hamam* as a crowded space where women eat, smoke, and dance, the scene depicted in the miniature is rather serene.[67] It includes a marble basin and a wooden bench on which the woman is seated by herself. The wall in the background is painted in a pale hue. Similarly, the tiled floor is a plain white surface. The interior does not all resemble those scenes of imagined ostentation in which the interior of an Ottoman *hamam* would be richly decorated and ornamented.

Additionally, instead of the spacious and luminous space of a *hamam*, the miniature brings forth a clearly limited and almost claustrophobically framed interior. If anything, the space looks like an undersized bathroom. The attentive viewer might be taken by the slender line of dark grayish paint applied at the very bottom of the miniature plane. This line looks as if the marble ground was slightly elevated at the exact place where it was cut by the frame. This elevation from the ground turns the tiled floor into a platform or stage-like structure. Alternatively, it prompts the idea that the ground actually terminates precisely where it has been framed. Hence we may argue that the space depicted is a separate small room rather than the publicly occupied section of the *hamam*.[68]

In fact, traditional *hamam* buildings included private bathing cubicles called *halvet* where one could bathe in seclusion. As the miniature gives no clue as to which part of the *hamam* it depicts, we can read the abruptly cut floor as an indication of such a private cubicle. The frame of the miniature designates the side walls, ceiling, and the floor of the room, while its surface overlaps with that of the location of the doorstep. By presenting the space in this way, the miniature places the viewer at the threshold of the cubicle. *Halvet* is an Arabic word meaning withdrawal into seclusion, isolation, and retirement. In esoteric Islamic traditions, such as Sufism, the notion of *halvet* refers to the practice of making a forty-day solitary retreat as a way of coming to a mystical experience of the divine. Even though such connotations

[67] In two different copies of *Fazil Husayn*'s *Zenânnâme* (IUL, T5502 c.1793 and BL, Or. 7094, c. 1776), there are two similar miniatures that represent a crowded *hamam* scene in which women are served coffee, wash each other's hair, and chat. Mahir argues that these works were inspired by the costume albums prepared by European painters working in the Pera district of Istanbul (2004: 81).

[68] A typical *hamam*, mostly divided into separate sections for men and women, consists of three interconnected basic rooms: the *sıcaklık* (or *hararet* -*caldarium*), which is the hot room; the warm room (*tepidarium*), which is the intermediate room; and the *soğukluk*, which is the cool room. In addition there are private rooms reserved for individual use.

cannot be strictly attributed to bathing cubicles, these spaces were reserved for the solitary experience of washing oneself, away from the gaze of the others. In this capacity, the *halvet* room is the domain of the intimate, encircled by the publicly available space of the *hamam*.

In *The Poetics of Space* (1958), Gaston Bachelard investigates poetic images of what he calls the "felicitous space." These spaces "we love" are more than just places of physical safety; they are places of our own where we retire to. According to Bachelard, the house image is the *locus classicus* of "intimate space," which "would appear to have become the topography of our intimate being" (xxxvi). It is "one of the greatest powers of integration for the thoughts, memories and dreams of mankind" of which binding principle is the daydream (6). By "remembering 'houses' and 'rooms,' we learn to 'abide' within ourselves" (xxxvii).[69]

Even though Bachelard seems to privilege the image of the house as the realm of the intimate, the isolated *halvet* room might be seen as an intimate space where one can dwell in oneself.[70] I propose that the posture of the woman suggests an intimate experience of the sort in which one abides in oneself. She seems to have just entered the room; she has sat down and has allowed the garment with which she was covering her body outside of the *halvet* fall down over her knees, and then has taken the bowl and has just begun pouring its water. As if performing a ritual, she holds the bowl gently and lets the water sink in while stroking her hair. Her face is expressionless, bearing no sign of emotion; she looks as if she is immersed in herself and in her thoughts. The lack of expression, And notes, is an aesthetic feature of the miniature tradition that stems from "the suppression of interest in character and expressiveness" that was consciously sought by the artists (1987: 103). The faces in miniatures "show a complete indifference: no scowl, no smile or grief, not even a wrinkle" (103). In opposition to And's negative understanding, Sayin argues that the absence of facial expression is a way of screening the figure's inner world hidden behind her face (2003: 60). The face should be kept indifferent, signifying as it does

[69] While Bachelard's notion of the "felicitous space" and reverie has feminine overtones, his conceptualization of the image of the house has been criticized as reflecting the perspective of the privileged upper-class white male.

[70] Certainly, modern differentiation between private and public space does not correspond to the ways in which space was experienced and imagined in Ottoman society. For a general discussion of the ways in which the distinction between the public and the private has been played out in eighteenth-century Ottoman society, see Artan (1993).

the incorporeal qualities of the body (60). It is for this reason, she contends, that even the most pornographic miniatures, such as those found in the *bahnames*, never give away the faces of the figures even though they depict bodies completely naked (60). They expose everything but the faces so as to keep the intimate away from the gaze of the viewer.

In this respect, the inexpressive face of the bathing woman can be read as a screen that repels the viewer's gaze. Simultaneously, this face invites witness of a moment of intimacy, when one becomes submerged in oneself while daydreaming in solitude under the governance of what Bachelard calls "the being inhabiting our still waters" (1968: 60). Could it be that the woman experiences an instance in which one retreats fully to the intimacy within oneself, to those deepest thoughts or feelings concerning one's inmost self? Even if this is so, the viewer is not encouraged to participate, as the face of the woman gives away nothing but the sign of experiencing an intimate moment on her own.

So far I have sketched two instances of the ways in which the intimate encounter operates: the reading of the miniature as depicting the privacy of a *hamam* cubicle that is reserved for solitary withdrawal, and the acknowledgement of the willful choice of the woman to retreat from the other's gaze so as to find comfort in isolation. The intimacy of the scene turns the viewer into an intruder who disturbs the woman's willful choice of seclusion. As Jean-Luc Nancy suggests, the intruder [*L'intrus*] "enters by force, through surprise of ruse in any case without the right and without having first been admitted" (2002: 1). His "coming will not cease; nor will it cease being in some respect an intrusion: that is to say, being without right, familiarity, accustomedness, or habit, the stranger's coming will not cease being a disturbance and perturbation of intimacy" (1-2). He adds that if "he is awaited and received without any part of him being unexpected or unwelcome, he is no longer the *intrus*, nor is he any longer the stranger" (1). Even though the viewer's coming will not cease, I suggest in what follows that the viewer may stop being an intruder once we acknowledge intimacy as a relational notion.

The rendering of the woman's body, in contrast to that of her face, is captivating and inviting. I propose that her body, paradoxically, carries the intimate engagement further. The whiteness and smoothness of the skin call for the viewer's eyes, yet in doing so what is encouraged is not a rapist gaze but a sensuous tactile one, which I shall explain presently. I argue that the intimate mode of looking is

promoted formally by the rendering of the body through accentuated outlines. The contours give the body not only its form but also separate it from the background, which is a little darker than the color of the body. The ground and the figure occupy the same plane yet are distinguished from (and connected to) one another by means of the figure's outlines. This body is clearly demarcated and contained by its contours. In a brief discussion of this miniature Renda suggests that Buharî "not only clearly defined his figure in space but also delineated the contours of the nude body through fine modelling, even trying to capture the pink under-tones of her skin" (1995: 66). According to Renda, this was a brave experiment in terms of the established norms of Islamic miniature painting (66). Even though Buharî's figures are somehow more voluminous than previous bodies in the miniature tradition, his work still sustains the line as the primary element of figuration—albeit his outlines are relatively less visible, for example, than those of his contemporary Levnî. In this respect, the line is the ordering and organizing principle of figuration; it functions less to describe the body in its fullness than to organize and design it (Sayin, 2003: 126).

In addition, the contours of the body confine and configure the figure in such a way to leave no space for corporeal excess. The curves of the woman's back, hips, belly, arms, and legs are contained by the strict order of the line, which displays no wrinkles or protruding fat. In this sense, her body is as expressionless as her face. The unpolluted whiteness of her body is more reminiscent of the solidness of marble than the softness of skin. The body, indeed, seems to be numb, as if it were made of stone rather than flesh and blood. As such, her body looks more like a statue than the body of a real woman.

In contrast to the contained solidness of the woman's body, the garment on her knees is vibrantly and warmly colored. In fact, this fabric is the only object that instantaneously captures the viewer's attention; its attractive, vivid colors distinguish it from the soft colors applied in the rest of the miniature. Additionally, its multiple curvilinear folds depart from the rigidity of the firm lines in the rest of the miniature. It seems as if the miniaturist worked more carefully on the garment, meticulously applying its miniscule patterns, folds, and curves, than he did on the woman's body. It has fullness, weight, and, above all, texture. Unlike the restrained and deductive rendering of the woman's body, the garment is excessive. It drapes her legs and knees, falls over the bench, and drops out of the frame in folds. It seems like it is

made of a weighty and thick textile. The garment's materiality invokes the sense of touch; it invites the viewer to caress and feel its texture.

I argue that the contrast between the material texture of the garment and the rigidity of the body it covers provokes the viewer's eyes—demanding, as it were, that the gaze reach out and touch them so as to feel the difference between the two.[71] It encourages what the art historian Aloïs Riegl called "haptic vision."[72] The notion, derived from the Greek word *haptein* (meaning pertaining to the sense of touch), stands for "a kind of vision that 'grabs' the thing it looks at" (Marks, 2004). [73] It implies a close-up viewing distinct from the optical, in which the eyes behave just like the hands. Laura M. Marks notes that the image of touching an object with our eyes "might be a rather painful one, calling up raw, bruised eyeballs scraping against the brute stuff of the world." She envisions instead "a way of seeing that does not posit a violent distance between the seer and the object, and hence cause pain when the two are brought together" (2004). Accordingly, in haptic visuality "the contact can be as gentle as a caress" (2004).

Naked Intimacy

The discrepancy between the garment and the body implies a mixed mode of looking that prompts a tender form of contact with the miniature. The viewer's eyes touch the intense texture of the textile and then move on to the body so as to feel the sensation of flesh beneath the stone-like solidness of its rendering. As Marks suggests, unlike the voyeuristic gaze, this contact need not be violent or rapist. Instead, it entails intimate contact, in which the viewer is touched in return by the nakedness of the woman. Rather than the distanced, disengaged mode often attributed to the sense of

[71] Even though this miniature does not belong to a book that one would touch and hold, it still corresponds to the hand, unlike a painting hanging on the wall. The encounter with miniature is inherently tactile. See Chapter 5 for a discussion of the relation between the bodily posture encouraged by the miniature and the hand.

[72] Riegl coined the term *haptic* in opposition to the optical terms used in delineating various historical manifestations, namely Egyptian, Greek, and Roman, of what he called the "will to art." He argued that the art of the ancient Egyptians "maintain[ed] as far as possible the appearance of a unified, isolated object adhering to a plane," which differed from the optical style of Roman art, in which objects "relinquished a tactile connection to the plane" (Marks, 2002: 4).

[73] Deleuze and Guattari appropriate the term haptic in their discussion of nomadic art. Deleuze also uses the term in relation to Francis Bacon's oeuvre. Marks develops the notion in referring to the tactile qualities of video art as "an alternative to the dominant theory of the Gaze, derived from Lacanian psychoanalysis" in order to "understand how looking could be something other than the exercise of power, and how to explain the pleasure of looking as not gendered, not perverse" (2004).

sight, the haptic look touches meticulously, in detail, on individual points. The minute, previously unnoticed wrinkles above the woman's elbows and hips touch the eye. This kind of looking provides the viewer with knowledge of an imperfect naked body. As Riegl suggests,

> We possess certain knowledge about the bounded individual unity of single objects only through the sense of touch. Through touch alone we gain awareness of the *impenetrable borders* which enclose individual material objects. These borders are the tactile surfaces of things. Yet what we touch immediately are not extended surfaces, but *only individual points* [….] The conception is not gained through an immediate perception of touch but through the combination of several such perceptions which necessarily presupposes the intervention of the subjective thought process. It follows, therefore, that the notion of tactile impenetrability as an essential condition of material individuality was achieved not merely on the basis of sense perception but also with the supplementary aid of the thought process. (Riegl, *Spätrömische Kunstindustrie*, 39 quoted in Gubser, 2005: 470-471, emphasis added)

In this capacity, the haptic look proceeds from quick visual contacts in which the viewer's eye touches upon the hair, the eyebrows, the lips, the cheeks, the fingertips, the arms, the belly, the hips, the breasts, the nipples, the genitals, the soles, and the painted heels of the woman. These individual points provide the viewer with a body in bits and pieces. As in the case of the literal act of touching, the jigsaw-like perception of the haptic look culminates in an image of the body formed out of the viewer's subjective intervention. However, this intervention does not produce a coherent and unified body appreciated from a distance. Rather, it assumes shape as the image of a singular body perceived in detail. The haptic look allows the viewer to acknowledge the materiality, solidity, and impenetrability of the body. This way of knowing the body is an intimate one, as the viewer comes close to the image, caresses its details, and acknowledges it as an impenetrable surface in the realm of the other.

I contend that this process of haptic looking transforms the nude into a singular naked body. It adorns the nude with the intimacy of nakedness. This body is

a touched one that touches the viewer in return, rather than being a nude that is the object of a distanced gaze. However, the distinction I make between the nude and the naked does not correspond to Kenneth Clark's distinction between the two in his classic treatise *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form* (1956). According to Clark, nakedness is a "natural state" of being "deprived of our clothes," implying "the embarrassment most of us feel in that condition" (1956: 3). The nude, in contrast, is the body in representation: "a balanced, prosperous and confident body: the body re-formed" (3). As Lynda Nead notes, Clark's distinction promotes "the transformation from the naked to the nude" as a "shift from the actual to the ideal—the move from a perception of unformed, corporeal matter to the recognition of unity and constraint, the regulated economy of art" (1992: 14).[74] In his response to Clark, John Berger attempts to value the naked while retaining the binary opposition between the two notions. He writes:

> To be naked is to be oneself. To be nude is to be seen by others and yet not recognized for oneself. A naked body has to be seen as an object in order to become a nude. [….] Nakedness reveals itself. Nudity is placed on display. To be naked is to be without disguise. To be on display is to have the surface of one's own skin, the hairs of one's body turned into a disguise which, in that situation, can never be discarded. The nude is condemned to never being naked. Nudity is a form of dress. (Berger, 1072: 54)

For Berger, the nude always asks for the voyeuristic gaze. However, there are a few valuable exceptions in painting that are no longer nudes but "paintings of loved women, more or less naked" (57). Such works can be created because the "painter's personal vision of the particular women" allows the spectator only to "witness their relationship—but he can do no more; he is forced to recognize himself as the outsider he is" (57).

I distance myself from both authors' accounts. I maintain that the body is always already in representation, and therefore nakedness and nudity are both discourses on the depicted body. As I understand it, nakedness and nudity are

[74] This economy of art refers to an idealized, classic, and "official" mode of representing the nude that excludes traditions such as the Gothic and the Baroque, as well as non-Western modes.

viewing positions taken up by the viewer. Following T. J. Clark, I argue that nakedness entails the acknowledgment that "we are nowhere but in a body, constructed by it, by the way it incorporates the signs of other people" (1990: 146).[75] Nudity, on the contrary, "is a set of signs for the belief that our body is ours, a great generality that we make our own, or leave in art in the abstract" (146). In this capacity, the haptic look—because it involves being touched by the image in return, and constructs the body of the woman in relation to that of the viewer—underlines those aspects of the miniature that displays the body as a naked body. This involves the intimacy between bodies when they touch each other.

While the haptic look enfolds the depicted body in the discourse of nakedness and the intimacy of the mutual touch, it also occasions eroticism of the sort that is involved in tactile encounters.[76] As Marks argues, the haptic look invites "the viewer to dissolve his or her subjectivity in the close and bodily contact with the image," creating "an erotic relationship, a shifting between distance and closeness" (2002: 13). Referring to Emanuel Levinas's concept of eroticism, Marks argues:

> Eroticism is an encounter with an other that delights in the fact of its alterity, rather than an attempt to know it. Visual erotics allows the thing seen to maintain its unknowability, delighting in playing at the boundary of that knowability. Visual erotics allows the object of vision to remain inscrutable. But it is not voyeurism for in visual erotics the looker is also implicated. By engaging with an object in a haptic way, I come to the surface of my self…. [I] los[e] myself in the intensified relation with an other that cannot be known. (2002: 18-19)

In this sense, eroticism and intimacy seem to contradict each other. As Lord suggests, the notion of the intimate involves the development of "a profound

[75] In his reading of Manet's *Olympia* (1865), Clark asserts that the signs for nakedness are related to those of class; hence the real subject of *Olympia* is the class system. I am, however, not arguing for such a class-related reading.

[76] For Freud, looking and touching are inherently related. Looking is a derivative of touching and for that reason is able to arouse desire. In her reading of "Rembrandt"'s *Susanna* Bal notes that looking is a metonymic substitute for touching and proposes to reverse the relation and "see touching as an inherent second phase of looking, while the desire aroused by looking is generated by the prospect of touching" (1991: 150).

knowledge of the other," whereas eroticism plays on the border between knowing and not-knowing (1999: 6).[77] The carnal intimacy brought by the haptic look takes place on the surface of the body, not within its most profound spaces, allegedly concealed in the innermost reaches of the body. As such, it retains the impenetrability of the body and hence the erotic impulses of play.

Perhaps the most intense moments of this erotic intimacy occur when the viewer loses herself in the details through which the inside of the body opens toward its outside, to the other. As the haptic look tends to caress the image in close proximity, the intimate holes of the body, such as the ears, the mouth, the nostrils, the nipples, and the genitals, opening to the inmost depths of the body, become more visible. Even though all these openings are vigilantly rendered, the mouth, the nipples, and the genitals attract more attention than the rest as they are accentuated with strong pinkish lines. These are not only erotogenic zones but also apertures that reveal glimpses into the interior of the body that is kept out of sight under the protection of the skin. They unlock the realm of the intimate by allowing the inside and the outside, the self and the other, to become permeable. Perhaps because of this permeability, Gérard Wajcman argues that "one must watch [….] over the openings which might pierce the wall though which the Enemy might infiltrate: mouth, ears, nostrils, through which the taste of the world can penetrate and with it corruption and sin" (2004b: 77). According to him, it is less the image of the body that must be protected than its holes:

> Nudity is less scandalous than that which opens the interior of the body and frees the soul to sin. The visible envelope and what is seen of bodies do not fall under the same prohibitions as what is hidden in the body. This is why particular attention is paid to the feminine sex which, less closed than the masculine sex to the holes of the body, is assumed to be more permeable to corruption. (2004b: 77)

Contrary to Wajcman's advice, the *Woman bathing in the Hamam* exposes such

[77] The film *Intimacy* (2001), directed by Patrice Chéreau, narrates the intricate relation between intimacy and erotics. It tells the story of a bartender who has casual sex with a mysterious woman every Wednesday. He becomes more curious about her life and begins spying on her in order to gain "profound knowledge" of her. This unsolicited quest for intimacy destroys their relationship.

sinful openings rather intensely. As if to compensate for the inherent invisibility of the genitals, the hairless labia is drawn in an exaggerated manner. So are the nipples and the mouth. However, these areas do not make the intimate visible; instead they give the promise of an opening. Like the aperture on the top of the basin, they open nowhere but to darkness. As such, they maintain the delight in playing at the boundary of the knowability of the other, of the intimate.

Moreover, in line with the previous reading that suggested that the lack of pubic hair gives the viewer visual access to the inside of the woman's body, I propose that the figure's long black hair possesses a transgressive significance. The excess of hair compensates for the weakened potential sexual power of the woman.[78] As Boer suggests, hair evokes contradictory responses: "admiration on the one hand and fear on the other" (2004: 64). Invoking the myth of Medusa, she argues that hair refers to the relation between beauty and threat. Similarly in her article "The Power of Women's Hair in the Victorian Imagination" (1984), Elizabeth G. Gitter states that "for folk, literary and psychoanalytic traditions agree that the luxuriance of the hair is an index of vigorous sexuality, even of wantonness" (938). In addition, she proposes that hair is also an expressive means: it is "the text that explains" the woman, an "outward sign of the inner self" (941). In this respect, the hair of the woman and the act of washing the hair can be read as juxtaposing the possession of sexual power with the exposure of an inner intimate world.

While such sinful openings to the other are made extremely visible, another semi-hole, namely the navel, is effaced from the woman's body. The belly button, perhaps more than any other hole, is tied to the intimate. As Bal notes, it is both a "trace of the mother, and the token of autonomy of the subject, male and female alike" (1991: 22). It is the trace of the mother's womb, the most intimate space of all. It also testifies to the subject's independence from the mother as an autonomous being. The absence of the woman's belly button, however, should not be read as showing either that the woman lacks human qualities or that the representation is not realistic. The metaphor of the navel, according to Bal, is a detail that opens up an

[78] Boer provides an in-depth analysis of the function of braided hair employed by Lady Montagu in her *Turkish Embassy Letters*. She argues that braided hair, as an index, refers to Medusa. In line with Freud's reading of the myth, she suggests that the sight of the braided hair evokes a castration anxiety on the part of the despot, demonstrating the ambivalence status of his dominance (2004: 56-74). However, I distance myself from such a psychoanalytic reading based on castration anxiety as I think that it, too, tends to "read the same story everywhere."

interpretative strategy that allows one to concentrate on an odd detail, often overlooked or resisted, that does not fit the "official" interpretation. It is a meaningful pointer that allows "plurality and mobility, that allows the viewer to propose new readings … without letting those readings fall into the arbitrariness" (22).

In the miniature, the navel, in its absence, becomes more than a metaphor. Whereas Bal argues for the effective possibilities of the detail, I suggest that the lack of a detail could be just as productive as a depicted one.[79] Nevertheless, the absence here does not fall into the psychoanalytic understanding of the phallic lack that has to be replaced with an object.[80] In line with my reading of the miniature, the absent navel hints at one of the main tenets of the notion of intimacy. The invisibility of the most intimate marks of the subject enables us to recognize that intimacy might not be about gaining a profound knowledge of the other. Instead, we might conceive of intimacy as a relationship based on the acknowledgement of the other's unknowability. The absent detail is a synecdoche of the opaqueness of the other as well as representation. In this capacity, it promotes a look that does not attempt to penetrate but instead remains on the surface of the image and the skin of the body so as to be intimate, however distant it may be.

My reading of the *Woman bathing in the Hamam* miniature touched upon instances of what I call an intimate encounter. Each instance through which intimacy is played out brought about a tension between different possible definitions of the notion of the intimate. The core oscillation is between the intimate defined as that relating to the profound and innermost of the subject (and the image) that has to be surmounted by the look of the other, and intimacy defined as a relational practice performed on the surface, which acknowledges the alterity of the subject (and the image). As such, the encounter with the miniature invites us to discuss intimacy as a concept.

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[79] In the previous chapter, I suggested a similar reading of the absence of the navel.

[80] Bal states that by choosing a bodily metaphor, she wishes to demonstrate both her allegiance and her polemic opposition to psychoanalytic theory. She writes: "Here the navel is the symbolization of a body part, just as the phallus is, and it too is loaded with connotations of gender. Yet these are radically different in status. The phallus refers to gender in terms of haves and have-nots…. The navel, in contrast, is fundamentally gender specific…. But it is also democratic that both men and women have it" (1991: 23).

Redefining the Intimate

In *Fenêtre: Chroniques du regard et de l'intime* (2004), Gérard Wajcman, one of the few scholars who has dwelled on the notion of the intimate in depth, attempts to outline intimacy as a visual performance. Informed by Lacanian psychoanalysis, he defines the intimate as the place, essentially both architectural and scopic, where the subject can put himself/herself to the test beyond the gaze of the Other. The intimate, according to Wajcman, remains beyond the grasp of the Other. He argues that the intimate is

> a space in internal exclusion, an island where the subject escapes even the supposition of being watched [….] That space can be internal, subjective, just as it could be embodied in a physical place [….] From the watchful eyes of the Other […] I get to the very heart of the question of the Intimate [….] The Other is moved by an absolute desire to see, to see everything, that there was before anything the presence of an irreducible and insatiable watchfulness. Fundamentally, we are watched beings. If the basic assumption is the pre-existence of watching, the fundamental question that then arises … [is] whether or not there exists for the subject a space where he can withdraw from the panoptical eye of the Other, that all-seeing eye of the Gorgon that never sleeps. (2007)

For Wajcman, "the hidden, secret, shadowy place we need to believe in," where the subject would feel *chez soi*, came to be called the intimate after the sixteenth century (2004b: 67). The intimate, in the modern sense, took form in the Renaissance with the inception of modern painting, which is defined by Alberti as an "open window."[81] He argues that the tableau-window enabled the viewer to create an intimacy with herself because it creates the illusion that the viewer is shielded from being seen in front of the painting. Finally, the tableau-window allows the viewer to see without being seen in return. Hence, she is subtracted from the gaze of the Other (62). However, the intimate is not a "barricaded place in which the subject is enclosed." (71). Rather, it is "precisely the place from which the subject […] can

[81] In Chapter 6, I discuss the window metaphor and the conceptualization of the visual field the trope brings about.

unite himself with others" (71-72). It is a space of necessary segregation in which the subject is "outside of visible things" so that she can join in that which exists outside (72).

While Wajcman depends heavily on Lacan's conceptualization of the visual field, within which the subject is always under the threat of the Gaze, the cultural and literary critic Hamid Dabashi offers an alternative understanding of the intimate as it has been understood in Islamic cultures. He points out that the notion of *Mahram* (intimate) has been conceptualized in relation to its opposite *Na-Mahram*, which he considers to be "the most anxiety-provoking binary opposition in an Islamic context" (2003: 937). He writes:

> If we consider the trilateral root of *Mahram*—HRM—and note that its cognate *Haram* denotes "that which is forbidden," as opposed to *Halal* from HLL, which is "that which is permitted," it becomes clear that the figure of *Mahram* is inside a territorial boundary of private sacredness, while *Na-Mahram* is outside it in the publicity of some profane space. (937)

As such, the intimate is space bounded. In addition, and in a way similar to Wajcman's account, the intimate in the Islamic context is a scopic regime that manifests itself in architecture. The main difference between the two understandings is that the first promotes intimacy as a singular subjective notion, whereas the latter refers to a relationship by stating that the intimate is that which can be seen by others. However, the *Maharem* (those who are *mahram*) is strictly defined. It includes "one's parents and siblings primarily, but it extends into a whole group of people with whom one is related by blood" (Dabashi, 2003: 939). It is important to note that this categorization is gender-bound. That is to say: for a woman, those men to whom she is not related by blood are considered *na-mahram*—hence, forbidden. Those who are the intimates, on the other hand, can be seen without the restrictions imposed by the *purdah* (screen) or the veil. As such, *mahram* is an ordering of bodies based on gender segregation. It constructs the (female) body as the locus of the intimate and (male) sight as the main potential intruder of that intimate body. In the regime of the *mahrem* the (female) body is shielded from the gaze of the *na-mahram* while she is given the power to see (behind the veil or *purdah*) in a relation

in which she remains unreachable to the other's gaze. This formulation comes close to Wajcman's definition of the intimate as "not to be seen seeing" (71).[82]

Dabahsi suggests that another gender-neutral opposition between *Khodi* and *Gharibeh* constitutes an adjacent binary opposition to *Mahram* and *Na-Mahram*:

> *Khodi*, as "he or she who belongs to oneself," is interior to the sacred space, while *Gharibeh* is a stranger to it. While *Khodi* carries all the psychological comfort of "belonging to one-self," *Gharibeh*, conversely, carries all the social fears of a total stranger. *Khodi* is territorial to the sacred space; *Gharibeh* is aterritorial, strange, infectious. (2003: 938)

Moreover, he adds yet another additional binary in defining the *mahram*:

> *Mahram* is equally related to the categorical inhibition of *Haram*, "that which is forbidden," as opposed to *Halal*, "that which is permitted"; and thus to be a *Mahram* is to be privy to a knowledge whose publicity is absolutely forbidden, and thus carries a strong juridical inhibition with it; while *Na-Mahram* by extension is he who is juridically forbidden to have a public knowledge of the strictly private. (2003: 938)

All these dichotomies mentioned by Dabashi make it clear that the intimate is a strictly defined intersubjective relationship. It stems not from a singular subject but from an intersubjective encounter. Once a person is granted the peculiarities of intimacy, she is allowed to see "that which is forbidden," or to gain "a knowledge whose publicity is absolutely forbidden." The definition of the intimate within the Islamic context seems to refer to a state of collective being rather than a nucleus where the subject should reside before joining the world outside.

No doubt this collective from which the intimate flourishes is defined in terms of kinship and gender segregation. However, at least in the Ottoman context, as Tülay Artan notes in her article "Mahremiyet: Mahrûmiyetin Resmi," the notion

[82] The paragraph from which the quote comes reads in full: "The hidden is the source if two powers of the modern subject: power of the intimate and power of seeing. Not being seen is the base of two powers which are arranged according to what is subtracted from the gaze of the Other: not being seen in intimacy, in the body and in the amorous exchange of bodies—this is the intimate; not to be seen seeing, this is the master gaze, the window is the weapon of the two powers" (2004b: 71).

of the intimate was always contested and its boundaries were under constant negotiation. By means of an in-depth analysis of the miniatures *Hamse-i Atayi*, she argues that, beginning in the seventeenth century, what had earlier been considered *mahrem* found ways to be visually and textually expressed (1993: 92). The woman in the *hamam* miniature illustrates the expansion of the limits of the intimate beyond kinship relations and gendered order of looking. In this respect, the dropping of the garment off from the woman's body might be read as paralleling the fall of the law of the *mahrem* embodied in the practice of veiling or the screening of the *purdah*. Its lowering can be seen as a challenge to the scopic regime of the intimate, an encouragement to the viewer to become a *khodi* and share the secret sacredness, the intimate.

While the miniature revised the structure of intimacy to its contemporaries, it also allows *us* to rework the notion. Wajcman suggests that the modern of understanding of intimacy can be found in the conception of the tableau window, which enabled the viewer to believe in the illusion that she is concealed from the Gaze. Consequently, the subject can separate herself from the world; she can contemplate it in secret and look at herself, away from the gaze of the others. She can see without being seen. Missing in Wajcman's account is the possibility that the painting can look back at its viewer and engage in a dialogue.

No doubt, Wajcman builds his discussion of the modern conception of intimacy on the operation of the modern tableau. In this respect, the comparison between the tableau and the miniature might sound incongruous, as the two media are radically different from one another. [83] However, my suggestion to re-examine of the notion of intimacy through this analysis of the *hamam* miniature bears on the notion of "alternative modernity," asserting that modern notions unfold within different cultures and lead to different practices. [84] If we accept that the language and lessons of Western modernity have always been contested outside as well as inside

[83] Here, I do not wish to conflate the operation of the tableau and the miniature painting. The radical difference between the two allows me to conceptualize an alternative to the modern understanding of the intimate. For an in-depth discussion of the incommensurability of the two media, see Chapter 5 and 6.

[84] The term is most notably associated with the essays collected in the volume *Alternative Modernities,* edited by Dilip Parameshwarg Aonkar. The essays address the dilemmas of modernity from transnational and transcultural perspectives.

the West, then the miniature offers us a way of understanding another conceptualization of the intimate.

However, with this statement I do not wish to argue that miniature the *Woman bathing in the Hamam* miniature is a mere reflection on the notion of intimacy as it has been lived up to in its own time. Rather, I suggest that the miniature stages intimacy as a relational notion and proposes that the viewer become complicit with such understanding. In this respect, it promotes an instance when the object looks back and initiates a dialogue with the viewer—though the woman in the miniature does not look back at the viewer. It suggests intimacy as an intersubjective state of being that lets the other see the intimate without exposing it entirely. Contrary to Wajcman's understanding, my reading of the *Woman bathing in the Hamam* suggests that the intimate starts in the realm of the other; it is only through that realm that one can construct the intimate. However, this conception of the intimate does not involve subtracting the profound knowledge of the other. Rather, it begins from the radical impossibility—because it is an intersubjective process, constructed by means of constant negotiation and dialogue—of the profoundness of the intimate.

In the introduction of this study, I invoked Hubert Damisch's axiom that "art thinks." According to Ernst van Alphen, this axiom entails understanding art as a form of thinking that compels the viewer to start a "dialogue with it by articulating questions of a more general—for instance, philosophical, political, or social—nature." The artwork becomes a *historical* articulation of a general, more fundamental problem (2005: 4). My discussion of the *Woman bathing in the Hamam* miniature demonstrated the ways in which an artwork raises diverse questions and lets the viewer engage in dialogue with it. The process of thinking starts with the fall of the woman in the *hamam* miniature from the conventional context of the miniature tradition: the book and the pre-text. A contemporary souvenir, which reproduces the miniature on its cover with the textual intervention of the phrase "Sultan's address book," allowed me to locate where the miniature would fall once it is separated from the materially and textually protective settings of the book. The textual manipulation underlines a latent Orientalist gaze that, inevitably, informs the contemporary viewer's encounter with the miniature. The Orientalist gaze ignores the singularity of the miniature by subsuming it to a stereotypical reading that sees the same story everywhere.

In contrast to this potential reading I suggested a critical process of re-looking that reads the image for the difference and plurality residing, potentially, within it. The intimate encounter between the viewer and the miniature unravels in interrelated instances of engagement. I argued that the *halvet*, with its connotations of sacred retreat, defines a space of intimacy where the viewer is given a sight of an intimate moment in which the woman, perhaps, abides in herself. Allowing no suggestion of carnal excess, the rendering of the woman's body by means of accented contours constructs a tactile opposition to the textured garment falling over her knees. This contrast paves the way for a haptic look that caresses her body in close proximity to her, leaving the body bare and naked. Accordingly, I contended that the discourse of nakedness promotes an intimate bodily relation in which the other's body bears the signs of the self. This relation purports to be an erotic encounter that plays on the boundaries between knowing and not-knowing the other's body. Moreover, the carefully rendered intimate openings of the woman's body encourage the viewer to experience intimacy as a state in which one has profound knowledge of the other—even as the absent belly button invites us to consider the notion otherwise. In this capacity, my analysis advocates a mode of engagement with the image by sketching out the notion of intimacy as a visual practice.

This intimate encounter is a strategy that enables the viewer to critically engage with the miniature by acknowledging that, in its historical specificity, the miniature engenders general, transhistorical, and philosophical questions. The miniature visualizes a certain shift in the traditional understanding of the intimate that was conceived in the dichotomies of *mahram* and *na-mahram*, *haram* and *halal*, and *khodi* and g*haribeh*, oppositions that constructed the notion of intimacy on the basis of kinship and gender segregation. Such historical allocation allows us to rethink Wajcman's definition of the intimate as the place that remains aloof from the gaze of the other as realized at the inception of the modern painting: the tableau-window. The encounter with the miniature provides us with an alternative model of intimacy in which the image looks back at the viewer and initiates an intimate, intersubjective engagement. This process allows us to reconsider the intimate not as an absolute state of being *chez soi* away from the gaze of the others, but as a dialogical process in which intimacy is constructed as an intersubjective performance.

In the first two chapters of this study I attempted to contribute in the discussions pertaining to the function of the pictorial detail and the the ways in which it affects our encounters with images. In the following chapter, I zoom out from the detail to a wider realm of inquiry, namely the representation of time and movement in miniature painting. I look at a miniature series from the *Sûrname-i Vehbi* by Master Levnî that depicts the procession of Sultan Ahmed III in three subsequent folios. This ordering has an anachronistic cinematic "touch" to it because the technique underlines a problem of representing an *event*—a problem that extends into the treatment of time and space within motion. Relying on the "critical loop" between two distinct media—a concept inspired by the writings of the Soviet cinematographer Sergei Eisenstein—I address issues concerning representation in the miniature series by engaging a chain of cinematic concepts such as the still, the out-of-field, montage and the interval. This montage of concepts allows me to mediate on the ways in which the procession miniatures produce an idea of event-ness in effect and affect in the service of constructing an imperial visuality.