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"The Chinese Chameleon" – Revisiting Angela Carter's "New – fangled Orientalism"

British writer Angela Carter is famous for her subversive writings, her exuberant allusiveness, and above all, her dazzling postmodernist techniques in bringing everything together. Noticeably, Carter's writings are permeated with Chinese elements and references despite the fact that she had visited China herself. On the one hand, as a literary element, the image of China is historically interwoven with the Gothic literary tradition in presenting Western imagination of the Orientalist other. On the other hand, with the rise of postmodernism and critique of Orientalism, this Orientalist image of China constructed by Eurocentrism was and is still under deconstruction. Given that Carter is highly conscious of both critical theories and her own creative writings, her (re)representation of the Orient comes not as a mimicry of tradition, but a deliberate divergence from the traditional orientalist discourse which allows further critical reflection of it. Thus, Carter's individual perspective including her experience in Japan and her self – professed political commitment of her writings merit special attention. As Carter's artistic style and political ideas develop, her "new – fangled Orientalism" under such critical reflection also takes different shape.