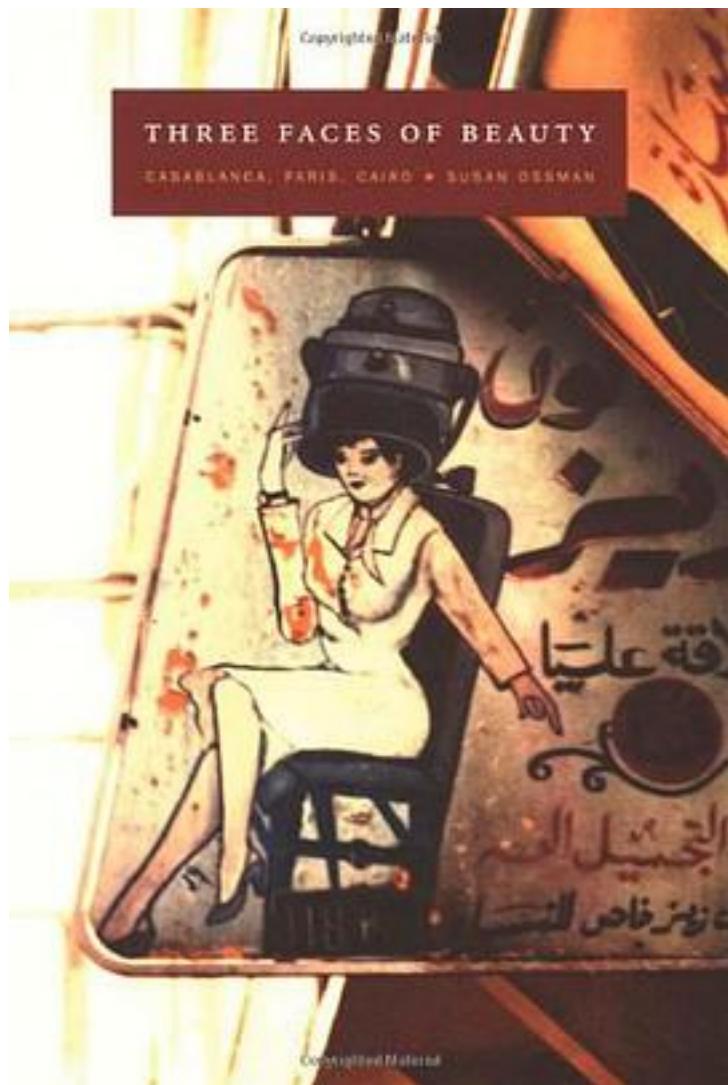


Three Faces of Beauty



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Three Faces of Beauty offers a unique approach to understanding globalisation and cultural change based on a comparative, ethnographic study of a nearly universal institution: the beauty salon. Susan Ossman traces the images and words of the beauty industry as they developed historically between Paris, Cairo, and Casablanca and then vividly demonstrates how such images are embodied today in salons located in each city. By examining how images from fashion magazines, film, and advertising are enacted in beauty salons, Ossman is able to demonstrate how embodiment displays and reworks certain hierarchies. While offering the possibility of freedom from the tethers of status, nation, religion, and nature, beauty is created by these very categories and values, Ossman shows. Drawing on hundreds of interviews, she documents the various rituals of welcome, choice-making, pricing practices, and spatial arrangements in salon after salon. She also reveals ways in which patrons in each of the three cities imagine and co-opt looks they believe are fashionable in the other cities. By observing salons as scenes of instruction, Ossman reveals that beautiful bodies evolve within the intertwining contexts of media, modernity, location, time, postcolonialism, and male expectation. Three Faces of Beauty will interest anthropologists as well as scholars of globalization, media and communication, postcolonialism, and women's studies.

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