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Globalorientalization: Globalization through the Lens of Edward Said's *Orientalism*

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Abstract: This article aims to show, first, that Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) offers a critical genealogy of globalization *avant la lettre*, an account of Orientalism in its global orientation that I call "globalorientalization." Globalorientalization not only precedes but also resembles "globalatinization," Jacques Derrida's genealogy of Europe's ascent to global power. Second, Said's book, anticipating some of the problems posed by globalization, provides an outline of a contrapuntal humanist cosmopolitanism that can free us from static and unproductive oppositions such as that between an essentializing identitarian logic and a universalizing homogeneity, between the local and the global. Said's contrapuntal cosmopolitanism refuses any easy passage or accommodation and emphasizes a critically interactive and restless movement not unlike Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing's metaphor of globalization as an awkward, unstable, and uneven process of "friction." This frictional, contrapuntal cosmopolitanism allows Said to question and unsettle identitarian claims that are still made today—claims that rely on static binary oppositions such as the Occident and the Orient, us and them, and the global and the local.

Keywords: globalorientalization, Derrida, humanism, cosmopolitanism, Said, Tsing

"Globalization" was not a term commonly employed in academic discourse in the 1970s, and so it comes as no surprise that it does not appear in Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), whose recent fortieth anniversary this issue of *ARIEL* celebrates. "Globalization" also does not appear in the books that followed *Orientalism* like *The World, the Text,*

and the Critic (1983) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993). The term "globalization" first appears in Said's writing in his essay "Orientalism, an Afterword," which was published in the journal *Raritan* in 1995 and appended to a reissued edition of *Orientalism* the same year. In this essay, Said draws on work by socialist economist Harry Magdoff to define globalization as "a system by which a small financial elite expanded its power over the whole globe, inflating commodity and service prices, redistributing wealth from lower income sectors (usually in the non-Western world) to the higher-income ones" (55). "Along with this," Said adds, "there has emerged a new transnational order in which states no longer have borders, labor and income are subject only to global managers, and colonialism has reappeared in the subservience of the South to the North" (55).

Although Said's definition of globalization is somewhat commonplace and leans heavily on a leftist critique of the global economy, there are a couple of phrases in this passage that merit attention. Said's description of a system that exerts "power over the whole globe" and claim that "colonialism has reappeared in the subservience of the South to the North" draw attention to a key similarity between globalization and Orientalism, namely the interest of so-called developed nations (mostly Western or Northern nations) to project their power globally in order to shape, control, dominate, and speak for the rest of the world. This article aims to show, first, that Said's *Orientalism* offers a critical genealogy of globalization *avant la lettre* and, second, that the book, anticipating some of the problems posed by globalization, outlines a critical humanist cosmopolitanism, driven by a contrapuntal logic that can free us from static and unproductive oppositions such as those between an essentializing identitarian logic and a universalizing homogeneity or between the local and the global.

I. *Orientalism* and the Genealogy of Globalization

In a talk he gave in 1994, Jacques Derrida proposed that a critical genealogy of globalization would have to look closely at the religious and philosophical legacy of a Europe bent on universalizing itself, a project he termed "globalatinization" in order to draw attention to its Christian

and Latin roots. Following Immanuel Kant's *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, Derrida distinguishes between a cult religion and a moral religion. The former "seeks 'favours of God,' but at bottom, and in essence, it does not act, teaching only prayer and desire. Man is not obliged to become better, be it through the remission of sins" (Derrida, "Faith" 10). In contrast, moral religion, which Kant links to Christianity, enjoins man to act and better himself. Moral religion is thus a self-reflective faith, or what Derrida calls a "reflecting faith," in which "[i]t is not essential and hence not necessary for everyone to know what God does or has done for his salvation, but it is essential to know what man himself must do in order to become worthy of this assistance" (10). For Kant, Derrida argues, Christianity is "the only truly moral religion" that employs practical reason rather than believing solely in divine revelation and is thus entrusted with a mission "reserved exclusively for it and for it alone: that of liberating a 'reflecting faith'" (10). Since, for Kant, Christianity advocates the liberation of a "reflecting faith" that results in the institution of a moral universal or categorical imperative, Derrida concludes that "the unconditional universality of the categorical imperative is evangelical" (11). This Kantian thesis is at the heart of Derrida's "globalatinization," the global evangelism or universalization of a Christian Latinity. Even the current Anglo-American global hegemon, Derrida argues, remains indebted to this Latin Christian heritage. As he points out sardonically, "[*r*]*eligion* [in this case, the truly moral religion of Latin Christianity] circulates in the world, one might say, like an *English word* that has been to Rome and taken a detour to the United States" (29; emphasis in original).

More importantly, Derrida also warns that "globalatinization" is geopolitically and ethico-juridically linked to

> a hyper-imperialist appropriation [that] has been underway now for centuries. It imposes itself in a particularly palpable manner within the conceptual apparatus of international law and of global political rhetoric. Wherever this apparatus dominates, it articulates itself through a discourse on religion. From here on, the word 'religion' is calmly (and violently) applied to

> things which have always been and remain foreign to what this word names and arrests in its history. (29)

The importance for Derrida of establishing globalization's Latin Christian roots, its globalatinization, is that this enables a deconstructive examination of globalization's genealogy as against a globalization unmarked by any historical or religio-cultural provenance. Such a genealogical deconstruction

> would consist in analyzing rigorously and without complacency all of the genealogical features that lead the concept of world, the geopolitical axioms and the assumptions of international law, and everything that rules its interpretation, back to its European, Abrahamic, and predominantly Christian, indeed Roman, filiation (with the effects of hegemony implicit and explicit that this inherently involves). (Derrida, "Globalization" 375)

In this view, globalization is not an objective or inevitable historical process but is globalatinization, a deliberate effort to universalize the values of Christian Europe.

I argue, however, that sixteen years before Derrida first broached the subject of "globalatinization," Said laid the groundwork for a critical genealogy of globalization in *Orientalism*. If the roots of globalization are Latinate, as Derrida asserts, they are, it turns out, Orientalist as well. Globalization might also be called, *pace* Derrida, "globalorientalization." When Derrida warns that globalatinization also involves "hyper-imperialist appropriation" and that the word "religion" (with its etymological and cultural roots in the Latin *religio*) is calmly and violently applied to those things which are foreign to it, he seems to be describing, *mutatis mutandis*, Orientalism's imperial appropriation of the Orient for the West through the apparatus of cultural representation or military conquest as well as its defense of the identity of the West through the force of a nominal and ontological separation of the Occident from an Orient that eternally remains foreign to it. Globalatinization, in affirming the identity of Western expansion and universalization, is also a global-

orientalization that requires the forceful naming and essentializing of that which is Western and that which is not—namely, the Orient. Thus, over a decade before Derrida's reflections on globalatinization, Said already understood, though he would not have phrased it as I do here, that the West's attempt to globalize its Latin Christian identity involves, at the same time, its othering or Orientalizing of the rest of the world. Globalatinization is also a globalorientalization.

The second chapter of *Orientalism* opens with a discussion of Gustave Flaubert's notes or sketches for the conclusion of *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, a novel he did not live to complete. Flaubert describes the two autodidacts contemplating the future of mankind in their (failed) attempt to compile an encyclopedic account of human knowledge. Bouvard proclaims that "[m]odern man is progressing. Europe will be regenerated by Asia. The historical law that civilization moves from Orient to Occident . . . the two forms of humanity will at last be soldered together" (qtd. in Said, *Orientalism* 113). Commenting on Bouvard's vision, Said writes: "Like many of the two men's other visions, this one is *global* and it is *reconstructive*; it represents what Flaubert felt to be the nineteenth-century predilection for the rebuilding of the world according to an imaginative vision, sometimes accompanied by a special scientific technique" (114; emphasis in original). Like many similar "spiritual and intellectual projects of the late eighteenth century," Said continues, Bouvard's is a form of "reconstituted theology—natural supernaturalism, as M. H. Abrams has called it" (114). Abrams describes natural supernaturalism as a kind of Enlightenment secularization of the Christian story, and Said agrees with him that European writers, from the late eighteenth century on, have had to reconstitute the Christian myth of death and resurrection into more intellectually acceptable modern ideas such as that of historical progress and redemption. Bouvard's vision of a Europe redeemed by Asia depends, therefore, on "a secular post-Enlightenment myth whose outlines are unmistakably Christian" (115). At the same time, however, "what mattered was not Asia so much as Asia's *use* to modern Europe" (115; emphasis in original). What we have in Bouvard's vision of a Europe redeemed by the Orient is a reconstituted secular version of a Christian theodicy. Such an assertion of European identity—secu-

lar but also "unmistakably Christian"—as both the origin and the telos of spiritual and material progress reveals the formation not only of globalatinization but also of globalorientalization, insofar as European universalization is made possible only through a definition of Europe as different from the Orient and the rest of the world, a Europe driven as much to differentiate itself from as to dominate those lands and peoples it renders foreign.

In doing so, Orientalists, like Bouvard, employ an "imaginative geography" (55) at once influential and flawed. Said points out that Flaubert understood that the flaw in the imaginative vision of Europe's redemption by Asia is precisely the problem of taking one's representations of the other as matching actuality. As he explains:

> He [Flaubert] saw perfectly well that underneath the *idée reçue* "Europe-regenerated-by-Asia" lurked a very insidious hubris. Neither "Europe" nor "Asia" was anything without the visionaries' technique for turning vast geographical domains into treatable, and manageable, entities. At bottom, therefore, Europe and Asia were *our* Europe and *our* Asia—our *will* and *representation*, as [Arthur] Schopenhauer had said. Historical laws were in reality *historians*' laws, just as "the two forms of humanity" drew attention less to actuality than to a European capacity for lending man-made distinctions an air of inevitability. As for the other half of the phrase—"will at last be soldered together"—there Flaubert mocked the blithe indifference of science to actuality, a science which anatomized and melted human entities as if they were so much inert matter. (115–16; emphasis in original)

What Bouvard regards as historical laws and geographical science turn out to be merely ideological assumptions that do not examine their "own deeply ingrained and unself-conscious bad innocence" or the fact that they conceal an "egoistic will to power" (116).

Thus what really matters in Bouvard's imaginative geography—one shared by many Orientalists—is "not Asia so much as Asia's *use* to modern Europe" (115; emphasis in original). Moreover, this Bouvardian imagi-

native geography did not remain an idle fictional speculation. As Said points out, it accompanied "the greatest age of territorial acquisition ever known. By the end of World War I Europe had colonized 85 percent of the earth" (123). Orientalism's imaginative geography, "far from being exclusively an intellectual or theoretical feature," led inexorably to imperialism and colonialism, "the systematic accumulation of human beings and territories" (123). It is little wonder then that a staunch imperialist like Lord Curzon could praise geography as "the most cosmopolitan of all sciences" (215). In a 1912 speech Curzon addressed to the Geographical Society, of which he was president, the former Viceroy of India asserted: "Nowadays we regard geographical knowledge as an essential part of knowledge in general. By the aid of geography, and in no other way, do we understand the action of great natural forces, the distribution of population, the growth of commerce, the expansion of frontiers, the development of States, the splendid achievement of human energy in its various manifestations" (qtd. in Said, *Orientalism* 215). A similar belief in the power of geography elicited the following statement from another enthusiast, according to Said: "The geographical societies are formed to break the fatal charm that holds us enchained to our shores" (218). Geography as "the most cosmopolitan of all sciences" was thus seen by its nineteenth-century boosters to be in the service of imperial expansion.

Said's close attention to Orientalism's interest in geography and its links to imperialist expansion anticipates the expansive and hegemonic spatial imaginaries of present-day pundits writing on economic and sociocultural globalization. Just as Orientalism's imaginative geography and its regime of representation helped to explain—and justify—European imperial expansion, so too do contemporary theories of globalization employ narrative models and representational techniques to account for their interpretations of the state of the world today. In their illuminating study *The Imagined Economies of Globalization*, Angus Cameron and Ronen Palan point out that "[g]lobalization . . . is not a simple and unmediated process that can be described objectively. Rather, it is a mediated concept—what we know about globalization comes to us through the filter of theories and images that prescribe both its form and conse-

quences and our responses to them. Globalization is not just a phenomenon. It is also a story" (2–3). Similarly, Susie O'Brien and Imre Szeman argue that "[o]ne of the first things to realize about globalization is that its significance can only be grasped through its realization in a variety of narrative forms" (604). The "truth" of globalization is often represented, for example, by maps of the world diagramming investment flows or internet connectivity, or by a proliferation of concept-metaphors or phrases such as "the global soul" (Iyer), "the world is flat" (Friedman), "the smooth space of Empire" (Hardt and Negri 190), "the network society" (Castells), or "a world of disjunctive global flows" (Appadurai 47). These representational forms, which involve scaling or narrative models and tropes, succeed in presenting what they regard as globalization only by excluding or suppressing other aspects of the world that do not fit the version of the global they wish to highlight. As in Orientalism, accounts of globalization employ a repertoire of representations that speak to spatial or geographical expansion even as these representations narrow the scope of reality by screening out the untidy, the out-of-place that may challenge their claims. Like Orientalism, theories of globalization do the representing for those who cannot represent themselves. Said's critical examination of Orientalist techniques of narration and representation is thus proleptic insofar as it anticipates how geographical imaginaries and spatial tropes are still deployed in discussions of globalization today.

Orientalism employs an "imaginative geography" that allows it to turn "vast geographical domains into treatable, and manageable, entities" and envisions a reconstituted theology in which the Occident becomes the telos of a post-Enlightenment secular myth of redemption "whose outlines are unmistakably Christian." These ideological strategies anticipate contemporary globalization's reconfiguration of geographical space and scale and its view of itself as the "end of history," the telos of a developmental logic. Said's book thus shows how a Western geopolitical discourse coupled with a secularized myth of progress and redemption produces globalorientalization, a foundational narrative that validates what Aamir Mufti describes as "the cultural logic of (Western) bourgeois society in its global or outward orientation, in its encounter with and reorganization of human societies on a planetary scale" (26).

II. Against Orientalism's Identitarian Logic

One can well understand Lord Curzon's praise of geography as "the most cosmopolitan of all sciences" as an endorsement of globalorientalization, or Orientalism in its "global or outward orientation." Cosmopolitanism meant to Curzon the expansion of empire's reach and the imposition of British civilization and rule over other peoples and territories. Similarly, for another British imperialist, Evelyn Baring, Lord Cromer, Consul-General of Egypt from 1883 to 1907, cosmopolitanism meant persuading Egyptians, Indians, or Zulus to learn from the British. Britain thereby obtained from these subject races, as Cromer put it, "some sort of cosmopolitan allegiance grounded on the respect always accorded to superior talents and unselfish conduct" (qtd. in Said, *Orientalism* 37). "Even the Central African savage," Cromer went on to declare, "may eventually learn to chant a hymn in honour of Astraea Redux, as represented by the British official who denies him gin but gives him justice" (37). Said further cites Cromer as asserting unambiguously that "the real future of Egypt . . . lies not in the direction of a narrow nationalism, which will only embrace native Egyptians . . . but rather in that of an enlarged cosmopolitanism" (qtd. in *Orientalism* 37). To Cromer the rejection of Egyptian nationalism meant Egyptian emergence from a "narrow" parochialism or nativism into an "enlarged" cosmopolitanism that would welcome tutelage from a foreign colonial power. For Cromer, as for Curzon, "cosmopolitanism" is another name for imperial rule, and such a re-nomination is achieved by means of an Orientalist binary operation in which to be cosmopolitan is to enter a realm of enlargement, advancement, and modernization while to embrace nationalism is to be mired in the local, the narrowly provincial, and the backward. In short, what might be called "cosmopolitanism with imperialist characteristics" is not so different from what historians describe as Europe's civilizing mission.

Paradoxically, imperialist cosmopolitanism is ethnocentrism gone global. This is because Curzon's and Cromer's cosmopolitanism is a form of globalorientalization in which British or European Orientalism dictates relations with other countries and peoples—an Orientalism that, as Said shows, deliberately constructs the Orient as the binary opposite

of all that Europe stands for. In fact, Orientalist cosmopolitanism is self-conscious and reflexive in its relation to other cultures and societies; it is supremely aware that British or European identity is dependent on its difference from other identities, a difference that ensures or guarantees its superiority.

Even a more liberal conception of cosmopolitanism such as Kant's seems unable to shed its Eurocentrism. In his attempt to sketch a history of mankind that will eventually lead to "a universal *cosmopolitan state*, the womb in which all of the human species' original capacities will be developed" (Kant 38; emphasis in original), Kant nonetheless sees Europe as taking the progressive lead. His universal history with a cosmopolitan intent begins with Greek history, progresses through Roman history, and ends with his Enlightened Europe. In this cosmopolitan history, "one will discover a course of improvement conforming to rules in the constitutions of the nations on our continent [Europe] which will in all likelihood eventually give laws to all others [other continents]" (38). Europe, it seems, remains at the forefront of Kant's cosmopolitan project.

Thus, from Kant to Cromer, the cosmopolitanism of late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe is paradoxically part of a reflexive modern ethnocentrism, one that is not naïve like the ethnocentrism of pre-modern societies that were rarely exposed to others. This Eurocentric cosmopolitanism, John Tomlinson argues, is "of a piece with the emergence of a reflexively ordered nation-state system (the reflexive awareness built into political conceptualizations of 'borders,' of sovereignty and so on)" (74). We might add to Tomlinson's list the concept of identity. Eurocentric cosmopolitanism (which we can also call globalorientalization) is aware that the differentiation of identities by race, culture, or nationality is needed for its functioning. It is this differentiation of identities that Said sees as the central operation of Orientalism, and his critique of Orientalist identitarian thought furnishes the critical resources for thinking our way out of some of the dilemmas globalization has created.

European Orientalists, Said contends, saw "Orientals" as a "Platonic essence, which any Orientalist (or ruler of Orientals) might examine, un-

derstand, and expose" (*Orientalism* 38). Their identity was always already fixed and given since it was "*contained* and *represented* by dominating frameworks" (40; emphasis in original). "The Orient," Said continues, adopting a Foucauldian tone, "was viewed as if framed by the classroom, the criminal court, the prison, the illustrated manual. Orientalism, then, is knowledge of the Orient that places things Oriental in class, court, prison, or manual for scrutiny, study, judgment, discipline, or governing" (41). Oriental identity, thus framed or re-presented, is, moreover, judged or evaluated in ways that would always show "the ineradicable distinction between Western superiority and Oriental inferiority" (42). The "main intellectual issue raised by Orientalism" (45), then, is the following:

> Can one divide human reality, as indeed human reality seems to be genuinely divided, into clearly different cultures, histories, traditions, societies, even races, and survive the consequences humanly? By surviving the consequences humanly, I mean to ask whether there is any way of avoiding the hostility expressed by the division say, of men into "us" (Westerners) and "they" (Orientals). For such divisions are generalities whose use historically and actually has been to press the importance of the distinction between some men and some other men, usually towards not especially admirable ends. (45)

Said's critique of Orientalism is therefore directed at its essentializing identitarian logic. What globalorientalization (or Orientalism in its outward orientation) has done is to map out the world through an imaginative geography into different zones, cultures, nationalities, and races. Mufti astutely observes:

> Orientalism consists of those Western knowledge practices in the modern era whose emergence made possible for the first time the notion of a single world as a space populated by distinct civilizational complexes, each in possession of its own tradition, the unique expression of its own forms of national "genius." It is the name for the vast cultural apparatus in

> modern Western culture for the establishment of identitarian truth-claims around the world—an *imperial* task, par excellence. (24; emphasis in original)

Mufti cites a "luminous sentence" in one of Said's essays as a "precise aphoristic formulation" of imperialism's global identitarian initiative: "Imperialism is the export of identity" (qtd. in Mufti 24). A longer passage on imperialism's involvement with identity politics appears in the concluding paragraph of *Culture and Imperialism*:

> Imperialism consolidated the mixture of cultures and identities on a global scale. But its worst and most paradoxical gift was to allow people to believe that they were only, mainly, exclusively, white, or Black, or Western, or Oriental. . . . No one can deny the persisting continuities of long traditions, sustained habitations, national languages, and cultural geographies, but there seems no reason except fear and prejudice to keep insisting on their separation and distinctiveness, as if that was all human life was about. (Said 336)

Identity as a political call for unity mobilized by the oppressed in anti-imperial and anti-colonial struggles for liberation was also, ironically it seems, employed by Orientalist imperialism to divide the world into separate entities and to justify its claims of superiority and right to rule.

In *Orientalism*, Said comes out firmly against any kind of identitarian nominalism—the ability to generalize and confer an identity on a culture or a group of people. Orientalists are interested only in collective identities rather than in discussing individuals and thus prefer generalizations about "Orientals, Asiatics, Semites, Muslims, Arabs, Jews, races, mentalities, nations, and the like" (*Orientalism* 155). Orientalist scholars were often aware that individual differences existed among the populations they studied, but they were constrained by their profession's generalizing claims about Oriental, Semitic, Islamic, or other identities. As Said points out,

> [t]he tendency of the former [the recognition of individual differences] was always towards greater variety, yet this variety

> was always being restrained, compressed downwards and backwards to the radical terminal of the generality. Every modern, native instance of behavior became an effusion to be sent back to the original terminal, which was strengthened in the process. This kind of "dispatching" was precisely the discipline of Orientalism. (234)

Orientalism is therefore principally involved in the production and policing of identity. The task, then, of a critical humanism is to question all claims to an unchanging, essentialized identity and to deny that human beings are limited by the culture, race, religion, or nation into which they are born. The very term "the Orient" needs to be questioned, for stripped of its constructed identity and its restrictive limitations, "there would be scholars, critics, intellectuals, human beings, for whom the racial, ethnic, and national distinctions were less important than the common enterprise of promoting human community" (328). This statement, which appears on the last page of *Orientalism*, offers a condensed description of Said's humanism—a humanism that promotes a humanity free from the constraints and closures of identity.

III. Toward a Contrapuntal Humanist Cosmopolitanism

How to put a stop to the continuing export and consolidation of identities in a world that may be globalized by transportation and communication technologies but is still riven by warring ethnicities and religions, an increasing defensiveness over national borders, and a growing hostility to foreign others? How to move away from a persistent globalorientalization that still stubbornly believes in unchanging cultural traditions, essentialized racial or ethnic identities, and the clash of civilizations?[1] For Said, the answer can be found in a critical humanism that is also a critical cosmopolitanism. He was, of course, aware of the danger of misunderstanding terms like "humanism" and "cosmopolitanism," terms burdened by a long Eurocentric or imperial history of use. Nevertheless, distinguishing his use of the terms from those earlier compromised ones, Said could unequivocally declare in his posthumously published book *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, "I believed then, and still believe,

that it is possible to be critical of humanism in the name of humanism and that, schooled in its abuses by the experience of Eurocentrism and empire, one could fashion a different kind of humanism that was cosmopolitan" (10–11). "I would go so far as to say that humanism is critique," he argues (22). In what follows, I track the development of this Saidian critical humanist cosmopolitanism from *Orientalism* to his last writings and show that it functions not only as a counter-argument against the identitarian claims of an imperialist Orientalism, which I call globalorientalization, but also as a way of avoiding sterile oppositions in many accounts of globalization such as that between the local and the global—between particular identities and the homogenizing threat of the universal.

A humanism that works to free itself of identity is a cosmopolitan humanism. It is a humanism not bound to a culture, a religion, a race, or a nation. Unlike the imperial or Orientalist cosmopolitanism of Cromer or Curzon, Said's cosmopolitan humanism does not see the world divided into different unchanging identities that can be ranked according to how enlightened, advanced, or powerful they are. It is a cosmopolitanism based on the individual's adoption of a point of view external to or even alienated from her own cultural, religious, or ethnic origins and her desire to see her identity as never completely secured but accompanied by a necessary self-distancing and self-criticism.

Said cites the work of Erich Auerbach as an example of a humanist cosmopolitanism that is able to judge and evaluate its own culture precisely by maintaining distance from it. In the course of a discussion of the achievements of humanistic scholarship, Said singles out Auerbach's *Mimesis*, which, he notes, was written while the author was in exile in Istanbul, Turkey. *Mimesis* was Auerbach's attempt to sum up the principles and values of Western culture at a moment of crisis, when that very culture was threatened by destruction. At the same time, Said adds,

> [n]o less important for Auerbach—and this fact is of immediate relevance to Orientalism—was the humanistic tradition of involvement in a national culture or literature not one's own. . . . Not for nothing, then, did Auerbach end his autum-

> nal reflections with a significant quotation from Hugo of St. Victor's *Didascalicon*: "The man who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner; he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong; but he is perfect to whom the entire world is as a foreign land." The more one is able to leave one's cultural home, the more easily is one able to judge it, and the whole world as well, with the spiritual detachment *and* generosity necessary for true vision. The more easily, too, does one assess oneself and alien cultures with the same combination of intimacy and distance. (*Orientalism* 259; emphasis in original)

This is an extraordinary passage in a book that otherwise describes the almost inescapable grip of Orientalism on Western scholarship. Here, Auerbach's *Mimesis* offers a cosmopolitan voice that does not assert the superiority of Western cultural identity over others but judges its own culture by distancing it from itself by way of other cultures.

Clearly, Auerbach's humanist cosmopolitanism is important to Said because he returns to it in "Secular Criticism," an essay that introduces *The World, the Text, and the Critic*, published a few years after *Orientalism*. Said again cites Auerbach citing Hugo of St. Victor and remarks that

> *Mimesis* itself is not, as it has so frequently been taken to be, only a massive reaffirmation of the Western cultural tradition, but also a work built upon a critically important alienation from it, a work whose conditions and circumstances of existence are not immediately derived from the culture it describes with such extraordinary insight and brilliance but built rather on an agonizing distance from it. (*The World* 8)

Auerbach and Hugo of St. Victor appear again in the concluding pages of *Culture and Imperialism*, and Said reiterates Auerbach's view (and his) that the twelfth-century monk's words provide "a model for anyone . . . wishing to transcend the restraints of imperial or national or provincial limits" (335). But this time, Said adds a qualification to make it clear that neither Auerbach nor Hugo of St. Victor can be accused of rejecting their identity, culture, or homeland. Hugo, Said writes,

> makes it clear that the "strong" or "perfect" person achieves independence and detachment by *working through* attachments, not by rejecting them. . . . [Y]ou must have the independence and detachment of someone whose homeland is "sweet," but whose actual condition makes it impossible to recapture that sweetness, and even less possible to derive satisfaction from substitutes furnished by illusion or dogma, whether deriving from pride in one's heritage or from certainty about who "we" are. No one today is purely *one* thing. Labels like Indian, or woman, or Muslim, or American are not more than starting points, which if followed into actual experience for only a moment are quickly left behind. (*Culture* 336; emphasis in original)

This passage reveals the importance of maintaining a dialectical or, to use a term favored by Said, "contrapuntal" tacking-to-and-fro between identity and that which exceeds or goes beyond it. Said is not advocating an absolute anti-identitarian stance, a postmodern total rejection of identity; rather, what he wants, like Auerbach and Hugo, is a "*working through*" of identity in order to see it not as ontologically fixed and unchanging but as a "starting point" for further experiences to which it will inevitably be exposed. In the humanist cosmopolitanism Said promotes, we are neither imprisoned by identity nor totally, weightlessly free of it. The cosmopolitan humanist therefore does not completely reject his or her identity—cultural, ethnic, national, religious, sexual, or whatever—but sees this identity as always already provisional or transitional, subjecting it to questioning and criticism. Self-criticism, as Akeel Bilgrami puts it, "opens itself up to resources . . . not present while the focus is on the cozy and insular. The 'Other,' therefore, is the source and resource for a better, more critical understanding of the 'Self'" (xi-xii).

The topic of humanist cosmopolitanism comes most clearly into view in Said's posthumously published books, such as *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* (2004) and *Freud and the Non-European* (2004), as it assumes the task of freeing us from the baleful and violent identity politics of globalorientalization. Whereas Auerbach and Hugo of

St. Victor occupy the role of cosmopolitan humanists in Said's earlier writing, we have, in his later texts, the figure of Isaac Deutscher (the Polish-born Jewish biographer of Leon Trotsky and Joseph Stalin and an important influence for the British New Left) and his concept of the non-Jewish Jew.[2] "It is invigorating to recall," Said writes,

> Isaac Deutscher's insufficiently known book of essays, *The Non-Jewish Jew*, for an account of how great Jewish thinkers—Spinoza, chief among them, as well as Freud, Heine, and Deutscher himself—were in, and at the same time renounced, their tradition, preserving the original tie by submitting it to the corrosive questioning that took them well beyond it, sometimes banishing them from community in the process. (*Humanism* 76–77)

Said omits mentioning other important thinkers such as Karl Marx, Trotsky, and Rosa Luxemburg who also appear on Deutscher's list of non-Jewish Jews. Deutscher's name comes up again in Said's book on Sigmund Freud. Taking his cue from Deutscher's study of Jewish thinkers who have identified as Jews and yet have also gone beyond that identity, Said argues that Freud's late work, *Moses and Monotheism*, expresses Freud's own conflicted, cosmopolitan beliefs. He praises Freud for providing a "profound exemplification of the insight that even for the most definable, the most identifiable, the most stubborn communal identity—for him, this was the Jewish identity—there are inherent limits that prevent it from being fully incorporated into one, and only one, Identity" (*Freud* 53–54). Said identifies in Freud's thought a resolute antinomianism, an inherent dissenting streak that resembles Derrida's concept of an "autoimmune logic" at work in the idea of Europe, an autoimmunity or self-destruction of Europe's immune identity resulting in the auto-deconstruction of Eurocentric globalization.[3] Yet Said also acknowledges the high price one pays for critically distancing oneself from identity. As he notes:

> Freud's symbol of those limits [the limits of identity] was that the founder of Jewish identity was himself a non-Europe-

> an Egyptian. In other words, identity cannot be thought or worked through itself alone; it cannot constitute or even imagine itself without that originary break or flaw which will not be repressed, because Moses was Egyptian, and therefore always outside the identity inside which so many have stood, and suffered. . . . The strength of this thought is, I believe, that it can be articulated in and speak to other besieged identities as well—not through dispensing palliatives such as tolerance and compassion but, rather, by attending to it as a troubling, disabling, destabilizing secular wound—the essence of the cosmopolitan, from which there can be no recovery, no state of resolved or Stoic calm, and no utopian reconciliation even within itself. (*Freud* 54)

The "essence of the cosmopolitan" is therefore a "secular wound" that will trouble, disable, and destabilize any secure or secured identity, never allowing identity to become one with itself through the exclusion of others or even the other within the self.

In her response to Said's analysis of Freud, Jacqueline Rose asks whether Said is not a bit sanguine in his view that this wound at the heart of identity can lead to a cosmopolitan openness:

> For trauma [the wound], far from generating freedom, openness to others as well as to the divided and unresolved fragments of self, leads to a very different kind of fragmentation—one which is, in Freud's own words, "devastating," and causes identities to batten down, to go exactly the other way: towards dogma, the dangers of coercive and coercing forms of faith. Are we at risk of idealizing the flaws and fissures of identity? (75–76)

It is a good question indeed. But Said, I think, was aware of this dilemma. After all, he sees the cosmopolitan questioning of identity as the opening of a wound, or, to put it another way, that openness is a wound. He also admits that the position taken by Deutscher or Freud is difficult if not impossible for many of us: "Not many of us can or would want

to aspire to such a dialectically fraught, so sensitively located a class of individuals" (*Humanism* 77). In *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*, Said mentions Giovanni Battista Vico's tragic view that knowledge (or identity, for that matter) "is permanently undermined by 'the indefinite nature of the human mind.'" (12). He further notes that "there is always something radically incomplete, insufficient, provisional, disputable, and arguable about humanistic knowledge that Vico never loses sight of and that, as I said, gives the whole idea of humanism a tragic flaw that is constitutive to it and cannot be removed" (12). Trauma, wound, tragic flaw—Said well knows that these are to be endured by a humanist cosmopolitanism that seeks to question knowledge and identity and to open them up to history, change, and the presence of other peoples and knowledges. So, if we are not to circle the wagons, batten down the hatches, or believe that to safeguard "territories and selves seem[s] to require killing rather than living" (77), then we should risk the trauma or wound of humanist cosmopolitanism.

Said's humanist cosmopolitanism also provides us with a way of exiting the opposition between the local and the global, still employed in debates on globalization. To simplify somewhat, in these debates, those in favor of the local see it as standing for local or national autonomy with absolute or maximum control over its territory and borders and its unique culture or way of life. The global then stands for external, often threatening, political or cultural forces with imperial designs to destroy all things local and impose a global cultural homogeneity shaped by powerful capitalist economies. On the other hand, from the globalist position, the local is susceptible to a narrow parochialism or, worse, an oppressive chauvinism or nativism. The local also stands accused of NIMBYism (a not-in-my-backyard mentality) only invested in its own immediate surroundings when it should be more attentive to a highly interconnected global environment in our Anthropocene era.

Cosmopolitanism, in these debates, often appears to side with globalization. But cosmopolitanism need not oppose localism. In an insightful discussion of cosmopolitanism as "ethical glocalism" (194), Tomlinson points out that cosmopolitanism must contain two dispositions that may appear contradictory but are not. Cosmopolitanism must experi-

ence a "distanciated identity" that is "not totally circumscribed by the immediate locality, but, crucially, that embraces a sense of what unites us as human beings, of common risks and possibilities, of mutual responsibilities" (194). At the same time, however, cosmopolitanism must respect particular identities and cultures, attempt to understand their beliefs and aspirations, and remain open to cultural difference. The cosmopolitan, Tomlinson writes,

> is precisely someone who is able to live—ethically, culturally—*in both the global and the local at the same time*. Cosmopolitans can recognize and value their own cultural dispositions and negotiate as equals with other autonomous locals. But they can also think beyond the local to the long-distance and the long-term consequences of actions, recognize common global interests and be able to enter into an intelligent relationship of dialogue with others who start from different assumptions, about how to promote their interests. (195; emphasis in original)

To be sure, Tomlinson's ethical cosmopolitanism appears rather too sunny and utopian and does not always fit our experience of a world in which global mobility has created more unwanted refugees and unsettled, alienated migrants than the kind of thoughtful, dialogical cosmopolitans he favours. Simon Gikandi, for example, forcefully argues that the kind of ethical cosmopolitanism espoused by Tomlinson or Kwame Anthony Appiah, while worthy of support, is a stance accorded exclusively to privileged liberal elites. With Appiah's book *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* in mind, Gikandi contends "that a discourse of cosmopolitanism remains incomplete unless we read the redemptive narrative of being global in a contrapuntal relationship with the narrative of statelessness, and by reproduction, of locality, where we least expect it—in the metropolis. The refugee is the Other of the cosmopolitan" (26). He writes that his argument is framed by an "earlier discourse on exile and the value of rootlessness. For some of the most distinguished thinkers of the modern period, from Hannah Arendt to Edward Said, the characteristic figure of the twentieth century was the refugee and exile. Both represented the underside of modernity and

the failure of a discourse of reason and rights" (26–27). Gikandi's argument that cosmopolitanism's redemptive narrative must be thought about contrapuntally with the troubling narrative of the refugee or exile adds a dimension of complexity to Said's humanist cosmopolitanism. *Orientalism*, for example, was written from the point of view of an exile (and, in a sense, a refugee whose parents were forcibly dispossessed of their Palestinian home) who did not feel at ease in America. Said confesses his motivation for writing *Orientalism*: "My own experiences . . . are in part what made me write this book. The life of an Arab Palestinian in the West, particularly in America, is disheartening. There exists here an almost unanimous consensus that politically he does not exist, and when it is allowed that he does, it is either as a nuisance or as an Oriental" (27). Said also recognizes "a great difference . . . between the optimistic mobility, the intellectual liveliness" of the cosmopolitan intellectual and "the massive dislocations, waste, misery, and horrors endured in our century's migrations and mutilated lives" (*Culture* 332). Yet, despite this difference, Said asserts that

> while it would be the rankest Panglossian dishonesty to say that the bravura performances of the intellectual exile and the miseries of the displaced person or refugee are the same, it is possible, I think, to regard the intellectual as first distilling then articulating the predicaments that disfigure modernity—mass deportation, imprisonment, population transfer, collective dispossession, and forced immigration. (332–33)

What the intellectual exile (who in Said's work is indistinguishable from the humanist cosmopolitan) distills and articulates is the experience of being unsettled, of not belonging, of living in the margins. For from the margins, "the rewards of accommodation, yea-saying, settling in" can be refused and the authority of power rigorously questioned:

> Even if one is not an actual immigrant or expatriate, it is still possible to think as one, to imagine and investigate in spite of barriers, and always to move away from the centralizing authorities towards the margins, where you see things that are

> usually lost on minds that have never traveled beyond the conventional and the comfortable. . . . The *exilic* intellectual does not respond to the logic of the conventional but to the audacity of daring, and to representing change, to moving on, not standing still. (*Representations* 46–47; emphasis in original)

Said recognizes in the alienation, unsettledness, and marginality of the refugee or exile the pain and mutilation of displacement; but, perhaps more significantly, he also sees that the site of displacement and marginality can proffer resources for critical thought. His cosmopolitanism is therefore more strenuous—we might say more contrapuntal—than Tomlinson's or Appiah's since it is less about the ease of accepting or accommodating differences than about exposing and challenging differential access to power (a point repeatedly stressed in *Orientalism* and the texts that follow). Said assumes a difficult combative and critical stance—what he elsewhere calls oppositional or "secular criticism" (*The World* 29)—toward "the authoritatively given *status quo*" (*Representations* 47).

In insisting that one must not accept any totalizing authority or convention but instead always move on, Said's cosmopolitanism relies on the theoretical concept of the contrapuntal, which he first introduced in *Culture and Imperialism* in response to criticisms of *Orientalism* for falling into a Orient-Occident binary (though *Orientalism*'s intention was, ironically, to critique that very binary). Contrapuntality is about movement that destabilizes the static entities of a binary configuration by making them interact and overlap in a non-hierarchical manner; it is a restless movement that denies the satisfactions of stasis and the essentialization of identity. "In the counterpoint of Western classical music," Said explains, "various themes play off one another, with only a provisional privilege being given to any particular one; yet in the resulting polyphony there is . . . an organized interplay that derives from the themes, not from a rigorous melodic or formal principle outside the work" (*Culture* 51). A contrapuntal critical approach can therefore do away with binaries like Oriental and Occidental, cosmopolitan and native, and global and local because it dwells not on either pole of the binaries but on the

movement which gives those binary entities only a provisional standing. Tomlinson's model of ethical cosmopolitanism, for example, is weakened precisely by his continuing reliance on the binary relationship of the global and the local even as he tries to conflate the binary into the conjoined figure of the "ethical glocalist" (198). Contrapuntal movement, on the other hand, erases the binary relationship of the global and the local by questioning the stability of both as existing entities. Cultural identities, Said argues, should be understood "not as essentializations (although part of their enduring appeal is that they seem and are considered to be like essentializations) but as contrapuntal ensembles" (*Culture* 52). This means that no cultural identity is ever essential or fixed as a stable entity in a binary configuration; cultural identity is only ever in movement, in transit—it exists only contrapuntally.

Said's contrapuntal analyses are in some ways similar to the anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing's metaphor of globalization as a continual process of friction. Tsing writes:

> In reaction to popular over-enthusiasm for programmatic global predictions, I emphasize the unexpected and unstable aspects of global interaction. To enrich the single-mindedness of cultural explanation[,] . . . I stress the importance of cross-cultural and long-distance encounters in forming everything we know as culture. Cultures are continually co-produced in the interactions I call "friction" the awkward, unequal, unstable, and creative qualities of interconnection across difference. (3–4)

Tsing argues against models of globalization that celebrate the seamless and smooth "flow of goods, ideas, money, and people" unimpeded by friction (5). The models that see globalization as the end of national and cultural barriers, that celebrate "the freedom to travel everywhere" and promote mobility as "self-actualization" (5), can be likened to liberal, elitist views of global cosmopolitanism as the ability to engage freely and equally with others. But Tsing's metaphor of friction and Said's concept of the contrapuntal refuse any such easy passage or accommodation. Instead, both friction and contrapuntality suggest a continual interac-

tive movement, tracking both connection and difference, mobility and obstruction. Tsing suggests that roads provide a good image of how friction works: "Roads create pathways that make motion easier and more efficient, but in doing so they limit where we go. The ease of travel they facilitate is also a structure of confinement. Friction inflects historical trajectories, enabling, excluding, and particularizing" (6). Tsing's description of globalization as an uneven, interactive process of friction whose outcomes are sometimes liberating and sometimes obstructive and exclusionary is similar to Said's insistence that a "global, contrapuntal analysis should be modelled not (as earlier notions of comparative literature were) on a symphony but rather on an atonal ensemble; we must take into account all sorts of spatial or geographical and rhetorical practices—inflections, limits, constraints, intrusions, inclusions, prohibitions—all of them tending to elucidate a complex and uneven topography" (*Culture* 318). Though Said never followed through by explicitly or extensively applying this contrapuntal approach to an analysis of globalization, such an analysis could have critically challenged overdetermined, single-track, programmatic theories of globalization in the same effective ways as Tsing's ethnographic investigations of global friction.

The best example that Said offers of contrapuntality, however, occurs in the concluding paragraph of his memoir *Out of Place*, which provides a description of himself while experiencing insomnia:

> I occasionally experience myself as a cluster of flowing currents. I prefer this to the idea of a solid self, the identity to which so many attach so much significance. These currents, like the themes of one's life, flow along during the waking hours, and at their best, they require no reconciling, no harmonizing. They are "off" and may be out of place, but at least they are always in motion, in time, in place, in the form of all kinds of strange combinations moving about, not necessarily forward, sometimes against each other, contrapuntally yet without one central theme. A form of freedom, I'd like to think, even if I am far from being totally convinced that it is. That skepticism too is one of the themes I particularly want to hold on to. With so

> many dissonances in my life I have learned actually to prefer being not quite right and out of place. (295)

Like Said, the cosmopolitan humanist is a contrapuntal being—ceaselessly in motion, made up of strange combinations—who is never comfortable with any form of accommodation. She is a perpetual exile and migrant who is as acutely aware of the pain of separation and exclusion as she is of the freedom to which she is nonetheless skeptically attached. This is a complex, entangled, and difficult cosmopolitanism, unlike the sunnier form offered by Tomlinson or Appiah. Said's cosmopolitan humanist is neither a globe-trotting individual who feels at home everywhere nor a "glocalist" who lives reassuringly at the same time in both the global and the local. She is someone who has dissolved the static binary of the global and the local by living contrapuntally amidst many disjunct, unharmonizable flows, aware of both the dangers and possibilities of what Tsing calls friction. She is an oppositional, secular critic who stubbornly refuses to accept the authority of the status quo or the logic of the conventional, whose identity is formed by dissonance and friction, and who is, therefore, never quite right and always out of place. This contrapuntal conception of cosmopolitanism, of never ever being in place because of always being in motion, becomes Said's response post-*Orientalism* to that book's critical exposure of the imperial identity politics—with its imperative to essentialize and its hardened distinctions—that is at the core of Orientalism.

Cosmopolitanism, which one may equally call contrapuntal living, the ability to live in restless motion so that self and other, Occident and Orient, local and global constantly overlap and remain unsettled, is the mission that Said sets for the humanist: "The task of the humanist is not just to occupy a position or place, nor simply to belong somewhere, but to be both insider and outsider to the circulating ideas and values that are at issue in our society or someone else's society or the society of the other" (*Humanism* 76). Said's contrapuntal cosmopolitanism accepts neither the global nor the local because rather than a position or place there is only movement, circulation, counterpoint, and constant departure from a place to which one is attached, however difficult that

may be, so that one may better judge it. Said's cosmopolitanism, with its rhythm of constant arrival and, more significantly, of constant departure, is contrapuntality or criticism itself. Recall that in *Orientalism*, published before globalization and cosmopolitanism became academic buzzwords, Said broaches the subject of humanist cosmopolitanism through the examples of Auerbach and Hugo of St. Victor, who teach us that the person who can love her homeland and yet also go beyond it gains a better and more generous understanding of humanity. In Said's words, "[t]he more one is able to leave one's cultural home, the more easily is one able to judge it, and the whole world as well, with the spiritual detachment *and* generosity necessary for true vision" (*Orientalism* 259; emphasis in original).

Notes

1 The rise of Asian economies and the weakening of Euro-American hegemony in the twenty-first century do not result in the end of globalorientalization. Rather, globalorientalization persists in the form of self-orientalization. The nineteenth-century imperial "export of identity" (Said qtd. in Mufti 24) has been matched over the last three decades or so by the Orient's own importation and assertion of identity. In this way, an economic super-power like China promotes Confucian values while the Indian government rushes to impose Hindutva beliefs. Said was aware of this problem of self-orientalization when he warned that "there is some reason for alarm in the fact that its [Orientalism's] influence has spread to 'the Orient' itself: the pages of books and journals in Arabic (and doubtless in Japanese, various Indian dialects, and other Oriental languages) are filled with second-order analyses by Arabs of 'the Arab mind,' 'Islam,' and other myths" (*Orientalism* 322).

2 Deutscher's view that one should not adopt an uncritical view of identity is evident in his criticism of Israel's wars against the Arabs:

> we must exercise our judgment and must not allow it to be clouded by emotions and memories, however deep or haunting. We should not allow even invocations of Auschwitz to blackmail us into supporting the wrong cause. I am speaking as a Marxist of Jewish origin whose next-of-kin perished in Auschwitz and whose relations live in Israel. To justify or condone Israel's wars against the Arabs is to render Israel a very bad service indeed and to harm its long term interest. Israel's security was not enhanced by the wars of 1956 and 1967; it was undermined and compromised. The 'friends of Israel' have in fact abetted Israel in a ruinous course. (43)

3 For Derrida's concept of autoimmunity see "Autoimmunity." On autoimmunity and Europe, see Derrida and Roudinesco, p. 178. For a discussion of Derrida's views on globalization, see Li.

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