

Persona Non Grata: Mouradgea d'Ohsson Between Empire, Republic, Kingdom

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A member of the minority in more senses than one, the Ottoman translator, Ignatius Mouradgea d'Ohsson (1740-1807) occupied a unique place in end-of-the-eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire and France. Born in Istanbul to Armenian and French parents, d'Ohsson was a translator for the Swedish Embassy there and hence technically a Swedish subject. He moved to France where he wrote and published the monumental *Tableau général de l'Empire Othomane* (1787), then back to Istanbul from where he was expelled as the Ottoman Empire's first *persona non grata*, only to be expelled one more time from Paris when French-Swedish relations deteriorated. He is, then, both the paradigmatic and impossible figure of the *hôte* ["guest" and "host"] in Istanbul and in Paris and inversely, the universally depatriated *persona non grata*. In both his *Tableau* and in his treatise for reform commissioned by Selim III (1793-1794), d'Ohsson negotiates cultural "origin," authenticity, and reappropriation, and effectively attempts to do the same thing twice, albeit in a mirror reflection.