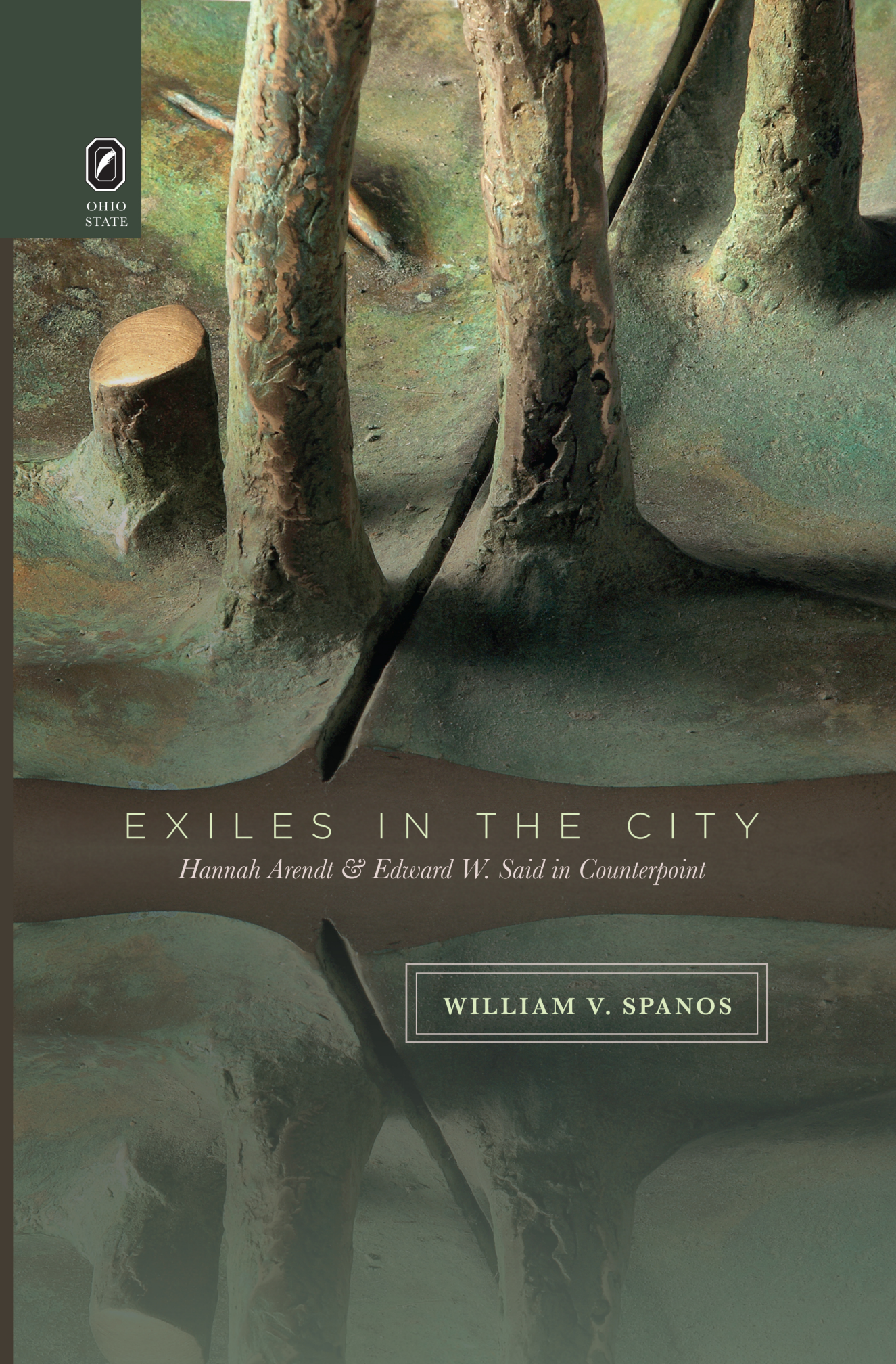

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EXILES IN THE CITY
Hannah Arendt & Edward W. Said in Counterpoint
WILLIAM V. SPANOS

Exiles in the City

To all the exiles in the world:
this testament to the witness
of two, who,
"between domains,
between forms,
between homes,
and between languages,"
saw and spoke the truth
to power

Exiles in the City

Hannah Arendt and Edward W. Said in Counterpoint

William V. Spanos



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Those few refugees who insist upon telling the truth, even to the point of "indecency" [the "conscious pariahs"], get in exchange for their unpopularity one priceless advantage: history is no longer a closed book to them and politics is no longer the privilege of Gentiles. . . . Refugees driven from country to country represent the vanguard of their people—if they keep their identity.

—Hannah Arendt, "We Refugees" (1943)

Yet it is no exaggeration to say that liberation as an intellectual mission, born in the resistance and opposition to the confinements and ravages of imperialism, is now shifted from the settled, established, and domesticated dynamic of culture to its unhoused, de-centered, and exilic energies, energies whose incarnation today is the migrant, and whose consciousness is that of the intellectual and artist in exile, the political figure between domains, between forms, between homes, and between languages.

—Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (1993)

Irreparable means that these things [the beings of being] are consigned without remedy to their being-thus, that they are precisely and only their *thus* . . . ; but irreparable also means that for them there is literally no shelter possible, that in their being-thus they are absolutely exposed, absolutely abandoned.

—Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community*

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Exiles in the City had its origins in a distant and now rather murky past, but one moment of that inaugural time stands out clearly in my mind. It was in May of 1982, when David Farrell Krell, one of Martin Heidegger's ablest critics and translators, invited me to give a series of lectures on the American reception of the controversial philosopher at the universities of Mannheim, Frankfurt, Heidelberg, and Freiburg in Germany. By that time, the French discovery of Heidegger, particularly his "deconstructive" side, had gone far to minimize his Nazi affiliations. But in Germany, at least in German academia, he was still suspect, as I found in the always polite but invariably resistant responses to my efforts to draw out the radically progressive implications of his "de-struction" of the Western philosophical tradition. After my last lecture at Freiburg, my generous host drove me to Todtnauberg to visit the cabin high up in the Black Forest where Heidegger did most of his writing. We were standing by a trough drinking spring water pouring out of a carved head of a bear or wolf adjacent to the cabin and talking about the *Holzwegen*—the indissoluble relationality of light and shadow so fundamental to Heidegger's thinking. Out of what seemed the clear blue, but, I learned shortly after, was actually triggered by the suspicion with which my talks had been met by my German audiences, David told me of the recent publication of *For Love of the World*, a massive, richly documented biography of Hannah Arendt by Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, in which, in the process of acknowledging her intellectual debts, informed her readers that she had not been given access to the life-long Arendt–Heidegger correspondence that had its origins in the love affair they had when she was his student at Marburg University beginning in

1925. In contrast, David told me in confidence, but without going into the reasons, that the Heidegger family, despite its having sequestered the correspondence for three generations, had recently allowed him to look at it, and that the eventual publication of the correspondence would disclose an image of Heidegger that was quite different from the anti-Semitic and Nazi Heidegger who, through the "scholarship" of the traditionalist humanists he and the French poststructuralists had called into question, was beginning to re-emerge.

David's prediction, clearly, did not turned out to be the case. But his summary of the life-long relationship between Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger—one, he underscored, that was maintained primarily by Hannah's initiative—in the context of a complex human history that had been reduced to "Jew" and "German anti-Semitic Gentile" made her seem to me an extraordinarily attractive figure. And this impression was deepened by David's enthusiastic portrayal of Arendt's generous mind and, not least, by his nuanced affirmation of the continuity between her and Heidegger's efforts to rethink thinking—the legacy of the Western tradition—of which I was only vaguely aware at the time. As a result of David's compelling conjuration of the image of Hannah Arendt into the shadows and light of the *Holzwegen,* I decided then and there to immerse myself in her writing after I returned to the United States.

In the fall of 1997, after teaching a number of graduate courses on Heidegger in which I had invoked Arendt's work, particularly *The Human Condition,* in a preliminary way, I decided that I was ready to teach a first graduate seminar on Heidegger and Arendt. In that course, we explored, as the course description attests, "the relationship between Heidegger's ontological inquiry into the question of being and Hannah Arendt's political inquiry into the question of the *polis* in the light of the mounting representation of Heidegger's philosophical writing (by important thinkers such as Jürgen Habermas) as complicitous with Nazism and anti-Semitism." This was followed by a graduate seminar on Michel Foucault and Edward Said in the fall of 1999, and, then, in the spring of 2000, a seminar on Arendt alone, this time attempting to show that "a too exclusive focus on Arendt's 'Habermasian' affinities deflects attention away from the train of thought from which her thinking derived: that which proceeds from Nietzsche through Heidegger and culminates in the poststructuralist theory." Following two further graduate courses on "The Criticism of Foucault and Said" (Fall 2004) and "Foucault, Said, and Globalization" (Spring 2007), which occasionally invoked Arendt, this pedagogical itinerary that had begun in Todtnauberg in 1982 culminated in the fall of 2009 in a graduate seminar on Arendt, Foucault, and Said, in which

we considered "1) the contested relationship between Michel Foucault and Edward Said as it pertains to the question of the secular/humanism; and 2) the relationship, all too often unremarked, between Said's and Arendt's particular interest in the now globally central issue of the Middle East, not least, the highly fraught question of Israel's relationship to the Palestinian people." What seemed on the surface to have been a long errant process turned out to be an improvisational one that, in fact, brought the singular voices of Arendt and Said, "conscious pariah" and "exilic consciousness" or "non-Jewish Jew" and "non-Palestinian Palestinian," together in intimate strife—or counterpoint—in my mind. Thus, this belated retrieval of that inaugural occasion in Todtnauberg *in illo tempore* and my expression of gratitude to David Farrell Krell.

During that long period of time between David Krell's introduction of Hannah Arendt's work to me and the completion of this book, I not only incurred many intellectual debts, but also instigated the opposition of various other colleagues who have thought my reconstellation of Edward Said into an affiliative context that includes Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Michel Foucault, Hannah Arendt, Giorgio Agamben, and Alain Badiou to be misconceived. Though I have not change my mind, I nevertheless, and in the spirit of dialogue, offer these unnamed latter critics my sincere thanks for compelling me to consider more deeply my all-too-easy original version of this affiliation. As to the former they are far too many to acknowledge adequately in this limited space. But it would be remiss of me not to express my gratitude to a number of students in those seminars who contributed, without knowing it, to that improvisational process that eventually brought the singular voices of Hannah Arendt and Edward Said into contrapuntal play in my mind. They include Assimina Karavanta, Andrew Martino, Soenke Zehle, Marina Zaharopol (1997); Robin Andreason, Monica O'Brien; Evi Haggipavlu, Michael Logan, James Martin, Firat Oruc, Ruth Schnabel (2000); Evrim Engin, Saygun Gokariksel, Susan McGee, Taras Sak, Ayse Temiz (2004); Tamkin Hussain, David Michelson, Jame Stanescu, Kevin Volk, Charles Wesley, Laura White (2007); and James Capozzi, Shawn Jascinski, Mary DiNapoli, Guy Risko, Melissa Sande, and Ubaraj Katawal (2009).

On a more personal level, I wish to express a very special thanks to my longstanding SUNY Binghamton colleagues and friends Jim Stark of the Art Department and David Bartine and Susan Strehle of the English Department. To David, for his abiding interest in and support of my work, but also for the substantial contributions he made to this book by way of the numerous biweekly conversations we had over beer at The Ale House while I was writing it. I am, above all, grateful to him for sharing with me his encyclopedic

expertise in the technical aspects of classical music and, more particularly, his deep and subtle understanding of Edward Said's writing in that field. I would be happy to know that my contributions to those intense and often startlingly luminous conversations were half as productive for him as they were for me. To Susan, not only for graciously tolerating my obsessive harangues in the process of writing, but also for those sudden insights that changed the direction of my thinking. To Jim, for the resonant cover of this book. Above all, I, once again—and with measureless and abiding love—want to express my deepest thanks to my son, Adam, for *being there.* Without his interest and invariably wise commentary on the book while it was in progress, particularly on those parts pertaining to the Palestinian struggle—and, not least, his uncanny attunement to the agonic polyphonic play struggling to articulate itself in its pages—it would no doubt have ended in utter cacophony. If this play has not been fully realized in what follows, it is not the consequence of his being misguided, but of the clumsiness of my own efforts.

Finally, I thank, with pleasure, Sandy Crooms, senior editor of The Ohio State University Press for her faith in my controversial project and to the staff members of the press for their patience, generosity, and efficiency in guiding the original manuscript through the publication process. Chapters 1 and 4, are considerably revised versions of previously published essays originally entitled "Global American: The Devastation of Language under the Dictatorship of the Public Realm," *Symplokē,* vol. 16, no. 1–2 (Spring–Fall 2009); and "Edward W. Said and Zionism: Rethinking the Exodus Story," *boundary 2,* vol. 37, no. 1 (Spring 2010). I wish to thank the editors of these journals, Jeffrey Di Leo and Paul A. Bové, respectively, for permission to reprint.

Introduction

This book is, as far as I know, the first that explores the relationship between Hannah Arendt's and Edward W. Said's thought, not simply their mutual emphasis on the importance of the exilic consciousness but also on the politics that such a consciousness enables, especially as it pertains to the particular—and urgent—question of Palestine. It consists of five chapters organized, not by the progressive imperative of narrative structure, but, in keeping with Said's deliberate and Arendt's implicit practice, by the variational and open-ended play of counterpoint. In other words, the chapters in this book, though each could be read independently of the others, are best understood when read collectively as variations on a theme, as, for example, Bach's *Goldberg Variations*. I mean, more precisely, the theme of exile embodied in Arendt's notion of the "conscious pariah" and in Said's "exilic consciousness." This is the theme that, in radically secularizing their comportment towards being, enabled these extraordinary intellectuals not simply to mount inaugural critiques of the culture of Western modernity (the banality of evil); the life-damaging binarist logic of belonging of the nation-state/imperialist system (particularly that ironic version of the Zionists in Palestine); and the biopolitics of contemporary nation-state democracies that threaten to reduce human beings to what Giorgio Agamben, following Arendt's analysis of the "stateless peoples" of the World War II era, has called "bare life" (*nuda vita*). It is also the theme that enabled Arendt and Said to provide inaugural directives towards the envisioning of an alternative *polis* from that of the (Western) nation-state, one in which, as Said resonantly puts it, "'the complete consort danc[es] together' contrapuntally."

The first chapter, "The Devastation of Language under the Dictatorship of the Public Realm: Reading Global American with Hannah Arendt," diagnoses from Arendt's exilic perspective the contemporary (post–World War II) condition of thinking that constitutes the corrosive legacy of the (bio-) logic of belonging of the nation-state. It brings Hannah Arendt's controversial notion of the banality of evil, worked out in *Eichmann in Jerusalem* and *The Life of the Mind,* to bear on the vacuous language of "expertise" (Said's "justificatory discursive regime") on which the governing of the United States has increasingly relied, despite the spectacle of Nazi Germany, especially from the time of the Vietnam War (*The Pentagon Papers*) to the George W. Bush administration's "war on terror" after 9/11 (The Rand Corporation's report to the U.S. Department of Defense, *Enlisting Madison Avenue: The Marketing Approach to Earning Popular Support in Theaters of Operations.*

The second chapter, "The Exilic Consciousness and the Imperatives of Betweenness," attempts to articulate 1) the paradoxical and enabling singularity of Edward Said's postcolonial perspective on the world—his "non-Palestinian Palestinianism" (which I derive from his identification with "non-Jewish Jews" like Isaac Deutscher, Sigmund Freud, Heinrich Heine, and, implicitly, Hannah Arendt—and 2) the political potential, both for resistance and the making of a coming global polity, that this dislocating, radically secular, exilic perspective enables by rendering the biopolitical logic of belonging endemic to the nation-state inoperative.

The third chapter, "The Calling and the Question Concerning the Secular," which takes its point of departure from Said's (and Arendt's) Vichean idea that human beings make their history, attempts to think his (and her) foundational commitment to a radical "worldliness" dissociated from the transcendental or sacred more specifically than he (and she) does by way of invoking the radically secular (indeed, "profane") commentaries of Giorgio Agamben (*The Time That Remains*) and Alain Badiou (*Saint Paul: The Foundations of Universalism*) on the epistles of Paul. In the process, this chapter shows that Said's (and Arendt's) vision of an alternative *polis* to that of the biopolitical nation-state is grounded in a comportment toward being that decisively rejects the notion of "the calling" or "vocation" (a task to be collectively accomplished in behalf of a future *Telos*), which has been at the heart of both the theological (Judeo-Christian) and the anthropological ("secular") phases of the Western political tradition. It shows, instead, that Said's (and Arendt's) vision of the coming *polis* is (un)grounded in the radically secular or profane—and "irreparable"—"time of the now," which is to say, in Said's and Arendt's uncannily common phrase, the time of "beginnings."

The fourth chapter, "The Exodus Story and the March of Zionism," analyzes Said's critique of the Zionist justificatory representation of the history of Palestine (and its people) as a "*terra nullius,*" an empty land that God has called the Jews (His Elect) to fill (or refill), occupy, and domesticate. It extends Said's critique of this Zionist vocation by pointing out the remarkable similarity between the late Zionist representation of this story (after the United States' intervention in the Middle East in the 1960s) and the U.S.'s "exceptionalist" representation of its history from the founding by the Puritans (their "errand in the wilderness") through the era of settlements and of westward expansion and the genocide of the Native Americans to the George W. Bush administration's Ahabian global "war on terror" inaugurated in the aftermath of 9/11. The chapter shows that this canonical representation of the history of the settling of the American continent, undertaken under the aegis of American exceptionalism—the perennial myth established by the Puritans by way of their interpretation of their divinely ordained historical "errand in the wilderness" on the model of the Old Testament, particularly of the Exodus story—becomes ironically the vocational model of the Zionists' representation of the history of Palestine in the aftermath of the United States' intervention in the Middle East.

The fifth and last chapter, "Hannah Arendt and Edward W. Said: A Contrapuntal Affiliation," is the culmination of the book, bringing all the distinctive motifs emanating from and circulating around the supreme theme of exile into playful focus—or, more precisely, loving strife. It extends and deepens the dislocating implications of Said's "exilic consciousness" and Arendt's "conscious pariah" to include 1) their anti-essentialist (and anti-nationalist), i.e., identity-less, identities—the "non-Jewish Jew" and the "non-Palestinian Palestinian"; 2) their radical secularity (or "worldliness"); 3) their refusal to be answerable to a (sacred) calling and the vocation it entails; 4) their critique of Zionism and its commitment to ethnic cleansing; 5) their singling out of the refugee or migrant as the fundamental political figure to be thought in the interregnum produced by the self-destruction of the logic of belonging of the nation-state system; and 6) their vision of the coming community as a "'complete consort dancing together' contrapuntally" (Said) or a "Mobius strip" or "Klein bottle" (Arendt via Giorgio Agamben). In reconstellating the resonant exilic voices of Hannah Arendt and Edward Said—"non-Jewish Jew" and "non-Palestinian Palestinian"—into a "two-in-one" belonging that renders the monologic of the nation-state inoperative—this culminating chapter, in short, attempts, in the "end," to offer in synecdochical form some semblance of the spatial/acoustical "lineaments" of the *polis* that their exilic

condition—their damaged lives—paradoxically enabled them to intuit if not to fully envision.

In sum, as contrapuntal variations on the particular theme of exile, which, in the process, open out to incorporate the more general political themes of Palestine and the postcolonial global occasion, these chapters constitute reflections on what is inaugural, central, and abiding in both Hannah Arendt's and Edward Said's work. They shed light on a hitherto surprisingly unremarked affiliation between Arendt and Said, one that, once noticed, estranges the terrain of their thought as it has been mapped by the previous voluminous scholarship. Equally, if not more important, they add enormous force to Arendt's and Said's proleptic activist explorations of the urgent and apparently irresolvable "question of Palestine," especially in the recent, post-1967 context, which bears increasing witness to the irony that the Israeli nation-state's comportment toward the Palestinian natives has, from the time of its origins, systematically repeated the life-damaging degradations the Jews suffered at the hands of German nationalism.

Finally, in remarking the heretofore unnoticed affiliative relationship between Hannah Arendt and Edward Said, especially the remarkable similarity of their understanding of their exilic condition and its imperatives for rethinking thinking, this book broadens the constellation in which their worlds have been hitherto located to include Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger as predecessors, the poststructuralists (especially Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, and Gilles Deleuze) as contemporaries, and, the post-poststructuralists, not least Giorgio Agamben, Alain Badiou, Slavoj Žižek, and Judith Butler as their present heirs. This is, admittedly, a controversial constellation, especially as it pertains to Said, since he appears to have been adamant about his adherence to the humanist tradition that the poststructuralists ostensibly reject. Once the affiliation between Arendt and Said is remarked, however, and the consequent enabling role of Arendt's devastating critique of the nation-state system *vis-à-vis* the Jews plays in Giorgio Agamben's writings is registered—particularly its influence on the articulation of the biopolitical figure of "*homo sacer*" and his projection of the "concentration camp" (and the production of "bare life") as the ominous paradigm of the contemporary Western occasion—the plausibility of this constellation, I believe, become eminently manifest.

CHAPTER 1

The Devastation of Language under the Dictatorship of the Public Realm

Reading Global American with Hannah Arendt

If public life has reached a state in which thought is being turned inescapably into a commodity and language into celebration of the commodity, the attempt to trace the sources of this degradation must refuse obedience to the current linguistic and intellectual demands before it is rendered entirely futile by the consequence of those demands for world history.

—Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of the Enlightenment* (1944)

You are quite right: I changed my mind and do no longer speak of "radical evil." It is a long time since we last met, or we would perhaps have spoken about the subject before. . . . It is indeed my opinion now that evil is never "radical," that it is only extreme, and that it possesses neither depth nor any demonic dimensions. It can overgrow and lay waste the whole world precisely because it spreads like a fungus on the surface. It is "thought-defying," as I said, because thought tries to reach some depth, to go to the roots, and the moment it concerns itself with evil, it is frustrated because there is nothing. That is its "banality." Only the good has depth and can be radical.

—Hannah Arendt, "Response to Gershom Scholem" (1963)

At the bottom was the shitface grunt, at the top a Command trinity: a blue-eyed, hero-faced general [William Westmoreland], a geriatrics-emergency ambassador [William Averell Harriman] and a hale, heartless CIA performer. (Robert "Blowtorch" Komer, chief of COORDS, spook anagram for Other War, pacification, another word for war. If William Blake had "reported" to him that he'd seen angels in the trees, Komer would have tried to talk him out of it. Failing there, he'd have ordered defoliation.)

—Michael Herr, *Dispatches* (1977)

I

As oppositional intellectuals claimed from the days of the beginning of the George W. Bush presidency, this Republican administration, more than any other in the history of the United States, was one that played havoc with the constitutional checks and balances in its arrogant and self-righteous effort to wrest the power to govern from the United States Congress in behalf of conducting a global war against the Islamic world which, in the name of the myth of American exceptionalism, it strategically called a "global war on terror." It was an initiative, therefore, that went far to render the state of exception the rule.[1] Long before their invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, this Republican president and his neoconservative intellectual deputies, aided and abetted by the fervor of the Evangelical Christian racist right, had produced an imperial global scenario the end of which was, from the beginning, the "*Pax Americana,*" the imposition of global "peace" by violence—and American-style democracies ("regime change")—in those areas of the world, most notably, the Middle East—that constituted obstacles to America's global hegemony. In the process—and taking strategic advantage of the "terrorist" attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on 9/11 by al-Qaeda—this regime, intellectually armed by policy experts who represent the complex dynamics of globalization in terms of capitalist "deregulation" of the national economy (the neoliberal free market)[2] and supported by the obsequious media, announced its policy of pre-emptive wars on "rogues states" and then invaded Afghanistan and, on the false pretext that Saddam Hussein was producing weapons of mass destruction, Iraq: a "global war on terror," that is, which has no borders and no foreseeable end. It thus established a global geopolitical crisis situation that rendered "homeland security" a major—and abiding—ideological priority. As a result of this strategic representation of the global occasion, the George W. Bush presidency tacitly established a *permanent* state of exception that justified a unilateral policing of the world of nations, the torture of suspected terrorists in defiance of international law, and produced the "Patriot Act," a climate of governmental secrecy, a national judicial system intent on annulling dissent, a timidity on the part of the official opposition in the face of the administration's imperial foreign policy: a political system, that is to say, the logic of which, if not the actual practice, was unambiguously totalitarian.

This argument against the policies of Bush administration and its intellectual deputies by oppositional intellectuals is manifest. There is no longer any question that this American presidential administration went farther than any other in the history of the United States to relocate the power to

govern, allocated jointly by the Constitution to the Congress, the judiciary, and the executive branches, in the presidency. Yet this totalitarian momentum, epitomized by the previous administration's invocation of the powerful myth of American exceptionalism to render the state of exception the rule, continues to flourish in the Barack Obama presidency. The latter's continuation of the Bush administration's policies in Afghanistan and Iraq and their application, most recently, in Libya; its reluctance to prosecute those government officials, like John Yoo and Jay Bybee of the Office of Legal Council, who were systematically developing a discursive regime in behalf of the executive branch that would enable the use of torture, the deployment of the military in domestic space, and other such totalitarian acts with impunity in its "war on terror"; and its unwillingness to close Guantanamo bear disturbing witness to this continuing momentum to normalize the sovereign state of exception in the name of the American exceptionalist "errand in [the global] wilderness." This unequivocal reactionary turn inaugurated by the Bush administration thus behooves oppositional intellectuals to resist its ominous political agenda, that is, to participate in politics, in a far more active way than they have done since the decade of Vietnam War. But this oppositional representation of the United States' relation to the world, though true in part, is not finally commensurate with the sociopolitical realities of what the neoconservative deputies of the dominant culture arrogantly called the "American Century"—the global realities, that is, produced under the aegis of a commodity-driven techno-capitalist, and republican "America," the America, in the presumptuous phrase coined by Theodore Roosevelt, as "Leader of the Free World." Nor, therefore, is the consequent tendency of recent American oppositional intellectuals to overdetermine politics as such as the privileged site of resistance entirely adequate to the imperatives of these global realities. In the following, all too brief remarks, I want to suggest, not an alternative to this kind of *disciplinary oppositional politics,* but a comportment towards political resistance that perceives the *act of thinking* as ontologically prior to, yet indissolubly related with politics per se. I have inferred this comportment from the decisive disintegration of the base/superstructure and/or disciplinary models of the representation of being enabled by the poststructuralist revolution. Contrary to the poststructuralists' tendency to restrict the implications of this revolution to the site of language (textuality) as such, however, I have, like Edward Said (and Hannah Arendt), understood this revolution as a historical and "worldly" one.[3] More specifically—and against the myth of American exceptionalism—I read the "postmodern" revolution in thinking, misnamed "theory" (from the Greek *theoria,* to see) as the inevitable precipitate of the fulfillment in post-Enlightenment, capitalist/democratic

America of the binary logic of the languages of Western civilization that had their origin in a metaphysical interpretation of being. I mean the logic that reduces the many to the One, difference to Identity, be-*ing* to Being, or, in the binary that has not been emphasized enough, temporality to Spatial (or Territorialized) Object. In other words, I read this poststructuralist revolution as the coming to its end of a gradual but necessary and relentless process of *reification*—which is to say, of *hardening* and *decay*—that, to invoke Hannah Arendt's version of this critique of the modern administered society produced by *homo faber*'s means-and-end paradigm of making,[4] has rendered the originative language of thinking depthless: a massified abstract, quantitative, calculative, and instrumentalist—utterly thoughtless—sociopolitical agent of brutal violence, torture, mutilation, dispossession, death against those constituencies of the human community (and the land that sustains them) that this administered *system* of language and thought—its (bio)logic of belonging—deems expendable, those who, in Michel Foucault's phrase, do not prove "useful and docile" to the dominant biopolitical culture.

One self-evident, if rather superficial, symptom of this decay of language and thinking in "exceptionalist" America, is the *essential* similarity of the political discourses of the two parties that collectively constitute the framework or, in Althusser's term, problematic—that which renders things visible and invisible and therefore permissible to speak[5]—of the American republican form of governmentality, a characteristic that, it has often been observed, confirmed this decay, but that has rarely been challenged in a serious way. A telling symptom of this politically disabling reality is the Democratic Party's consistent support of and/or passivity in the face of the Bush administration's imperial global policy, from the latter's announcement of America's "global war on terror" in the wake of al-Qaeda's attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on 9/11/01, through its invasion and occupation of Iraq on the patently trumped up charge that Saddam Hussein was developing weapons of mass destruction, to the present post-2008 occasion, which bears witness to the Obama administration's continuation of the policies of George W. Bush, despite the apparent electoral mandate to end the imperial wars in the Middle East.

In putting the crisis of the global occasion under the aegis of America in this way, I want to begin, at the risk of the invidious comparison, by recalling Martin Heidegger's admonition, as early as "The Question Concerning Technology" and "The Age of the World Picture," that the reduction, by way of "enframing" (*Ge-stell*) the be-*ing,* the temporality, of being, to "world picture" in post-Enlightenment modernity has been accompanied by the reduction, by way of the ordering "call" (interpellation) of the Subject, of the

phenomena of being, including human being, to *Bestand:* usually translated as "standing reserve," but, in my reading, better expressed in English by the paradox, "disposable reserve":

> What kind of unconcealment is it, then, that is peculiar to that which results from this setting-upon that challenges [technology]? Everywhere everything is ordered to stand by, to be immediately on hand, *indeed, to stand there just so that it may be on call for a further ordering.* Whatever is ordered about in this way has its own standing. We call it the standing-reserve [*Bestand*]. The word expresses here something more, and something more essential, than mere "stock." The word "standing-reserve" assumes the rank of an inclusive rubric. It designates nothing less than the way in which everything presences that is wrought upon by the revealing that challenges. Whatever stands by in the sense of standing-reserve no longer stands over against us as object.[6]

Thus, for example, recalling the devastating history of the enclosure of the commons, Heidegger observes that when a track of land is "challenged forth" and "enframed" to yield coal and ore, the "earth now reveals itself as a coal mining *district,* the soil a mineral deposit [for storing]. The field that the peasant formerly cultivated and set in order appears differently than it did when to set in order still meant to take care of and maintain" (QCT, 320). Or when the Rhine River is "challenged forth" and "enframed" to yield electric power by way of the construction of a hydroelectric plant, it comes to appear as "something at our command":

> The hydroelectric plant is not built into the Rhine River as was the old wooden bridge that joined bank with bank for hundreds of years. Rather, the river is dammed up into the power plant. What the river is now, namely, a water-power supplier, derives from the essence of the power station. In order that we may even remotely consider the monstrousness that reigns here, let us ponder for a moment the contrast that is spoken by the two titles: "The Rhine," as dammed up into a *power* works, and "The Rhine," as uttered by the *art*-work, in Hölderlin's hymn by that name. But, it will be replied, the Rhine is still a river in the landscape, is it not? Perhaps. But how? *In no other way than as an object on call* for inspection by a tour group ordered there by the vacation industry. (QCT, 321; my emphasis)

But the danger of this epochal reduction of the be-*ing* of being to standing or disposable reverse by the "challenging-forth," the "calling," and "enfram-

ing" of technology—the land to a mineral deposit, the river to a water-power supplier of electricity—is not limited to the phenomena of the ecos, the earth and sky. The greatest danger of this momentum towards the production of disposable reserve on call is to humanity itself:

> [W]hen destining reigns in the mode of enframing, it is the supreme danger. This danger attests itself to us in two ways. As soon as what is unconcealed no longer concerns man even as object, but exclusively as standing-reserve, and man in the midst of objectlessness is nothing but the orderer of the disposable-reserve, then he comes to the very brink of a precipitous fall; that is, he comes to the point where he himself will have to be taken as disposable reserve. Meanwhile, man, precisely as the one so threatened, exalts himself and postures as lord of the earth. In this way the illusion comes to prevail that everything man encounters exists only insofar as it is his construct. This illusion gives rise in turn to one final delusion: it seems as though man everywhere and always encounters only himself. . . . Man stands so decisively in subservience to on the challenging-forth of enframing that he does not grasp enframing as a claim, that he fails to see himself as the one spoken to, and hence also fails in every way to hear in what respect he *ek-sists* [my emphasis], in terms of his essence, in a realm where he is addressed [called], so that he *can never* encounter only himself. (QCT, 332)

Humanity, that is to say, at the very moment it affirms its conquest of and lordship over of being, i.e., transforms its exilic condition (the not-at-home [*die Unheimliche*] to a homeland, as it were), is endangered by a logical momentum—a calling—that reduces its ek-sistence—its being *outside in* the world (ontic/ontological)—to a being that is entirely in-sistent, inside—a part of—the world (ontic). Thus self-divested of the ability to think (of consciousness), man becomes him/herself disposable reserve.

Because, however, Heidegger did not fully perceive the dehumanizing implications of this reductive biopolitical worldly momentum concretely in his own culture, I will invoke a thinker, who, following his directives in the context of their implications for the Jews, did. I am, of course, referring to his student Hannah Arendt, who historicized Heidegger's admonition, above all, in *Eichmann in Jerusalem,* in which she diagnoses the thought and language of Adolf Eichmann at his trial in Jerusalem in 1963.[7] For Arendt, it will be remembered—indeed we are, paradoxically, not allowed to forget by those who have shrunk in horror from and vilified her epochal insight—the thought and language of this representative Nazi functionary, who, in the

name of the appropriately termed "final solution," sold transport trains for human beings destined for the gas chambers, were not those of an "evil" man in the conventional sense of the word. He was, rather, an ordinary Western human being—the inevitable consequence of the fulfillment of the logic of belonging endemic to the Western nation-state system[8]—who was simply incapable of *thinking,* which is to say, thinking *feelingly.* "The trouble with Eichmann," she wrote both genealogically and proleptically:

> was precisely that so many were like him, and that the many were neither perverted nor sadistic, that they were, *and still are,* terribly and terrifyingly normal. From the viewpoint of our legal institutions and of our moral standards of judgment, this normality was much more terrifying than all the atrocities put together, for it implied . . . that this new type of criminal, who is in actual fact *hostis generis humani,* commits his crimes under circumstances that make it well-nigh impossible for him to know or to feel that he is doing wrong. (EJ, 276)

In her annunciation of "the banality of evil" as it manifested itself in the language of this (Western) Everyman, Arendt, I am suggesting, follows the thread of Heidegger's de-struction (*Destruktion*) of the Western tradition in its modern (anthropological) phase. I am not simply referring to his genealogical account of the gradual but inexorable "forgetting" or, more to the point, the *hardening* or *ossification* of the "*Seinsfrage*" (the *question* of being) under the aegis of metaphysics (thinking *meta ta physika,* from after or above time's disseminations) in the process of fulfilling its "progressive," linear binary logic in modernity: "the age of the world picture." In invoking Arendt's diagnosis of Eichmann's thought and language in this context, I am also referring to Heidegger's announcement of the end—the *demise*—of this dehumanized and dehumanizing Western spatializing thinking. I mean its self-de-struction in the sense that the Eichmann to whom Arendt bears witness in Jerusalem—the "policy expert," in Edward Said's appropriately critical term, who can speak of human beings and transport trucks as if there was no difference between them—constitutes the fulfillment of Heidegger's inaugural announcement in *Being and Time* of the triumph of the "they-self" (*das Man*) or, as he puts this metamorphosis of thinking into calculation in "Letter on Humanism," the "dictatorship of the public realm." Echoing the dangers inhering in the reduction of being to disposable reserve, he writes in this essay:

> The widely and rapidly spreading devastation of language not only under-

> mines aesthetic and moral responsibility, in every use of language; it arises from a threat to the essence of humanity. A mere cultivated use of language is still no proof that we have as yet escaped the danger to our essence. These days, in fact, such usage might sooner testify that we have not yet seen and cannot see the danger because we have never yet placed ourselves in view of it. Much bemoaned of late, and much too lately, the downfall of language is, however, not the grounds for, but already a consequence of, the state of affairs in which language under the dominance of the modern metaphysics of subjectivity almost irremediably falls out of its element. Language still denies us its essence: that it is the house of the truth of Being. Instead, language surrenders itself to our mere willing and trafficking as an instrument of domination over beings. We encounter beings as actualities in a calculative businesslike way, but also scientifically and by way of philosophy, with explanations and proofs.[9]

It will, no doubt, be objected, especially by American political scientists, that, in identifying the "banality of evil" with Adolph Eichmann in 1963, Arendt was not referring to American culture or, more generally, to Western democratic societies, but to their exception, that is, to Nazi Germany, to the *indoctrinated* "thoughtless thought" endemic to and culturally produced by totalitarian societies. This is, of course, literally true. But there are good, if not decisive, reasons to suggest that, even at that time, Arendt, following Heidegger—and, not incidentally, the Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer of *Dialectic of the Enlightenment* (1947)—was diagnosing a momentum of language and thought production that, like a virus, had infected modern Western civilization at large, that German civilization was not an anomaly, but the manifestation of the fulfillment of Western modernity's reifying logic, particularly of the logic of belonging of the nation-state: the interpellative logic that, grounded in a *Telos* (a means/end structure), renders the secular life of the called, an unwittingly sacred national vocation.[10] It is not only *Arendt's unapologetic resistance to those who condemned her for deliberately* generalizing Eichmann—representing him as an "ordinary" man as opposed to the "demonic monster" or "German monster" they preferred—that justifies this possibility. It is also the critiques of modernity she proffers in the two great books she published before *Eichmann in Jerusalem: The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951) and *The Human Condition* (1958). In the case of the first, I am referring specifically to Arendt's analysis of the dehumanizing (bio)logic of belonging of the modern Western nation-state that produced the de-humanized because depoliticized "stateless" or "superfluous" person—the "bare life," in Giorgio Agamben's later term,[11] that became fodder for the concentration

camps and the gas chambers. In the case of the second, I mean, more generally, her diagnosis of modernity at large (including her adopted country) as the demise of the *political* (speaking and acting) and the triumph of "*homo faber*" (man as maker understood in terms of the means/end paradigm of knowledge production), that is, of the "social" (or the socialization of the biologically oriented private world [*oikos*]): the realm of instrumental thinking, "the culture industry" (in Adorno's phrase), mass uniformity, and the administered society ("the rule of nobody"), which eventually reproduces *animal laborans* (the metabolism of the biological cycle) in its extreme; i.e., as "bare life":

> To gauge the extent of society's victory in the modern age, its early substitution of behavior for action and its eventual substitution of bureaucracy, the rule of nobody, for personal rulership, it may be well to recall that its initial science of economics, which substitutes patterns of behavior only in this rather limited field of human activity, was finally followed by the all-comprehensive pretension of the social sciences, which, as "behavioral sciences," aim to reduce man as a whole, in all his activities, to the level of a conditioned and behaving animal.[12]

Be that as it may, it can be said decisively that in the early 1970s, long after the demise of the German totalitarian state and her exilic flight to the United States, Arendt returned to the figure of Eichmann and the banality of his evil precisely to inaugurate a meditation on the corruption of Western thinking *at large*—the depthless thinking she saw "spreading like a fungus throughout the [contemporary] world"[13]—in her magisterial and appropriately titled, unfinished book, *The Life of the Mind*. Though this meditation is essentially philosophical, not political as such, it is not difficult to infer that she, like Horkheimer and Adorno in the *aftermath* of World War II, is responding now, not so much to German nationalism or totalitarianism as to the post-war Cold War context, or, to be more precise, to the global historical occasion now under the aegis of a democratic/capitalist United States. I mean the Western nation-state that, having assumed the leadership of the "free world" in the wake of its triumph over German and Italian totalitarianism, had, ironically, begun to impose by violence its "free" way of life on alien cultures such as that of Vietnam in the name of the myth of its exceptionalism:

> The immediate impulse [for "my (present) preoccupation with mental activity" in *The Life of the Mind*] came from my attending the Eichmann

> trial in Jerusalem. In my report of it I spoke of "the banality of evil." Behind that phrase, I held no thesis or doctrine, although I was dimly aware of the fact that it went counter to our tradition of thought—literary, theological, or philosophical—about the phenomenon of evil. Evil, we learned, is something demonic. . . . However, what I was confronted with was utterly different and still undeniably factual. I was struck by a manifest shallowness in the doer that made it impossible to trace the incontestable evil of his deeds to any deeper level of roots or motives. The deeds were monstrous, but the doer . . . was quite ordinary, commonplace, and neither demonic nor monstrous. There was no sign in him of firm ideological convictions or of specific evil motives, and the only notable characteristic one could detect in his past behavior as well as in his behavior during the trial . . . was something entirely negative: it was not stupidity but *thoughtlessness.* (LM, 3–4; Arendt's emphasis)

II

It is not my purpose in this chapter to argue that, in invoking Eichmann long after he was executed by the state of Israel for his crimes against the Jews, Hannah Arendt was specifically identifying the thinking he demonstrated at his trial—the "thought-defying" thought that, in the name of his duty to the Führer, coordinated the logistic machinery feeding millions of innocent human beings into the mass death-producing "gas factories"—with the American discursive regime, the official and public discourse that has increasingly come to dominate knowledge production in the United States in the wake of World War II. What I want to suggest, rather, is that this American language (and thought), which is contemporaneous with the time its publicists (the dominant neoliberal/capitalist culture) came to call triumphantly "the American Century," bears an ominously striking resemblance to Arendt's diagnosis of Eichmann's language (and thought). This becomes especially evident at those historical conjunctures when, as in the cases of the Vietnam War and the second Iraq War, America's "destined" march toward global hegemony was resisted (and threatened) by subaltern cultures. There is, of course, a marked difference between the two discourses that must be kept in mind. But this difference, as I will argue more fully later on, is essentially a matter of degree, not of kind. The same (metaphysical) ontology, the same (binarist) representation of being, the same (naturalized supernaturalist) secularism, the same (vocational) logic of belonging—that subsumed German nationalist/totalitarian thinking subsumes American democratic

thinking; the difference is that the former constituted the fulfillment of the binarist logical economy of this metaphysically oriented relay and the systemic harnessing of its polyvalent "truth"—its *picture* of the world—to *praxis,* whereas the latter still remains in a state of unfulfillment.

Nor am I suggesting that the analogy I am proposing is utterly foreign to the oppositional intellectual milieu in the United States. Though awareness of the relay between the instrumentalist official and public discourses, on the one hand, and the dehumanized political practices of violence, on the other, has been fundamental to oppositional discourses, especially since the Vietnam War, it has nevertheless been by and large symptomatic. This was not only the case during the Vietnam War, when the oppositional constituencies focused their critique on the dehumanized public language of the "body count" (or on the official language of the "war of attrition"). It has also been the case throughout the long and continuing aftermath of the Vietnam War under the impetus of the various perspectives of poststructuralist theory.

Throughout the Cold War era, especially since the Vietnam War, these American oppositional discourses have intuited this complicity between the deeply background, privileged instrumentalist language (thinking) of "America" and the dehumanized violence the United States has perpetrated in the name of its deeply backgrounded exceptionalist mission in the "wilderness" of the modern world. But they have not, I submit, overtly called this complicity by its right name. This is, no doubt, partly because of a failure of nerve—a shrinking back from that anxiety-provoking and unhoming time of the now to which their disclosive discourses have brought them face to face.[14] But this failure is also partly because these oppositional discourses have tended to remain disciplinary—some focused on language and the others, in an antithetical way, on politics—and thus have failed to perceive the indissoluble relay between the two in the very process of articulating it.

My argument in this chapter, to repeat, is that the official and public American discourses *vis-à-vis* the nation and its "other," have, despite their dynamic exceptionalist tenor, become precariously similar to that of Arendt's representative German logistics expert/functionary, Adolph Eichmann, that they have come increasingly to mirror the deadly instrumentalist superficiality of the latter's discourse—its blindness and indifference to the biopolitical violence against other humans (the German *Volk*'s others) which its logic enables and justifies, that is to say, to the banality of the evil it perpetrates. I cannot, of course, rehearse in this limited space the history of this American discursive regime that would validate and authorize my argument. Following Arendt's directive—her representation of Eichmann as the *type* of the

German everyman of the Nazi era—I will, instead, retrieve and reconstellate into the present occasion a number of synecdochical instances of this ominous discursive history. Symptomatically analyzed by earlier oppositional critics in terms of the dehumanized and dehumanizing thrust of their calculative language, these examples, typical of the fate of unaccommodatable contradictions to the official discourse, have by now been obliterated from the American amnesiac historical memory. Their retrieval and reconstellation into the present global occasion, particularly the United States' continuing military intervention in the Middle East in the name of the *Pax Americana,* will, I hope, at least suggest the viability of my argument.

For the purpose of demonstrating the complicity of modern American knowledge production—language, as Arendt might put it, in its privileged "self-reliant," means-and-end, instrumentalist ("can do") nationalist vocational mode—and the dehumanizing (bio)political violence its structure/rhetoric mirrors and enables, I will, as point of departure, retrieve from the oblivion to which it has been relegated the revelatory body of official writing informing the notorious *Pentagon Papers.* These, it will be recalled, were the secret "memoranda" pertaining to *the day-to-day,* that is, routine, conduct and execution of the unspeakably brutal war the United States waged against the Vietnamese people between 1954 and 1974 written by the Pentagon policy experts—"the best and the brightest" as these bureaucrats were called earlier on[15]—compiled by Robert McNamara, the former Ford Motors CEO and Secretary of Defense of both the "New Frontier" administration of John F. Kennedy and the "Great Society" administration of Lyndon B. Johnson, and leaked to the American public by Daniel Ellsworth.

Here are two absolutely typical examples of this calculative operational discourse from *The Pentagon Papers,* written in 1965, at the time the United States, under the Johnson administration, was planning to "escalate" the clandestine military operations, undertaken as early as the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations in Vietnam in defiance of the protocols of the Geneva Accords following the fall of Dien Bien Phu to the Vietminh in 1954, into overt and all out war against the anticolonial victors. The first is an excerpt from a document written by McGeorge Bundy, "Special Assistant for National Security Affairs," advocating, in the name of "sustained reprisal," the full scale and indiscriminate B-52 bombing of North Vietnam (which came, in the trite melodramatic rhetoric of the Pentagon, to be called "Operation Rolling Thunder") (February 7, 1965). I quote at length to illustrate the undeviating banality—the calculative, abstract, dehumanized, and duplicitous essence—of the language of these documents at large:

> We believe that the best available way of increasing our chance of success in Vietnam is the development and execution of a policy of *sustained reprisal* against North Vietnam—a policy in which air and naval action against the North is justified by and related to the whole Viet Cong [meaning "Viet Communists," the name given to the insurrectionary National Liberation Front by the Pentagon] campaign of violence and terror in the South.
>
> While we believe that the risks of such a policy are acceptable, we emphasize that its costs are real. It implies significant U.S. air losses even if no full air war is joined, and it seems likely that it would eventually require an extensive and costly effort against the whole air defense system of North Vietnam. U.S. casualties will be higher—and more visible to American feelings—than those sustained in the struggle in South Vietnam.
>
> Yet measured against the cost of defeat in Vietnam, this program seems cheap. And even if it fails to turn the tide—as it may—the value of the effort seems to us to exceed the cost.[16]

The second example is an excerpt from a document written by John McNaughton, "Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs," "evaluating" the conditions in Vietnam in the wake of the failure of the large scale "reprisal" bombing of the North that led to President Johnson's decision to send combat troops to Vietnam to engage in overt warfare. (March 24, 1965):

1. U.S. aims:
   70%—To avoid a humiliating U.S. defeat (to our reputation as a guarantor).
   20%—To keep SVN [South Vietnam] (and the adjacent) territory from Chinese hands.
   10%—To permit the people of SVN to enjoy a better, freer way of life.
   ALSO—To emerge from the crisis without unacceptable taint from methods used.
   NOT—to "help a friend," although it would be hard to stay in if asked out.
2. The situation: The situation in general is bad and deteriorating. The VC have the initiative. Defeatism is gaining among the rural population, somewhat in the cities, and even among the soldiers—especially those with relatives in rural areas. The Hop Tac area around Saigon is making little progress; the Delta stays bad; the country has been severed in the north with refugees. GVN [government of (South) Vietnam]

control is shrinking to the enclaves, some burdened with refugees. In Saigon we have a remission: Quat is giving hope on the civilian side, the Buddhists have calmed, and the split generals are in uneasy equilibrium.

3. The preliminary questions: can the situation inside SVN be bottomed out (a) without extreme measures against the DRV [Democratic Republic of (North)Vietnam] and/or (b) without deployment of large numbers of U.S. (and other) combat troops inside SVN? The answer is, perhaps, but probably no.
4. Ways GVN might collapse:
   a) VC successes reduce GVN control to enclaves, causing:
      (1) insurrection in the enclaved population,
      (2) massive defections of ARVN [Army of the Republic of (South) Vietnam] soldiers and even units,
      (3) aggravated dissension and impotence in Saigon,
      (4) defeatism and reorientation by key GVN officials,
      (5) entrance of left-wing elements into government,
      (6) emergence of a popular-front regime,
      (7) request that U.S. withdraw,
      (8) concessions to the VC, and
      (9) accommodations to the DRV,
   b) VC with DRV volunteers concentrate on I and II Corps,
      (1) conquering principal GVN-held enclaves there,
      (2) declaring Liberation Government,
      (3) joining the I & II Corps areas to the DRV, and
      (4) pressing the course in (a) above for rest of SVN.
   c) While in a temporary funk, GVN might throw in sponge;
      (1) dealing under the table with VC,
      (2) asking the U.S. to cease at least military aid,
      (3) bringing left-wing elements into the government,
      (4) leading to a popular-front regime, and
      (5) ending in accommodations to the VC and DRV,
   d) In a surge of anti-Americanism, GVN could ask the U.S. out and pursue course otherwise similar to (c) above.
5. The "trilemma": U.S. policy appears to be drifting. This is because, while there is consensus that efforts inside SVN (para 6) will probably fail to prevent collapse, all three of the possible remedial courses of action have so far been rejected:
   a) Will-breaking strikes on the North (para 7) are balked (1) by flashpoint limits, 2) by doubts that the DRV will cave and (3) by doubts

that the VC will obey a caving DRV. (Leaving strikes only a political and ante-infiltration nuisance.)

b) large U.S. strike on the North (para 9) are blocked by "French-defeat" and "Korea" syndromes, and Quat is queasy. (Troops could be net negatives, and be besieged.)

c) Exit by negotiations (para 9) is tainted by the humiliation likely to follow.[17]

No more damning analysis of the "problem-solving" or "can do" style—what I have been calling the "vocational" rhetoric and structure—of these routine, indiscriminate death-dealing documents exists than that of Richard Ohmann in *English in America* (1976), except for the fact that he does not quite draw the logical conclusion I am suggesting. I am referring to Ohmann's decisive, though now virtually forgotten, exposure of the (inadvertent) complicity of university literature departments—their cultural production, especially the teaching of freshman composition—with the "commonsensical" and routinized violence perpetrated by the American government in Vietnam.[18] Responding to the style and content of the first of these excerpts, Ohmann writes:

> Of course it is the job of generals to win, and political impact be damned. The more surprising and dismaying revelation of *The Pentagon Papers* is how much the *civilians* running America came to share this perspective. Perhaps the neatly symmetrical form . . . and the mechanical quality of the whole paradigm, helped dull their senses and made the unspeakable a daily routine.
>
> An all-pervasive metaphor accompanies the argumentative strategy [of the authors' problem-solving model], that of cost and benefit. . . . They must solve the problem, even if it means subtracting cabbages from kings. Thus, McGeorge Bundy in February, 1965, advocating a course of "sustained reprisal" against North Vietnam for "offenses" in the south: "While we believed that the risks of such a policy are acceptable, we emphasize that its costs are real." These costs include "significant losses," "an extensive and costly effort against the whole air defense system of North Vietnam," high U.S casualties, and arousal of American "feelings." "Yet measured against the costs of defeat in Vietnam, this program seems cheap. And even if it fails to turn the tide—as it may—the value of the effort seems to us to exceed its cost."
>
> What arguments like these have in common is a lunatic incommensurability. Even now, reading these documents, I want to shout, "You

> destroyed the South Vietnamese people, and talked of piaster spending. You held off from still greater killing only because open debate in America about doing so might encourage the North Vietnamese." The main point to make, in this context, is that since the suffering of the Vietnamese did not impinge on the consciousness of the policy-makers as a cost, it had virtually no existence for them—at least in these memoranda.[19]

One could supplement Ohmann's damning critical analysis of the "can do" language (and the deeply inscribed panoptic structure) of the enormous archive of memoranda written by these "policy experts" by pointing to its predictable and mind-numbing sameness: its systematic reliance on the quantitative measure, the unerring calculative logic, the abstracting and reductive cliché, the euphemism, the short-hand structure of the sentences—what Eichmann called the "appropriate telegraphic style" in speaking of the "monthly reports" on the progress of the "Final Solution" he sent to the *Reichsführer-SS,* Heinrich Himmler.[20] One could also point to the "problem-solving "model subsuming these, the model that, like the "oversight" or "super-vision" of the capitalist "problematic" brilliantly analyzed by Louis Althusser in "From *Capital* to Marx's Philosophy," blinds the willful inquirer to any differential reality that would contradict and thus remain an obstacle to the end he/she desires from the beginning: in this case, "the suffering of the Vietnamese," which "did not impinge on the consciousness of the policy makers," that is, "*had virtually no existence for them*": did not count in a system in which what counts is determined by the logic of belonging endemic to nation building. Further, one could mark the obliteration of conscience (the other self), which Arendt overdetermines in her devastating analysis of Eichmann's language, effected in these Pentagon memoranda by the insistent identification of the existential realities instigating it as a neurosis—the "'French defeat' and 'Korean syndromes'"—as well as invoke the genealogy of what, in the aftermath of the war under the massive campaign of the American government and the culture industry to "forget Vietnam" in the name of resuming its mission in the world's wilderness (specifically the Middle East), came to be called "the Vietnam syndrome." Not least, one could point as well to the harnessing of capitalist advertising—the selling of the war to the American people—implicit in the memoranda's references to higher U.S. casualties and the arousal of "American feelings." (I will return to this aspect of global American later in this chapter, where I turn to the Pentagon under the aegis of the George W. Bush administration's invasion and occupation of Iraq.) But, for the purpose of my immediate argument, I want to underscore what Ohmann long ago noted at the outset of his criticism, but

did not adequately amplify about the "agents" of the "thoughtless" thought of these memoranda. This deadly, cliché-ridden and euphemistic "telegraphic" language, whose superficiality—is it inappropriate to call this symptom of these documents "banality"?—lent itself to the pervasive routinization of a murderous indiscriminate violence against America's demonized "others," is not, as it is in a totalitarian society, that of a militarist mentality. It is, rather, the language of *civilians,* precisely those "ordinary" Americans who exist in democracies to protect society from the juggernaut mentality of the militaristic mind.

These American "citizens"—Robert McNamara, Walt Rostow, William Bundy, McGeorge Bundy, John McNaughton, to name only a few of the most prominent—were, as Richard Halberstam called them at that time, "the best and the brightest." In this respect, they were unlike Eichmann, who, as Arendt rightly remarks, was basically uneducated and had made his way into the bureaucracy of the *SS* from being a salesman of the Austrian Vacuum Oil Company. But what is profoundly troubling about their American language (and thinking) in *The Pentagon Papers* is its remarkable similarity, despite the distinct difference in education (and perhaps even intelligence), to that of Eichmann in the self-condemning prevarications of his depositions to his Israeli interrogators prior to his trial and in his testimony at his trial as analyzed by Hannah Arendt. As the above randomly selected passages clearly suggest, the memoranda through which these citizens of the United States conducted an imperial war that, in the name of America's exceptionalist ethos and the American victory it justified (a "final solution" to the "problem of Vietnam," as it were), killed and mutilated at least two million Vietnamese people, mostly civilians ("gooks" or "slopes," as both the military command and most of the American soldiers called them), reduced a traditional rice culture to a society of refugees, and destroyed the land that sustained this ancient mode of life, betray the same dehumanized indifference, the same blindness, the same imperviousness, not simply to the minute particulars of the historical sociopolitical situation, but also, and above all, to the integrity and dignity of the lives of their Oriental "others" that Eichmann, the German "everyman," betrays to the Jews in the name of his (national) vocation: what he refers to tellingly as "doing his job."[21]

Following Hannah Arendt's directive, we should not let the fact that these American Pentagon policy experts wore three piece suits and ties and were highly educated, whereas Eichmann wore the uniform of the *SS* and was unread, obscure, as such surfaces tend to do, the terribly disturbing degree to which, under the aegis of the "American calling," they had become, like Eichmann in response to the Nazi calling, "subjected subjects." We should

not, in other words, let such differences hide the degree to which their "can-do" agency, like Eichmann's, had become ventriloquized, made more or less one with the systematized "dictatorship of the public realm."[22] As Edward Said implied in insistently underscoring the unerring instrumentalism—the linear means-end logic—of the Orientalist discourse of the American "policy experts" who superseded the erudite philological Orientalist scholars of the nineteenth century—Sylvestre de Sacy and Ernest Renan, for example—when the United States intervened in the Middle East at the outset of the Cold War, there is a disturbing similarity between their strategy-oriented "expertise" and the banality that Hannah Arendt attributes to Adolph Eichmann.[23]

Here, for example, among many others possibilities, is Eichmann's (defensive) response to his Israeli interrogator's question about his role in the "solution to the Jewish problem" in the aftermath of *Kristallnacht* (the pogrom perpetrated by the German state in November 1938, during which the windows of thousands of Jewish shops were broken, all the synagogues were burned down, and seventy-five hundred Jewish males were rounded up and sent to concentration camps), when the "solution" in his testimony was still a matter of negotiating with Jewish "functionaries" over "emigration;" i.e., forced expulsion:

> Yes, there we were beginning to see daylight [that is, the "sett[ing] aside as large a territory as possible (in Poland) as a protectorate" to relocate and house the Jewish population]. One day my chief, Dr. Stahlecker . . . and I took a trip to Poland. We went as far as the San in southeastern Poland, a tributary of the Vistula.
>
> When we got to the demarcation line, some Russian police guards led us a short way through Russian territory. We finally came to Nisko on the San. Nisko was in the Radom government; this I only knew from Jewish sources, because I had sent out some Jews to investigate settlement possibilities in that district. We went in; we saw an enormous territory, river, villages, markets, small towns, and we said to ourselves: This is perfect, why not resettle the Poles, seeing there's so much resettling being done in any case, and then move Jews into this big territory. The Eastern Jews are remarkably skillful craftsmen. If industries are set up, if Jews are brought in from Austria, Germany, Czechoslo—Bohemia [*sic*] and Moravia . . . Protectorate [by that time Czechoslovakia had been made a German protectorate], plus agriculture—that might easily provide a temporary solution, sure to be good for quite a while. That would relieve the worst of the pressure. It would benefit all concerned. It would be a political success for the Reich government. And it would take care of one point in the party program:

> solution of the Jewish problem. We, the Security Police, would have nothing more to worry about. One thing at least would be settled. So, Stahlecker submitted the proposition to Heydrich. It was approved, and I received an order to send five hundred, or maybe a thousand—I can't be sure of the numbers at this late date—Jewish artisans with a few trainloads of material to Nisko to put up a village of shacks, and using it as a center to settle Jews in proportion as the inhabitants were moved out. (EI, 60)

The utter absence of the humanity of the human beings, not only the Jews, but also the Poles, to whom Eichmann is referring—they simply have no being in his mind, despite his avowed ameliorative intention—is chillingly self-evident: they are, as in the case of Pentagon experts' comportment towards the Vietnamese, nothing but pawns—"bare life" in Agamben's terms—in a biopolitical problem the solution of which is pre-seen: disposable in the administrative (bio)logic of efficiency and utility. What I want to emphasize about this rhetoric of Eichmann's early (1939) take on the "Jewish problem"—it is repeated almost entirely in the same language in his account of "his plan" to render Germany "*judenrein*" (purified of Jews) by "emigrating" them to Madagascar shortly after the Nisko project was blocked[24]—is that it is essentially identical to that of the "Final Solution" period. In it, we hear the same dehumanized voice that we hear at the time, after the Wannsee Conference (January 1942), when he is using his considerable logistical skills to round up the Jews for the gas factories. The difference is substantial, of course, but it is essentially a matter of the intensification of the bionational "problem" in the process of time and thus, a matter, that is, of degree not of kind.

Seen from this biopolitical angle, the mentality of the American bureaucrats that planned and conducted the war in Vietnam against an enemy that turned their invisibility into a positively effective mode of resistance comes all too easily and uncomfortably to be perceived as similar to that of this early, "benign," Eichmann. I mean, more specifically, the cultural experts who devised the notoriously cruel "pacification" program (euphemism for violence, probably deriving from the *Pax Romana,* having its origins in the British enclosure movement that annulled the "commons" in behalf of the establishment of the bourgeois nation-state[25]): first, the "Strategic Hamlet" (during the Kennedy administration)[26] as the means of solving the "problem" of the invisible, unpredictable, and nomadic tactics of the insurgent enemy—their molecularization and neutralization of the massive American war machine. Civilian in origin, these various callous pacification strategies, rarely contested at the time for their cruel and indiscriminate inhumanity, though often criticized for their failure to accomplish the "pacification" of

the countryside, involved the massive uprooting of the populations of noncombatant Vietnamese peasantry from their ancestral rice paddies and often, as in its "Operation Phoenix" phase under the management of "Ambassador" Komer, extreme forms of torture and assassination,[27] and their relocation in contained settlements that were, in actuality, nothing more than concentration camps.[28] This forced emigration of a people whose lives were deeply rooted in their rice culture, which was the means of "neutralizing" (Komer) or "excising" (Westmoreland) "the VC political infrastructure,"[29] rendered the "cleared" space "free-fire zones" or, as all to many of the American soldiers put it, following the directives of the instrumentalist and quantitative language of their military and civilian superiors in Saigon and the Pentagon, spaces in which "if he's [*sic*] dead and a Vietnamese [man or woman, young or old], he's VC."[30]

This kind of dehumanized thought systematically utilized by official American civilians who were, indeed, cultural experts (total insiders, as it were)—a "thoughtless thought" that eventually became incapable of conceiving the possibility that the "enemy" was fighting a powerful and ruthless invader or of discriminating between civilians and combatants—was massively documented long ago (although this documentation was reluctant to draw the conclusions about the American national identity and, thus, about the American thinking it implied). Like the revelations of *The Pentagon Papers,* however, its witness has been more or less forgotten. I will retrieve only one more, quite visible, synedochical figure, Robert Komer, head of CORDS (Civilian Operations and Revolutionary Development Support), and mastermind of the "Phoenix" program (*Phung Hoang*) under the direction of his CIA deputy, William Colby. CORDS, which, it will be remembered, was the bureaucratic euphemism for the euphemism, pacification: the *systematic,* i.e., ideologically motivated, American effort to wrest control of the hamlets and villages of south Vietnam from the National Liberation Front. The Phoenix program that Komer inaugurated and supervised was, as the name suggests, the "benign" "revolutionary" cultural project that superseded the failed "Strategic Hamlet" initiative and, paradoxically, enabled—and justified—the cold-blooded calculus of the "kill ratio" or "body count."

Komer, nicknamed (not ironically) "Blowtorch" by his fellow civilian officials in Saigon for his aggressive optimism and riding roughshod over qualifying arguments in the name of his vocation, massively represented this new American "revolutionary"/"pacification" initiative as benign. Under the aegis of the American pioneer democracy of its cadre—or, rather, a highly schematized, techno-capitalist version of it—this cultural "revolution" would eventually "free"—by teaching freedom to—the Vietnamese people from the

ruthless tyranny of communist oppression and lift them, whether they liked it or not, out of the allegedly squalid, inhuman conditions of their primitive culture. In reality, however, the benignity of this nation-building discourse—and practice—was empty of care, that is, dehumanized. Its call concealed, even to those like Komer who vociferously espoused it, a ruthless and unrelenting will to power over—and a horrific indifference to—the humanity it represented, one tethered primarily to a "problem" that had to be solved, a "task" that had to be completed. Komer's thoughtless thought—the horrific inhumanity of his perception of the Vietnamese villagers it was his abiding purpose to "pacify" in the name of their freedom and nation-building—is reminiscent of the instrumentalist language of the authors of *The Pentagon Papers*. Indeed, it carries the dehumanizing biopolitical logic of its "telegraphic style" to its destructive (and self-destructive) end. This disclosive extreme is epitomized when, reducing "attrition," the official euphemism for a terrorist war that killed massively and indiscriminately for the purpose of destroying the morale of a people and bringing its leadership to its knees, to a vulgar abbreviation, he says, "If we attrit the population base of the Viet Cong, it will accelerate the process of degrading the V. C."[31] As the testimony of so many American veterans of the Vietnam War insistently bears witness, it was precisely this kind of mind—this eviscerated instrumentalist thinking that evaluated the progress toward victory in terms of the "kill ratio" or the arithmetic of "the body count"—that determined the brutal practice of those Americans and their South Vietnam clients who participated in Komer's Phoenix program.[32] I mean, to put this rhetoric in terms of the referent it conceals or annuls, the pervasive American practice, whether it took the form of "search and destroy" actions, the eviction of villagers, or massive B 52 bombings of the north, of killing the Vietnamese people *indiscriminately;* or, to invoke a more recent language, of making those humans who have been reduced to bodies that don't count (bare life)—accountable: serve the higher cause. At the outset of the Phoenix program, as the historian Marilyn Young puts it,

> Komer set a quota of three thousand VCI (the bureaucratic acronym for the meaning-reductive "Viet Cong Infrastructure") to be "neutralized" each month, and the figures were not unsatisfactory. From 1968 to mid-1971, 28,000 VCI were captured, 20,000 assassinated, 17,000 persuaded to defect (though whether all these people were in fact VCI is doubtful, since Phoenix early on became an extortionist's paradise, with payoffs as available for denunciation as for protection). "People who were just complicit were good for ten thousand or more piasters on the presentation of a head

> or an ID card or an ear to identify them," K. Barton Osborne recalled in an interview after the war. "It was a very wild kind of program. There were an awful lot of vendettas being carried out with Phoenix license." Moreover, the "process of bringing these people in and interrogating them, the process of even considering legal recourses, was just too overpowering, considering the mania of the body count and the quotas assigned for V. C. I. and neutralization. So quite often it was a matter of expediency just to eliminate a person in the field rather than deal with the paperwork."[33]

III

The complicity of the kind of thoughtless thought epitomized by the Pentagon planners and the civilians experts, like Robert Komer, in Saigon, who were ostensibly engaged in the task of "winning the hearts and minds" of the Vietnamese people to the cause of "freedom" and the American version of the Western nation-state system, with the horrific dehumanized killing practice of "'attrit[ing]' the population base of the Viet Cong" became remarkably manifest in the process of the Vietnam War. One would expect, therefore, that, in the wake of the defeat of the United States, this complicity—and its analogy with the thought and practice of the Eichmanns in Nazi Germany would become a major if not the central tenet of those who opposed America's renewed pursuit of hegemony over the planet in the wake of the implosion of the Soviet Union in the last decade of the twentieth century. But it did not, at least not in a decisively articulated way. There are, I suggest, at least two significant reasons for this. 1) In the aftermath of "defeat," the dominant order of the United States—and the culture industry it controls—mounted a sustained and virtually total campaign to forget the Vietnam War, or, more accurately, to rewrite its history: to convey the impression to the American public that the protest movement had instigated a national neurosis (the "Vietnam syndrome") that, in provoking complexity in thinking, divided the nation and prevented the American military forces from winning the war.[34] 2) In the aftermath of its "victory," the protest movement in the United States, in its typically American distrust of theory in favor of political practice, created an adversarial environment that precluded the possibility of perceiving the *indissoluble relationship between thinking and practice,* a division repeated in reverse within academia, as the antagonism between the poststructuralists and the "worldly" political and postcolonial critics testifies.

It was primarily the combination of these two initiatives that eventually enabled the dominant culture in America to resume its pre-Vietnam War

vocation to achieve global hegemony in the name of American exceptionalism and the *Pax Americana*. First, it enabled President George Bush the elder to invade Iraq in the first Gulf War (1990–1991) and to announce in its aftermath that America had "kicked the Vietnam syndrome at last"—that is to say, had recuperated precisely the kind of dehumanized instrumentalist thinking that, in devastating Vietnam (its land, its people, and its culture), had self-destructed. And then, after 9/11, it enabled George W. Bush the younger (and his neocon intellectual deputies) to invade Afghanistan and Iraq in the name of "regime change," and, when Iraq threatened to become another Vietnam "quagmire," to invoke the rewritten history of the Vietnam War in a speech before the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Kansas City for the purpose of aligning it with World War II—the democratization of Japan—in the name of the banal and banalizing phrase, "staying the course" in Iraq. Recalling the anti-war sentiments of members of the Congress and the media against the presence of America in Vietnam that emerged all too late in the war, particularly in the context of Cambodia, President Bush said, astonishingly:

> The world would learn just how costly these misimpressions would be. In Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge began a murderous rule in which hundreds of thousand of Cambodians died by starvation and torture and execution. In Vietnam, former allies of the United States and government workers and intellectuals and businessmen were sent off to prison camps, where tens of thousands perished. Hundreds of thousands more fled the country on rickety boats, many of them going to their graves in the South China Sea.
>
> Three decades later, there is a legitimate debate about how we got into the Vietnam War and how we left. . . . Whatever your position on that debate [this is intended to recall the question of how the United States got into the war in Iraq], one unmistakable legacy of Vietnam is that the price of America's withdrawal was paid by millions of innocent citizens whose agonies would add to our vocabulary new terms like "boat people," "re-education camps," and "killing fields."
>
> There was another price to our withdrawal from Vietnam, and we can hear it in the words of the enemy we face in today's struggle—those who came to our soil and killed thousands of citizens on September the 11th, 2001. In an interview with a Pakistani newspaper after the 9/11 attacks, Osama bin Laden declared that "the American people had risen against their government's war on Vietnam. And they must do the same today.". . .
>
> We must remember the words of the enemy. We must listen to what they say. Bin Laden had declared that "war [in Iraq] is for you or us to win.

> If we win it, it means your disgrace and defeat forever." Iraq is one of several fronts in the war on terror—but it's the central front—it's the central front for the enemy that attacked us and wants to attack us again. And it's the central front for the United States and to withdraw without getting the job done would be devastating.
>
> If we were to abandon the Iraqi people, the terrorists would be emboldened and use their victory to gain new recruits. As we saw on September 11th, a terrorist safe haven on the other side of the world can bring death and destruction to the streets of our cities. Unlike in Vietnam, if we withdraw before the job is done, this enemy will follow us home. And that is why, for the security of the United States of America, we must defeat them overseas so we do not face them in the United States of America. (Applause.)
>
> I recognize that history cannot predict the future with absolute certainty. I understand that. But history does remind us that there are lessons applicable to our time. And we can learn something from history. In Asia [the reference is to Japan] we saw freedom triumph over violent ideologies after the sacrifice of tens of thousands of American lives—and that freedom has yielded peace for generations.[35]

This patently crude rewriting of the history of the Vietnam War, including, the obliteration of the role President Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger's illicit bombing and invasion of Cambodia played in enabling the Khmer Rouge's rise to power—Americans called it "airbrushing" during the Cold War, when they attributed this same kind of revisionism to the Stalinists—is not simply a matter of prevarication. It is, rather, the consequence of a national vocation: a deeply inscribed insider's mind-set that simply assumes America's metropolitan status and its exceptionalist global missionary project to be a truth ordained by God or History, even if that truth calls for the slaughter of an untold number of innocents—or, in the banal language that accompanies such slaughter, "collateral damage."

In his speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Kansas City, President Bush traced the present "argument" against "staying the course" in Iraq back to the Vietnam War, when "people argued the real problem was America's presence and that if we would just withdraw, the killing would end." More specifically—and not incidentally—he attributed its origin to the anti-American Old World British novelist, Graham Greene:

> The argument that America's presence in Indochina was dangerous had a long pedigree. In 1955, long before the United States had entered the war,

> Graham Greene wrote a novel called "The Quiet American." It was set in Saigon, and the main character was a young government agent named Alden Pyle. He was a symbol of American purpose and patriotism—and dangerous naïveté. Another character [the English expatriate reporter and narrator, Fowler] describes Alden this way: "I never knew a man who had better motives for all the trouble he caused."
>
> After America entered the Vietnam War, the Graham Green argument gathered some steam. As a matter of fact, many argued that if we pulled out there would be no consequences for the Vietnamese people.

In fact, "this symbol of American purpose and patriotism," as President Bush describes the "quiet American," was an American CIA agent, who, in the face of the imminent defeat of the French colonial army at the hands of the insurgent Vietminh and armed with the Domino Theory—the "truth" he acquired from the Cold War—and the Orientalist books of the "area expert" York Harding and his American exceptionalist ethos—was clandestinely attempting to establish a "Third Force." Following the unerring missionary logic of the myth of American exceptionalism, Pyle envisages this "Third Force" as one, under the aegis of the United States, that would oppose both the decadent (Old World) French colonial regime and the Chinese and/or Soviet communists, who were alleged (falsely) to be in control of the Vietminh. Directed by what Edward Said called the "textual attitude"—the "fallacy" of "assuming that the swarming, unpredictable, and problematic mess in which humans beings live can be understood on the basis of what books—texts—say[36]—and in the name of his American exceptionalism, Pyle arranged with the "leader" of this "Third Force" to detonate some bombs in the heart of Saigon during a parade that would be interpreted by the world press as the terrorist work of the communists. Unbeknown to Pyle, the parade had been called off, but this had not deterred the leader of the "Third Force." The result of Pyle's "American purpose and patriotism"—what President Bush's satirical invocation of Greene's novel leaves resonantly unsaid—is a terrorist massacre of innocents. I quote at some length to retrieve the chilling point, obliterated by the president in his speech, that Greene is making (in anticipation of Hannah Arendt) about the terrible banality of the American language and thinking epitomized by the "quiet American":

> "There mustn't be any American casualties, must there?" [Pyle had warned a couple of American secretaries (and Phuong, his Vietnamese girlfriend) to stay away from the milk bar they frequented that day.] An ambulance forced it way up the rue Catinat into the square and the policeman who had

stopped me moved to one side to let it through. . . . I pushed Pyle forward and ahead of me into the square before we could be stopped.

We were among a congregation of mourners. The police could prevent others entering the square; they were powerless to clear the square of the survivors and the first-comers. The doctors were too busy to attend to the dead, and so the dead were left to their owners, for one can own the dead as one owns a chair. A woman sat on the ground with what was left of her baby in her lap; with a kind of modesty, she covered it with her straw peasant hat. She was still silent, and what struck me most in the square was the silence. . . . The legless torso, at the edge of the garden still twitched like a chicken that had lost its head. From the man's shirt, he had probably been a trishaw driver.

Pyle said, "It's awful." He looked at the wet on his shoes and said in a sick voice, "What's that?"

"Blood," I said, "Haven't you ever seen it before?"

He said, "I must get them cleaned before I see the minister." I don't think he knew what he was saying. He was seeing a real war for the first time: he'd punted down into Phat Diem in a kind of school boy dream, and anyway in his eyes soldiers didn't count.

I forced him, with my hand on his shoulder, to look around. I said, "This is the hour when the place is always full of women and children—it's the shopping hour. Why choose that of all hours?"

He said weakly, "There was to have been a parade."

"And you hoped to catch a few colonels. But the parade was cancelled yesterday, Pyle."

"I didn't know."

"Didn't know!" I pushed him into a patch of blood where a stretcher had lain. "You ought to be better informed."

"I was out of town," he said, looking down at his shoes. "They should have called it off."

"And miss the fun?" I asked him. "Do you expect General Thé to lose his demonstration? This is better than a parade. Women and children are news, and soldiers aren't, in a war. This will hit the world press. You've put General Thé on the map all right, Pyle. You've got the Third Force and National Democracy all over your right shoe. Go home to Phuong and tell her about your heroic dead—there are a few dozen less of her people to worry about. . . .

Unlike them [the people who were already flocking into the nearby cathedral] I had reason for thankfulness, for wasn't Phuong alive? Hadn't she been warned? But what I remembered was the torso in the square, the

> baby on its mother's lap. They had not been warned: they had not been sufficiently important. . . . A two-hundred pound bomb does not discriminate. How many dead colonels justify a child's or a trishaw driver's death when you are building a national democratic front?[37]

This increasing deterioration of language and thinking in America to which Graham Greene (among many others) synecdochically pointed to proleptically in *The Quiet American,* as America began to acquire global hegemony in the wake of World War II, is epidemic at the present historical conjuncture. It afflicts, in some ominous degree or other, not only every facet of public discourse, from that of the government through the corporate world and the information media to the public schools. I am referring in general to the massive and increasingly totalizing initiative, undertaken by the state in collusion with late (global) capitalism, to transfer the production of culture, traditionally the function of the university, into the hands of the corporate world or, to what Adorno and Horkheimer, pointing to the increasing massification of public life, especially in the United States (the "administered society") under the aegis of capitalism and advertising, called the "culture industry" a half century ago. This initiative was given its defining momentum in the 1980s during the Reagan administration. On the one hand, it was intended to facilitate late capitalism's commodity-oriented version of globalization: the neo-imperialist expansion of the free market enabled by the electronic technology of information transmission and retrieval under the aegis of what has come to be called "global English." On the other—and contradictorily—it was intended to counteract the North American humanities departments' rejection of the traditional (nationalist) Kantian model of the university, which assigned the humanist disciplines the task of instilling its students with a national culture that reflected and enhanced the unity, integrity, and authority of the nation-state, in favor of the inculcation of a global, if not exactly anti-nationalist or postcolonial, cultural perspective more attuned to and "sympathetic" with the diversity of its cultures.[38]

It is by way of the usurpation of cultural production by the culture industry in its global allotrope that the falling of language under the dictatorship of the American capitalist public realm has also invaded the very institutions of higher education, which, theoretically, exist to resist such a deterioration. The neo-imperial capitalist version of globalization inaugurally sponsored by the Reagan administration has not been satisfied simply to take over the production of culture from the humanities. Dependent on a massive new global "intellectual proletariat" and its "immaterial labor,"[39] it has begun to insinuate itself into those disciplines of the university that have traditionally

existed to acculturate its students. This initiative, for example, lies behind the massive momentum now under way to diversify and privatize the public university, and, specifically, to transform English departments into departments that are programmed to serve the needs of global capitalism. That is, to teach "global English"—an instrumentalist American English emptied of all ambiguities and cultural, social, and political markers—to a culturally diverse student body as the *lingua franca* of the neoliberal world, an allegedly benign momentum that, in fact, is already ravaging the diverse peoples of the third world and their earth by way of reducing them to the consumers of products.[40]

IV

This epidemic of language and thought deterioration is too pervasive and widespread to be adequately addressed in this limited space, though the validity of the point I am arguing will at least be suggested if, against a certain inertia among progressive scholars and intellectuals, what I have said all too briefly about the increasing deterioration of language and thinking in America by way of Arendt's analysis of Eichmann's depositions is reconstellated into the context provided by poststructuralist theory, particularly Michel Foucault's, Edward Said's, and, more recently, Giorgio Agamben's Arendtian-inflected histories of the complicity of (Western) knowledge production and power beginning with the advent of modernity—and so called nation-state democracies—and culminating in that mode of "the "regime of truth" that has come to be called biopower. Here, I will restrict my commentary on the present state of this all too invisible (unthought) but pervasive process of the deterioration—which is to say with Hannah Arendt, of the banalization of evil—to an exemplary document prepared by the Rand Corporation in 2007 at the behest of the Pentagon during the George W. Bush administration (at the cost of $400,000 in public tax money) in behalf of the latter's Ahabian commitment (though now bordering on farce) to "stay the course" in Iraq and Afghanistan, despite the "quagmire" that has killed and maimed and continues to kill and maim not only American, Iraqi, and Afghan soldiers but far larger numbers of innocent Iraqi and Afghan civilians; has instigated increasingly irreconcilable divisions within Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan many of which did not exist before America's trumped up invasion; has destabilized the Middle East and Southeast Asia; has produced a huge global population of refugees and unhoused émigrés to exacerbate the already existing problem of migrants and undocumented people in the

Western world; and, not least, has rendered the state of exception the global norm. I am referring to the report, entitled *Enlisting Madison Avenue: The Marketing Approach to Earning Popular Support in Theaters of Operation,*[41] that, as the astonishing title blatantly suggests, has proposed the employment of the strategies of persuasion developed and fine-tuned by the American advertising industry in behalf of the U.S. Defense Department's failing effort to "shape" "positive indigenous attitudes toward U.S. and coalition forces [in Afghanistan and Iraq]," (EMA, 4) that is to say, to seduce the multitudes of radically other cultures into taking their *proper place* in a global whole the legitimacy of which has been determined by the American "errand" and its end, the (neoliberal version of) *Pax Americana.* The ubiquity of the marketing term "shaping" in the report—this awfully reductive white metaphor for "winning hearts and minds" (along with its "cost efficiency" rhetoric and its awareness of the need to appease "American 'feelings'" so reminiscence of the panoptic spatializing language of the Pentagon planners during the Vietnam War)—should not be overlooked. Here, for example, is a typical summary statement of the "vision" of the report:

> It is an oft-cited lament that a nation with the vast skills and resources of the U.S. commercial marketing sector should not have such difficulty in effectively influencing the populations that reside in U.S. operational theaters. Despite considerable differences between military operational venues and the commercial marketplace, a common thread exits, one that allows the weaving of insights from one into new shaping approaches and opportunities in the other.
>
> It is true that the realm of U.S. military stability operations is worlds apart from the comparatively safe and genial environment of U.S. business activities. However, there are key similarities between commercial marketing practices and the military's efforts to shape noncombatants. At the most basic level, both efforts have as their objectives a change in behavior. Businesses ultimately seek to move customers to purchase products or services. The military seeks to cultivate popular support (or, at a minimum, to deny that support to adversaries) and motivate compliance with operational objectives. Businesses seek to create products or provide services that meet the needs and satisfy the desires of the marketplace. [This locution obscures the fact that their primary purpose is to produce desire and needs.] As our shaping concept highlights, they also seek to instill brand loyalty through a synchronization of word and deed and to combine these with well-integrated promotional activities that are clear and compelling. These business approaches have paid handsome dividends for those who

> have applied the trade with discipline. Brands such as Starbuck and Apple have captured the hearts and minds of consumers and have reaped financial windfalls in return. (EMA, 58)

And here is a more particular, though utterly representative, application of the general thesis of the report, one focusing on the problem of the limited "Product Life-Cycle" as it pertains to the obsoleteness of the U.S Army Cold War "brand" (the one "based on a force of might"):

> To maintain or recapture leading market positions, companies must adapt by changing the product's positioning to suit new competitive needs. This new positioning may effect a modification in different product attributes, such as a change in quality, features, or styling. The slow pour of Heinz ketchup once embodied the brand's positioning of the ketchup as having a thick, rich consistency. Possibly reflecting a new societal focus on speed and efficiency, Heinz still maintains that its ketchup is "thick and rich," but the positioning now focuses more on its new upside-down squeeze packaging that is "always ready when you are." Similarly, McDonald's suffered a tired brand identity, increasing concerns from a health-conscious marketplace, and a saturated fast-food market. It encountered this slump with new health-conscious menu items and a hip positioning, reflected in the tagline, "I'm lovin' it." In highly competitive markets, adaptation is always a key to success in maintaining market leadership.

Under the heading "A New Brand for the U.S. Military," what follows from these notorious—but still to be adequately constellated—examples of strategic "rebranding," is a brief history pointing to the obsolescence of the "brand identity" based "on force and might." Developed by the U.S. military since before World War II, this one, "like all good consumer brands," "was incredibly focused and clear" and served to imprint "a clear identity on the minds of its intended target, the nation's adversaries." But, it goes on, this "product's life-cycle" has run its course:

> More recently, however, the military has been embroiled in numerous smaller conflicts, from Somalia to Haiti and Bosnia. Currently, U.S. and allied forces are engaged in COIN [counterinsurgency] operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Many U.S. adversaries in these regions have seen the truth behind the brand. The United States cannot be defeated in open-terrain, force-on-force combat. Instead, the new modus operandi is to retreat into complex terrain, don a civilian cloak, and steadily inflict losses

> that weaken U.S. public resolve. Deftness of touch interacting with civilians, applying focused combat power, and collecting HUMINT [human intelligence] have become the requirements of the day. Addressing these requirements with brute force has hindered operational success in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Some may hope that such operational trends are only a blip on the historical screen and that a U.S. brand focused solely on the application of superior firepower may again carry the day. This is unlikely to be the case.
>
> Like consumer products positioned and branded for a day gone by, so too is the U.S. military brand identity now—at least in part—out of date. A new and more effective U.S. military brand identity is critical to the success of stability operations for several reasons. We posit that engendering positive indigenous attitudes towards U.S. military presence is important in that it will encourage support of the U.S. military, make U.S forces more approachable to civilians, and enable more effective and trustworthy communications. The perceptions that people hold about the U.S military (or the U.S. military brand identity) will prove crucial in molding relevant attitudes. Importantly, an effective brand identity also internally guides corporate actions and communications. It is similar to a commander's intent, imbued from boot camp to combat and beyond. . . . (EMA, 74–75)

What is astonishing in the typical discourse of the Rand Corporation report—so reminiscent of the discourse of *The Pentagon Papers* forty years earlier—positing the benefits to the U.S. Department of Defense of "shaping" "indigenous attitudes" is its unquestioned reduction of living human beings, especially a diverse cultural population of Arab civilians who are being killed, mutilated, unhoused, imprisoned, tortured, by a foreign invading and occupational force (a horror it calls "collateral damage") to "targeted" "consumers" of "branded" products—the entire value system, including the consumerism, of American capitalist democracy—in the very process of claiming to care for the lives of its "targets." As in the case of *The Pentagon Papers* during the early phase of the United States' intervention in Vietnam, nowhere in this extended genial and mind-numbing repetitive instrumentalist report is there the slightest hint as to the question of the legitimacy of the American invasion and occupation of Iraqi and Afghanistani land. It simply—and optimistically—assumes that the United States' military presence in Iraq and Afghanistan has been decreed by Providence or History, that its mission is necessary, and that the end of this intervention is benign. Nor, as a necessary consequence, is there any reference to alternative emotions that its marketing strategies might be instigating in its "indigenous targets": revulsion or

outrage, for example, at their dislocated lives being represented as nothing more than mindless consumers of products—a reduction exacerbated by the traditional animosity these Islamic peoples bear against the imperial West—at the very moment that the American war machine is destroying them and their singular ways of life. The authors' absolute confidence in the "American calling"—their unquestioning assumption of the benign utility of their relentlessly instrumentalist marketing discourse—betrays their absolute submersion in a biopolitical regime of truth, which is to say, their unawareness of the innocent human blood that the American army of occupation is spilling—to say nothing of the endless anguish its destabilizing occupation is precipitating—in the name of "regime change" in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. The end of the means-end logic of their biopolitical regime of truth is the reduction of human to bare life, life, to anticipate Giorgio Agamben's analysis, that, like Adolph Eichmann's Jews, can be killed with impunity.[42]

In this, the authors of *Enlisting Madison Avenue* recall Alden Pyle, the representative "quiet American," whose murderous blind and thoughtless optimism Graham Greene indicted half a century ago, at the very moment that the United States began to calculate the benefits of "winning the hearts and minds" of Third World peoples in its pursuit of world hegemony. Though this time, to invoke Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire*—and Voltaire's *Candide*—as farce:

> Candide had been wounded [during the Lisbon earthquake] by splinters of flying masonry and lay helpless in the road, covered with rubble.
>
> "For heaven's sake," he cried to Pangloss, "Fetch me some wine and oil! I'm dying."
>
> "This earthquake is nothing new," replied Pangloss, "The town of Lima in America experienced the same shocks last year. The same cause produced the same effects. There is certainly a vein of sulphur running under the earth from Lima to Lisbon."
>
> "Nothing is more likely," cried Candide; "but the oil and wine, for pity's sake!"
>
> "Likely!" exclaimed the philosopher, "I maintained it's proved!"
>
> Candide lost consciousness, and Pangloss brought him a little water from a fountain close by.[43]

The appallingly dehumanized language/thinking I have liberally quoted from *Enlisting Madison Avenue,* it is important to underscore, must not be attributed simply to the lack of intelligence and/or sensitivity of its team of

authors. Nor is there anything in the text to suggest that it is the consequence of hypocrisy. The same dehumanized instrumentalist language/thinking pervades the primary and secondary sources of their report as a broad random sampling suggests:

- The White House had launched several recent initiatives designed to promote the coordination of U.S. public diplomacy efforts, and agencies are working to improve public diplomacy, but the government does not yet have a national communication strategy. (U.S. Government Accounting Office), EMA, 33
- PA [Public Affairs] does not want the PSYOP/Io [Psychological Operations/Information Operations] stink on them (Anonymous interviewee), EMA, 33
- A dilatory PSYOP product approval process is detrimental to the execution of an effective PSYOP campaign. Before operations, a delayed process inhibits PSYOP planning and rehearsal time, while slow approval during an actual campaign can render some military and political products useless, since they may be overcome by events. (Christopher Lamb, Review of Psychological Operations Lesson Learned from Recent Operational Experience [Washington, D.C: National Defense University Press, 2005], EMA, 45)
- They [a U.S. "focus group" "pretesting" a "product"] are doing products for Taliban and using civilians to pretest. We had Taliban as prisoners and defectors; they should have used them. (Anonymous interviewee, EMA, 46)
- Sometimes, we have to produce a product without adequate target-audience analysis. That is problematic and is very hard to fix. When a general tells us they want something, you say, "Yes, sir!" and give them the product. (Anonymous interviewee, EMA, 52)
- If you are going to defeat an insurgency, the people have got to want to eradicate the violence from their society. You have to go into the street and treat the people as your customers, because they are [the customers] in defeating an insurgency. With the ordinary people, you cannot burst into their houses and slam them up against the wall, because that is not how you treat your customers. (Anonymous interviewee, EMA, 57)

If one is attuned to the relentless critique of representation that begins with Heidegger's de-struction of *Das Man* (the they-self, the one whose thinking is dictated by the public realm), is developed by Hannah Arendt's

critique of *homo faber* and *animal laborans* and Michel Foucault's analysis of the "useful and docile body," and culminates in Edward Said's critique of the American version of the Orientalist mind, one arrives at a profoundly different understanding of the language of the authors of the Rand Report (and of their sources). It comes to be seen as the deeply inscribed calculative and rigidly systematic biopolitical language of a powerful guild of foreign policy "experts"—the, now, huge and formidable constituency of American society whose "expertise" determines foreign and domestic policy: a constituency, transcending the Republican and Democratic parties, that might be called official America or, as one of them, a "senior advisor in the George W. Bush administration," put it to the reporter Ron Suskind, that "creates reality":

> The aide said that guys like me were "in what we call the reality-based community," which he defined as people who "believe that solutions emerge from your judicious study of discernible reality." I nodded and murmured something about enlightenment principles and empiricism. He cut me off. "That's not the way the world really works anymore, he continued. "We're an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you're studying that reality—judiciously, as you will—we'll act again, creating other new realities, which you can study too, and that's how things will sort out. We're history's actors . . . and you, all of you, will be left to just study what we do."[44]

And insofar as official America relies on the inordinate successfulness of the "shaping operations" of Madison Avenue in *behalf* of global capitalism, this language is, one is compelled, however reluctantly, to conclude, the dehumanized language of a vast majority of a ventriloquized American public.

In putting this collusion between the America nation-state and neoliberal capitalism in the formation ("shaping") of the collective identity of an indigenous people in terms of "making reality," I am not only invoking Arendt's critique of the instrumentalist world produced by *homo faber* in *The Human Condition,* but also Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer's now classic *Dialectic of the Enlightenment.* Originally published in 1947, in the immediate wake of the fall of Nazi Germany, this meditation on the re-enchantment of the world that the disenchanting Enlightenment backed into was intended as a warning to the victorious nation-states of the capitalist West, not least the United States, which, like Arendt, they called appropriately the "administered world,"[45] a prophesy that the Enlightenment under the aegis of the means/end logic of positivist rationality, technology, and the calculative language of the "culture industry" (including advertising) would end up repro-

ducing the totalitarianism it had spilled oceans of blood to defeat—and the dehumanized or depoliticized "other" that blood was intended to redeem:

> For enlightenment, anything which does not conform to the standard of calculability and utility must be viewed with suspicion. Once the movement is able to develop unhampered by external oppression, there is no holding it back. Its own ideas of human rights then fare no better than the older universals. Any intellectual resistance it encounters merely increases its strength. The reason is that enlightenment also recognizes itself in the old myths. No matter which myths are invoked against it, by being used as arguments they are made to acknowledge the very principle of corrosive rationality of which enlightenment stands accuses. Enlightenment is totalitarian. (DE, 3–4)

Nor should it be forgotten that, for Horkheimer and Adorno, it was, above all, advertising, the very instrument the Pentagon, via the "experts" of the Rand Corporation, is relying on to justify the ravages entailed in winning its neocolonial wars in the Middle East, that was the culture industry's essential medium for transforming its "mass deception" into the reality of the "democratic" mob: its language and its thinking.[46]

V

Let me now, after this long detour, return to Hannah Arendt's "Report on the Banality of Evil." When, following her directive in the introduction of *The Life of the Mind,* the American ("exceptionalist") discourse I have represented primarily by *The Pentagon Papers* and the Rand report is reconstellated into the historical context her book on Adolph Eichmann thinks, one cannot help being struck by the remarkable similarity between this global American "expertise" and the representative Nazi functionary's language. I am not simply referring to the thoughtless managerial instrumentalism of the *total insider* (at one with or at home in the nation and thus answerable to its call) that arrogantly—from a below that is informed by an above, as it were—determines the singular *lives* of an untold numbers of human beings whom, for one reason or other, this vocation perceives as "other" and "below" and, therefore, as cipher-like obstacles in the way of the achievement of its pre-established *Telos.* I am also referring to the concomitant blindness—and indifference—to the outrages, individual and collective, this naturalized, practical end-oriented (supernatural) language inflicts on these "obstacles"

in the undeviating process of arriving at the pre-conceived goal called for by a "higher cause."

This is not to say, to reiterate, that the two languages are identical. There is, of course, a considerable difference between Eichmann's grotesque abasement of his self to the totalitarian dictates of the Führer's and the Nazi Party's call and the Americans' no doubt sincere commitment to exceptionalist America's benign errand in the world's wilderness—the spreading of American-style democracy by violence—that lies behind the grotesque banal euphemism, "regime change." Nor is there an equivalence between the agency—the internment camps and the gas chambers—that he used to achieve his vocational end—"the Final Solution"—and the agency envisioned by the American experts to achieve theirs (though the absolute absence of reference to detention camps such as Guantanamo, the practice of "rendering," and the use of torture to extract "confessions" from detainees in the entire process of their argument should not be overlooked). But this obvious—and all too easily accepted—conventional opposition should not obscure what both these apparently antithetical political vocations have fundamentally in common. And that is 1) a *naturalized supernatural* (metaphysical) perspective—the perception of (the truth) of being from the end or from above, *meta ta physica,* that reduces by territorializing the differential world of time below—the end-oriented and "imperial" logical economy of which arrived at its highly efficient fulfillment in the modern nation-state: the age of science and technology, or, in Heidegger's now resonant formulation, the detemporalized "age of world picture" or, to bring theses references up to date, the global age of the "American Century"; and 2) a corollary exceptionalism—in the case of the Nazis, a chosen race; in the case of the Americans, a chosen people called by God or History to fulfill His/Its promise in the world's wilderness. Despite appearances, the difference, in other words, is not radical—a difference in logic—but a matter of degree. As Hannah Arendt brilliantly and proleptically showed a half century ago, the language/thought of the Nazi Eichmann is a totalizing and totalitarian language/thought that, in fulfilling its instrumentalist vocational logic (in coming to its end) self-destructed. The language/thought of the American authors of *The Pentagon Papers* and such representative documents as *Enlisting Madison Avenue* has not yet quite "arrived." It is still in some degree "democratic," but its forwarding vocational momentum (justified by a blind confidence in its truthfulness reminiscent of Cervantes' Don Quixote or Voltaire's Pangloss)—its "march," to use the telling metaphor inherent in the founding logic of American exceptionalist Manifest Destiny[47]—towards universalization, the penetration of the global body politic right down to its most remote capillaries—will give pause to

anyone conversant with history, especially the history of the twentieth century. To reconstellate Eichmann's language and that of the Pentagon or the Rand Corporation experts into the context prepared by Arendt is not only to point to the horrific self-destruction of the former's (bio)logic as a warning; it is also to suggest the urgency at this perilous global occasion of the need *to rethink thinking* itself, indeed, of a rethinking of thinking that takes its directives from the very "other"—the profane world below, as it were—that this privileged American will will—ferociously—have nothing to do with at the very time that it always already and necessarily speaks its "name."

At the end of his life, Edward W. Said called, in the exilic names of Giambattista Vico, Erich Auerbach, and Friedrich Nietzsche, for a return to philology as a means of forestalling the West's rapid ascent (decline) into the worst possible form of totalitarianism. I mean the kind which, unlike that of German Nazism, which was vulnerable because the force it used to achieve its end was patently visible, is invulnerable to opposition because the totalitarian biopolitical virus, by way of its democratization, permeates the social body right down to its capillaries. What I take Said to have meant by philology is succinctly articulated in his posthumously published *Humanism and Democratic Criticism.* It is a "*contrapuntal*" process of "reading" or "interpretation, which is to say, a *thinking the world,* that, very much like Arendt's Socrates in *The Life of the Mind,* as we shall see, involves two simultaneous "crucial motions": "reception" and "resistance."[48] After asserting the worldliness of the reader and the text he/she is reading, Said writes:

> [I]t can be said that two situations are in play: that of the humanist reader in the present and that of the text in its [historically established] framework. Each requires analysis, *each inhabits a local and wider historical framework,* and each must solicit relentless questioning by the humanist. The literary text derives, true enough, from the assumed privacy and solitude of the individual writer, *but the tension between the privileged location and the social location of the writer is ever present,* whether the writer is a historian like Henry Adams, a relatively isolated poet like Emily Dickinson, or a renowned man of letters like Henry James. (HDC, 74–75; my emphasis)

In this dense and resonant passage, Said is describing a position of reading/thinking/saying in which, paradoxically, the self is one, yet two: passive and active, native and alien, local and foreign, familiar and estranged, in short, ontic-ontological, inside and outside the world *at the same time.* To invoke a term that will assume increasing importance in this book, this self is a *radically secular* being-in-the world. The traditional Enlightenment humanists

assume a fundamental at-homeness in their world and thus either un-world it—reduce its living differential force to the identity of a (transcendentally informed, natural supernatural) identical object—or render it complicitous with the identity of the "local" or "national" (in this case, the United States of America). It is this humanism that would at all costs *at-home* the *being* of being—humans, animals, floral, fauna, the earth, the light, the dark—that, in the process of fulfilling its naturalized metaphysical logic in the calculative technological/instrumentalist thinking of American modernity, has reduced the differential dynamics of humanity to a totalized quantifiable object, a *Summum Ens,* in which every singular thing in space and even in time is an integral *part* of the larger identical whole: what Adorno and Horkheimer called the masses and Arendt epitomizes in the person of Adolph Eichmann. On the other hand, the position of the reader/thinker that Said is espousing against this total inside or inside totality is that of an "exile" from the "homeland," a radical "border" perspective that is *a-part*—a part of and apart from the larger whole—and thus enables such a humanist reader/thinker to be "responsible": both to feelingly understand the text's worldly meaning and to perceive its disabling, often life-devastating blindnesses without annulling the question by arriving at a definitive answer.

In adjudicating between the simultaneous, that is, dialogic or, better, contrapuntal, imperatives of reception and resistance in reading, Said, in fact, opts for the motion of resistance as the primary one of the humanism he professes:

> A reader is in a place, in a school or university, in a work place, or in a specific country at a particular time, situation, and so forth. But these are not passive frameworks. In the process of widening the humanistic horizon, its achievements of insight and understanding, the framework must be actively understood, constructed, and interpreted. *And this is what resistance is: the ability to differentiate between what is directly given and what may be withheld, whether because one's own circumstances as a humanist specialist may confine one to a limited space beyond which one can't venture or because one is indoctrinated to recognize only what one had been educated to see or because only policy experts are presumed to be entitled to speak about the economy, health services, or foreign and military policies, issues of urgent concern to the humanist as a citizen.* (HDC, 75–76; my emphasis)

Indeed, Said, fully aware of the inordinate degree to which the world has been systematized—reduced to an "administered world"—under the aegis

of the modern West and the logic of belonging of the nation-state system, especially of post-9/11 America, overdetermines this second, resistant, phase of philological reading:

> Yes, we need to keep coming back to the words and structures in the books we read [this is a reference to the phase of reception], but, just as these words were themselves taken by the poet from the world and evoked from out of silence in the forceful ways without which no creation is possible, readers must extend their readings out into the various worlds each one of us resides in. It is especially appropriate for the contemporary humanist to cultivate that sense of multiple worlds and complex interacting traditions, that inevitable combination I've mentioned of belonging and detachment, reception and resistance. *The task of the humanist is not just to occupy a position or place, not simply to belong somewhere, but rather 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. (HDC, 76; my emphasis)

In calling for the return of philology in *Humanism and Democratic Criticism,* Said, is, of course, referring to reading or interpreting texts, not thinking as such, but, as I have been suggesting by way of representing the world as text, it is quite clear that, for him, reading and thinking, including everyday thinking, are indissolubly related practices. This is borne witness to by the remarkable similarity or, rather, continuity between his account of the humanist philologist as one who exist at a *boundary*—is both simultaneously and always already outside and inside the "world," belonging and not belonging to a location—and Hannah Arendt's anti-Platonic Socrates, whom, in *The Life of the Mind,* she proffers as the absolute antithesis to Adolph Eichmann, who, incapable of contradictions, always remains *one*—and *at-home.* This is the non-professional ("gadfly" in Socrates' own words) who, "count[ing] himself neither among the many or the few,"[49] "unified [in his person] two apparently contradictory passions, for thinking and acting—not in the sense of being eager to apply his thoughts or to establish theoretical standards for actions but in the much more relevant sense of being equally at home in both spheres and able to move from one sphere to the other with the greatest apparent ease" (LMT, 167).

In her richly resonant account of Socrates' thinking, Arendt, like Said, rejects the idea of the identical self, a self that belongs entirely to, is a part of, the (systematized) public sphere, in favor of a paradoxical self that is "two-in-one": a self, that is, in which difference (the realm of the private)

is ontological prior to identity (the realm of the public) but nevertheless belong together in unending loving dialogic strife. For Socrates, according to Arendt, "the duality of the two-in-one" meant that to think, one had to "see to it that the two who carry on the dialogue be in good shape, that the partners be *friends.* The partner who comes to life when you are alert and alone [in the private realm] is the only one from whom you can never get away—except by ceasing to think." Invoking the famous saying of Socrates—"It is better to *suffer* wrong than to *do* wrong" (my emphasis), Arendt adds, no doubt with the Eichmann type in mind, that this is "because you can remain the friend of the sufferer; who would want to be the friend of and have to live together with a murderer? Not even a murderer" (LMT, 188). Then, in a striking passage invoking the contested Platonic dialogue, the *Hippias Major,* that is clearly intended to recall her account of Eichmann's dehumanized thoughtless thought in both her "Report on the Banality of Evil" and in the introduction to *The Life of the Mind,* she writes:

> It is the end of the dialogue, the moment of going home. He [Socrates] tell Hippias, who has shown himself to be an especially thickheaded partner [not devoid of intelligence], how "blissfully fortunate" he is in comparison with poor Socrates, who at home is awaited by a very obnoxious fellow who always cross-examines him. "He is a close relative and lives in the same house." When he now will hear Socrates give utterance to Hippias' opinions, he will ask "whether he is not ashamed of talking about a beautiful way of life, when questioning makes it evident that he does not even know the meaning of the word "beauty." When Hippias goes home, *he remains one,* for, though he lives alone, he does not seek to keep himself company. He certainly does not lose consciousness; he is simply not in the habit of actualizing it. When Socrates goes home he is not alone, he is by [alongside] himself. Clearly, with this fellow who awaits him, Socrates has to come to some kind of agreement, because they live under the same roof. Better to be at odds with the whole world than be at odds with the only one you are forced to live together with when you have left company behind. (LMT, 188; see also 190–91, where Arendt returns to the *Hippias Major*)

Eichmann, like Hippias, Arendt is suggesting, is neither stupid nor an evil man; he is quite simply a totally inscribed part of the systematized and identical public realm, one who, therefore, cannot go home to the interrogation of his other self; he "remains one"—and, therefore, incapable of thinking, "a sleepwalker," at best:

> Thinking, in its non-cognitive, non-specialized sense as a natural need of human life, the actualization of the difference given in consciousness, is not a prerogative of the few but an ever-present faculty in everybody; by the same token, inability to think is not a failing of the many who lack brain power but an ever-present possibility for everybody—*scientists, scholars, and other specialists in mental enterprises not excluded.* Every body may come to shun that intercourse with oneself whose feasibility and importance Socrates first discovered. Thinking accompanies life and is itself the de-materialized quintessence of being alive; and since life is a process, its quintessence can only lie in the actual thinking process and not in any solid results or specific thoughts. A life without thinking is quite possible; it then fails to develop its own essence—it is not merely meaningless; it is not fully alive. Unthinking men are like sleepwalkers. (LMT, 191; my emphasis)

I am not suggesting that Said's account of the humanist philologist's thinking and that of Arendt's Socrates are the same. I am suggesting, rather, that they are complementary or contrapuntal: each overdetermines that aspect of the act of thinking that the other underdetermines. Said emphasizes the public sphere over the private; Arendt the private over the public. Said's philologist is an exilic figure *in* the world: outside and inside—a-part, which is to say, apart from and a part of the identical whole. He is thus able to meet his private self in dialogic strife in the public realm. Arendt's Socrates is a worldly exile *in* the private realm and is thus able to meet his private self in dialogic strife at home. Unlike the totalized insider—whether the expert or the everyman he or she ventriloquizes—who is an integrated part of the identical, administered whole, both Said's humanist philologist and Arendt's Socrates are *beings*-in-the world, i.e., mortal, alive. They are, that is, ontic/ontological, in-sistent ek-sistent beings, "a strange empirico-transcendental doublet," in Foucault's terms[50] In other words, unlike the Hippias figure Arendt invokes or the foreign policy expert Said invokes, whose utter belongingness to—his at-homeness in—the systematic administered world has dehumanized and massified him/her, rendered him/her immortal and worldless and his/her thought thoughtless, Said's humanist philologist and Arendt's Socrates are alive, worldly, and capable of thinking. Their thought does not provide answers that reify being and thus render all its manifestations disposable reserve; they activate questions that, in keeping being alive, also stimulate judgment, the political faculty par excellence.

To put this alternatively, though in a way that Arendt enables by invoking Karl Jaspers' notion of the *Grenzsituation* at the point in her discussion

of the two-in-one self in which thinking verges on crossing over into the domain of the political, the contrapuntal thinking of Said's humanist philologist and Arendt's Socrates partake of the "boundary situation." This is the unhoming and radically secularizing "e-mergency" or crisis moment in human life when the familiar becomes estranged, the accepted view of reality—and "rules of conduct" (the vocation) it dictates—dissolves (becomes inoperative), and the thinking self begins to consider political options:

> This term ["boundary situations"] was coined by Jaspers for the general, unchanging human condition—"that I cannot live without struggling and suffering; that I cannot avoid guilt; that I must die"—to indicate an experience of "something immanent which already points to transcendence" and which, if we respond to it, will result in our "becoming the *Existenz* we potentially are." In Jasper, the term gets it suggestive plausibility less from specific experiences than from the simple fact that life itself, limited by birth and death, is a boundary affair in that my worldly existence always forces me to take account of a past when I was not yet and a future when I shall be no more. Here the point is that whenever I transcend the limits of my own life span and begin to reflect on this past, judging it, and this future, forming projects of the will, thinking ceases to be a politically marginal activity. And such reflections will inevitably arise in political emergencies. (LMT, 192; emphasis in the original)

It is, I suggest, the totalized at-homing and at-oneing—the *Nazification* of the German language—that produced the Eichmann who could exchange human beings for trains with immunity from the cross-examination of his other self. It is this same momentum towards a totalized at-homing and at-oneing—the *Americanization* of the English language—that has produced the dehumanized policy experts whom Said insistently criticizes, the Pentagon bureaucrats who planned the Vietnam War, and the intellectual deputies of the Rand Corporation who advised the U.S. Department of Defense to "enlist Madison Avenue"—the processes of mass deception—in behalf of the George W. Bush administration's unerring errand in Iraq and Afghanistan. And it is this increasing deterioration of language—this thought numbing momentum under the dictatorship of the American public realm—aided and abetted by the relative indifference of oppositional intellectuals to this urgent issue—that threatens to produce the American version of Eichmann. To think, Arendt, Horkheimer, Adorno, and Said insist against this entropic process, is to be "at home" in the uncomfortable not-at-home. It is worth recalling at this point—if we understand the term "homeland" metaphori-

cally as well as literally—the lines of Victor Saint Hugo, Said borrowed from Erich Auerbach, another great German exile from the Nazi homeland, that bring his great meditation on the exilic consciousness, *Culture and Imperialism,* to its opening conclusion:

> It is therefore, a source of great virtue for the practiced mind to learn, bit by bit, first to change about in visible and transitory things, so that afterwards it may be able to leave them behind altogether. The person who finds his home land 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 place. The tender soul has fixed his love on one spot in the world; the strong person has extended his love to all places; the perfect man has extinguished his.[51]

It is, I submit, this kind of negatively capable thinking that will produce a public sphere—a world, or, as I prefer, a *polis*—in which, as Said resonantly puts it—dialogically (with T. S. Eliot)—the "complete consort danc[es] together, contrapuntally."

VI

In this chapter, I have perforce invoked four Jewish-German exiles from Nazi Germany to America—Hannah Arendt, Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Erich Auerbach—whose lives were severely damaged by the reduction of language/thought to a dehumanized and dehumanizing quantitative, utilitarian, calculative, and finally biopolitical medium as witness bearers to a Western nation-state system that has reduced human being to disposable reserve or, in the term Agamben derives from Arendt, "bare life," which, as will be seen more fully later in this book, really means the mass slaughter—killing with impunity—of men, women, and children and the devastation of the lives and the cultures of those who remain alive. It is no accident, despite the bizarrely paradoxical juxtaposition, that I have also invoked the Palestinian-American, Edward W. Said, the exilic victim of a regime of truth ventriloquized by (exceptionalist) "America," a regime whose people were themselves the victims of the Nazi regime of truth, as the thinker who, more than anyone else, perhaps, has borne witness to the devastation of thought and language under the call of the public realm in the post–World War II or post-imperial era of American global hegemony. Together—and contrapuntally—they speak with enormous force the truth to the biopolitical power

that infects the post-Enlightenment world and its vocation, the world of neoliberal capitalist democracy, where the violence against being—especially human being—is hidden behind an apparently benign language of ameliorative (developmental) progress. But their witness, it is important to underscore, is not only to this consequence of the modern devastation of language/thought under the call of the public realm. Their witness to this peculiar kind of biopolitical violence, this killing and maiming at long distance, as it were, is, as I will suggest in later chapters, also a witness to the urgency at this time of dearth of retrieving a radically secular, indeed, profane thinking, that is, a kind of thinking that takes place in the time of the now: acknowledges its transience and is conscious *of* and responsible *for* what it thinks.[52] I mean a contrapuntal thinking that, against the comfortable "anthropological sleep" of certainty,[53] which is another way of characterizing the mind-numbing imperatives of vocation (responsibility to the call of a "higher cause" or, in Lacanian terms, the "Big Other"), is always at the boundary between the charted and uncharted—outside and inside a world—and, therefore, is always *conscious* and *careful*.

CHAPTER 2

The Exilic Consciousness and the Imperatives of Betweenness

and no race possesses the monopoly of beauty,
of intelligence, of force, and there
is a place for all at the rendezvous
of victory

—Aimé Césaire, *Cahier d'un retour*

In the wake of his untimely death in 2003, the great scholar and public intellectual Edward W. Said has come increasingly to be identified primarily as a partisan in the Palestinians' struggle against the Israeli occupation at the expense of the manifestly inaugural global and cosmopolitan perspective that has from the beginning of his career been at the heart of his extraordinarily prolific and influential work. This deflective tendency has been in part the result of Said's own journalistic writings published periodically with increasing insistence in Middle Eastern Arabic newspapers and journals during the last few years of his life.[1] But it has also, and more fundamentally perhaps, been the result of at least two other external but antithetical representational initiatives. I am referring, on the one hand, to the insidious ideological effort on the part of a number of neoconservative intellectuals in the United States to represent Said's scholarship and public writing about the Middle East, particularly that which has exposed the United States' allegedly "benign" global policies to be a new form of colonialism, as "extremist" and "anti-American," even "terrorist," and thus as ideological instruments calculated to undermine the United States' "war on terror" and homeland security. The notorious case of Stanley Kurtz's deposition to the House Subcommittee on Select Education (June 19, 2003) claiming that Said's ground-breaking critique of Western Orientalism has become dogma in Middle Eastern area studies funded by the

U.S. government under Title 6 of the Higher Education Act is exemplary of this crassly illegitimate initiative.[2] I am also referring, on the other hand, to the tendency of a number of influential Western leftist and anti-Western or anti-American Arab intellectuals to overdetermine Said's Palestinian partisanship. Several of the essays in the recent volume entitled *Edward Said and Critical Decolonization* (2005) edited by Ferial J. Ghazoul[3] are symptomatic of this narrowing of Said's global perspective. The emphasis on Said's critique of Western and/or American Middle Eastern policy on the part of Western leftist and Arab intellectuals is, of course, understandable. Indeed, it is also strategically necessary. But in reducing the unsettling aspects of the deracinating exilic condition, it nevertheless lends itself unwittingly to the obfuscation of Said's broader—cosmopolitan humanist—emancipatory legacy and contributes to the desired goal of his American neoconservative and Zionist opponents. In what follows, I do not want to deny or even minimize Edward Said's deeply felt, courageous, and abiding commitment to the Palestinian cause. That, I take to be a given. What I do want to suggest, however, is 1) that the effort, deliberate or unwitting, to impose a fixed or narrow nationalist identity on him and his allegiances—"anti-American," "anti-Semite," "Palestinian," or "Arab"—falsifies his insistently articulated anti-nationalist, i.e., global perspective on the world he inhabited exilically; 2) distorts the very generous and open-ended nature of his worldly commitments; and, not least; 3) minimizes the enabling inaugural cosmopolitan character of his oppositional discourse.

What must not be forgotten in the debate over Said's intellectual identity and legacy is that he received his formative education (the theoretical principles that enabled him to think his exilic predicament), as he tells us in his memoir *Out of Place,*[4] in the United States (at Mount Hermon and, especially, Princeton and Harvard), in comparative literature, a field, it needs to be emphasized, that was undergoing a radical globalization of the study of national literatures under the influence of revolutionary European philosophers and cultural critics such as Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Karl Jaspers, Georg Lukács, Erich Auerbach, Ernst Curtius, and revisionary American critics such as R. P. Blackmur, among others.[5] I mean by this last, more specifically, a field of literary studies that, in the aftermath of World War II, the implosion of the nation-state system and of imperialism, and the emergence to visibility of postcolonial peoples from the imperial shadows to which they had been confined, was bearing witness not simply to the *dislocation* of hitherto privileged European and American nationalist perspectives on literary studies (the notion of the literary canon, for example), but also, and more radically, to the interrogation of the very idea of the West, the

nation-state, and nationalist identity. And this momentum of destabilization, I suggest, exacerbated Said's feeling of being "out of place" in the wake of a history of up-rootings that took him from Jerusalem, to Cairo, and finally to a preparatory school, Mount Hermon, in the United States at the age of fifteen. These de-centering circumstances of Said's formative years, that is to say, a *Bildungs* in reverse, not only made his exilic condition a fundamental aspect of his very being. They also rendered the idea of exile one of the supreme themes of his mature thinking. This especially became the case following the Six-Day War of 1967—"the catastrophe of 1967," that, as he put it to Tariq Ali in *Conversations with Edward Said,*[6] bore witness to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank—shortly after Said joined the Columbia University English Department.

What does it mean to be an exile? How does being one affect one's self, one's being-in-the-world, one's sense of belonging to a "world," to a "homeland," to a "people"? What effect does the exilic consciousness have on the representation of local (national) and global worldly events? These are the questions—they are questions concerning personal and collective identity (filiation and affiliation) that only a few leading American intellectuals, particularly literary humanist critics, were asking at that historical conjuncture when the Allied victory had precipitated an exceptionalist America as a world power—that obsessed Edward Said increasingly from the time he arrived in the United States in the early 1950s until the end of his life, as his repeated invocations of the twelfth-century monk of Saxony, Hugh of Saint Victor, testify:

> It is therefore, a source of great virtue for the practiced mind to learn, bit by bit, first to change about in visible and transitory things, so that afterwards it may be able to leave them behind altogether. The person 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 place. The tender soul has fixed his love on one spot in the world; the strong person has extended his love to all places; the perfect man has extinguished his.[7]

Said, not incidentally, found this resonant passage from Hugh of Saint Victor in the great Jewish German philologist Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature,* written in exile from Nazi Germany in Istanbul during World War II. And he refers to it (at the end of *Culture and Imperialism*) as Auerbach's (and his own) "model for anyone—man *and* woman—wishing to transcend the restraints of imperial or

national or provincial limits" (CI, 335). This assertion alone should make it decisively clear that Said *eschewed an essentialist concept of identity* whether it pertained to the idea of human being, the individual, or the nation. But it should also show that he perceived the nationalist or racialist identitarian politics to which such a fixed idea of identity gave rise—its rigid inclusiveness, on the one hand, and its rigid exclusiveness, on the other—as that which the authentic scholar must resist: "Only through this attitude [held conjointly by Hugo, Auerbach, and Said—and, as we shall see, Hannah Arendt] can a historian, for example, begin to grasp human experience in its written records in all their diversity and particularity; otherwise one would remain committed more to the exclusions and reactions of prejudice than to the negative freedom of real knowledge." (CI, 335–36)

But, it is important to add, Said does not leave his account of the exilic consciousness in the negative: as an irreparable depredation. He goes on to think this negative's positive possibilities. Hugo, he notes, emphasizes that "'the strong' or 'perfect' person achieves independence and detachment by *working through attachments,* not rejecting them. Exile is predicated on the existence of, love for, and a real bond with one's native place; the universal truth of exile is not that one has lost that love or home, but that inherent in each is an unexpected, unwelcomed loss" (CI, 336; my emphasis). Exile, in other words, defamiliarizes or estranges the named (identified) world. It renders the familiar "something rich and strange" and, in so doing, enables the damaged exilic consciousness to perceive this renewed world as a domain of questions rather than of answers. "Regard experiences," he writes, "*as if* they were about to disappear" (CI, 336). This exhortation, it should be noted, is not a tacit acknowledgment of melancholic despair; it is, rather, to use the inaugural language of *Beginnings* (1975), Said's second book, a call for courageous confrontation of the dread-provoking transience of temporality (experience) as always already a beginning—*of potentiality as such*—untethered to the Origin and/or End that renders the life of humans a matter of necessary vocation—servitude to a sacred cause. "The state of mind that is concerned with origins," Said writes in explaining Vico's account of humanity's comportment to history,

> is . . . theological. By contrast, and this is the shift, beginnings are eminently secular, or gentile, continuing activities. . . . [W]hereas an origin *centrally* dominates what derives from it, the beginning (especially the modern beginning), encourages nonlinear development, a logic giving rise to the sort of multileveled coherence of dispersion we find in Freud's text, in the texts of modern writers, or in Foucault's archeological investigations.[8]

As suggestive as Said's explanation of the passage from Hugo and Auerbach is, however, it is not, in its focus on the subject, entirely adequate as a formulation of the exilic intellectual's perspective on the world that has rendered Said's scholarship and criticism an inaugural contribution to our benighted globalized age. Something more specific needs to be said about the horizon enabled by his version of the exilic condition. What is crucial in Said's understanding of the exilic consciousness is, as we have seen, the paradoxical relationality between—*the belongingness of*—the state of unwanted separation and the home from which the exile has been estranged. The exile is not one who now simply lives somewhere else. As the prefix suggests, he or she is, rather, someone who lives somewhere else *against his or her will.* The exile, that is, is *a part* of the new homeland, but also and simultaneously *apart* from it insofar as he or she brings that other lost world with him or her to the new one. Unlike the native (the insider)—the extreme form of which would be the Adolph Eichmann analyzed by Hannah Arendt—to whom the world he or she inhabits is all too familiar, the exile, as one who is inside and outside the new world *at the same time,* is enabled to perceive contrapuntally not only the differences—the "plurality"—but also the *potentialities* (questions) that the relay between the principle of identity, the nation (or homeland), and the empire reduces to the disabling comfortable—an exclusionary—same (answers).

It is this particular version of the exilic intellectual perspective—its disclosure that the "truth" of the self-identical nation-state and its imperial project *vis-à-vis* "inferior" cultures is a fiction *constructed* by the dominant West and naturalized by its sheer power—that instigated Said's unique global perspective at a time when Western scholarship, even that of a profound visionary poststructuralist thinker such as Michel Foucault, who, like Said, was interrogating the cultural, social, and political manifestations—the biopolitics—of the Western commitment to the principle of Identity, remained by and large local, if not exactly Eurocentric. More specifically, it was, I suggest, this peculiar exilic intellectual perspective that enabled Said to produce *Orientalism* (1978), *The Question of Palestine* (1979), *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), and *Covering Islam* (1997), those masterpieces of contrapuntal scholarship and criticism that, if they did not instigate the globalization of literary and cultural studies as such, did enable the incredibly productive shift from the diagnostic focus on brute power to the complicity between knowledge (cultural representation) and power. Taking their directives from the exilic condition, these works, despite manifesting Said's characteristically generous admiration for the richness and brilliance of the objects of his critical scholarship, disclosed the identity of the Orient collectively produced

by the canonical literature and historical, anthropological, and sociological scholarship of the West to be a degrading, disempowering, and life-damaging fiction—the result not of disinterested face to face encounter with the great variety of cultures that constitute the "Orient" but of what Said called "the textual attitude" in *Orientalism.*[9] In thus decisively demonstrating the *continuity between—the complicity of—cultural production and imperialism,* these texts brought to collaborative fulfillment the various postcolonial discursive initiatives of his international predecessors (as well as contemporaries) such as Frantz Fanon, C. L. R. James, George Antonius, S. H. Alatus, Albert Memmi, Amilcar Cabral, W. E. B. Dubois, Aimé Césaire, and Ranajit Guha, among others. In so doing, they also enabled the sudden takeoff and globalization of a postcolonial discourse adequate to the task of resistance in a neocolonial age.

By saying that Said's *Orientalism, The Question of Palestine, Culture and Imperialism,* and *Covering Islam* instigated a remarkable hastening of the evolution of "postcolonial discourse" by disclosing the complicity of Western cultural production and imperialism, I mean by this imperfect latter phrase more than simply a discourse that has enabled Western humanists to perceive their former "disinterested" scholarship as Eurocentric and third world intellectuals, hitherto spoken for by the colonial West, to speak back to their predatory first world colonizers. I also mean, above all, that critical global perspective—proleptically and forcefully articulated by the "conscious pariah," Hannah Arendt, in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*[10] in the context of "the Jewish question" as it was played out in European modernity—that has called the Western notion of the nation-state radically into question and, in so doing, announced a postcolonial polity that understands national or cultural identity as simply a temporarily *necessary* or *strategic fiction.*[11] In other words, because this postcolonial polity is acknowledged to be just that rather than a fixed, universal reality, it opens itself to transformation and thus encourages its "people's" empathy in the face of their "others" rather than—as Said's neoconservative and Zionist opponents and all too many of his sympathizers affirm or imply—their enmity.

It is, it seems to me, this unique kind of "postcolonial" polity focalized, if not enabled by Edward Said's reflections on the exilic condition—so radically different from all too many Third World nationalist versions—Nehru's, to mention one crucial example—and, not incidentally, from the now-influential German jurist Carl Schmitt's Hobbesian thesis that modern liberal democratic politics are always enacted according to the dictates of the Friend/foe binary opposition—that constitutes his major contribution towards ameliorating our precarious global, post-Western historical conjuncture. But to

suggest the character of this uniquely resonant polity adequately, it will be necessary to invoke another of Said's references to the exilic consciousness, this one, from the last chapter of *Culture and Imperialism,* more culturally and politically concrete than the previous one from Hugo of Saint Victor and Erich Auerbach. I quote at length not only to convey the proleptic originality and the scope and depth of Said's understanding of our precarious contemporary, post-imperial global occasion. I do so also to suggest the essential generosity—the care—that constitutes the driving force of his very being, in the face of those in the West who would represent him as a "professor of terrorism" or, for that matter, those in the East who would represent him primarily as a Palestinian patriot and/or disregard his larger cosmopolitan vision of humanity. Echoing Hannah Arendt's (as well and Theodor Adorno's) diagnosis of the plight of the stateless precipitated by the implosion of the nation-sate system during World War II in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (volume 2)—and, not incidentally, as I will show later in this book, anticipating contemporary "post-poststructuralist" thinkers such as Giorgio Agamben, Alain Badiou, Jacques Rancière, and Judith Butler, who write of those who "do not count"—"the part of no part"—in a global polity structured by the dominant minority who determine what counts—Said begins this brief but resonant analysis by first invoking the figure of the deracinated, that global "multitude" (in Negri and Hardt's term) that has been unhomed by the ravages of the nation-state system and its imperial project:

> [S]urely it is one of the unhappiest characteristics of the age to have produced more refugees, migrants, displaced persons, and exiles than ever before in history, most of them as an accompaniment to and, ironically enough, as afterthoughts of great postcolonial and imperial conflicts. As the struggle for independence produced new states and new boundaries, it also produced homeless wanderers, nomads, and vagrants, unassimilated to the emerging structures of institutional power, rejected by the established order for their intransigence and obdurate rebelliousness. And insofar as these people exist between the old and the new, between the old empire and the new state, their condition articulates the tensions, irresolutions, and contradictions in the overlapping territories shown on the cultural map of imperialism. (CI, 332)

Then, in a telling rhetoric that deliberately parallels the general condition he diagnoses above, Said invokes the figure of the exiled intellectual (and artist), whose previous at-homed cultural-political perspective has been unhomed and thus estranged to inaugurate a meditation on the posi-

tive political potentialities of this otherwise catastrophic human condition produced by the ravages of the Eurocentric nation-state/imperialism continuum. I mean by these the directives for resisting the polyvalent dehumanizing reductions of the imperial nation-state, on the one hand, and even more important, though tentatively, for the creation of the coming community of humanity, on the other:

> Yet it so no exaggeration to say that liberation as an intellectual mission, born in the resistance and opposition to the confinements and ravages of imperialism, has now shifted from the settled, established, and domesticated dynamics of culture to its unhoused, decentered, and exilic energies, energies whose incarnation today is the migrant, and whose consciousness is that of the intellectual and artist in exile, the political figure between domains, between forms, between homes, and between languages. From this perspective then all things are indeed counter, original, spare, strange. [The reference is to a poem by Gerard Manley Hopkins.] From this perspective also, one can see "the complete consort dancing together" contrapuntally. [The quotation is from T. S. Eliot's poem, "Four Quartets."] (CI, 332)

Let me consider the first directive first. In saying that liberation as an intellectual mission has "shifted from the settled, established, and domesticated dynamics of culture to its unhoused, decentered, and exilic energies," Said, no doubt with the tension between the condition of the stateless Jews of an earlier, pre-1948, and the later highly nationalized and racialized Israeli state ironically in mind, is pointing to an enabling paradox. 1) The demographics of the contemporary, postcolonial occasion he has described in the previous paragraph—a globalization characterized by the irreconcilable tension between a vast and amorphous population of stateless people and the metropolitan nation-state—has rendered traditional nationalist versions of resistance no longer possible. But 2) this condition of amorphous uprootedness, however terrible, provides a directive for envisioning an utterly new form of resistance, one based precisely on the pervasive exilic condition. From this exilic perspective the world produced by the Western nation-state system—the world structured in domination—undergoes a remarkable estrangement. As one who is "*between* domains, *between* forms, *between* homes, *between* languages" (my emphasis) or, to invoke my previous rhetoric, who is "apart from" and yet "a part of" the nation-state, the exilic intellectual or artist is enabled to perceive that "the homeless wanderers, nomads, vagrants" produced by the latter's regime of truth in it imperial phase need not, therefore,

be answerable to the call of the dominant nation-state culture. In other words, the damaged nomadic lives of this vast amorphous, i.e., nameless, population of migrants—these social dregs who do not count in the eyes of those who determine what counts—enables a "passive resistance" capable of destabilizing the very "truth" system that informs and props up the nation-state and its vocational imperial project. It is no accident that Said, in a characteristic collaborative gesture, leaves it to the great Jewish exile Theodor Adorno (he could, as we shall see, have invoked Hannah Arendt as well) to articulate the resonant essence of this revolutionary global mode of resistance immediately following the previously quoted passage:

> "The past life of emigres is, as we know, annulled," says Adorno in *Minima Moralia,* subtitled *Reflections from a Damaged Life*. . . . Why? "Because anything that is not reified, cannot be counted and measured, ceases to exit" or, as he says, later, is consigned to mere "background." Although the disabling aspects of this fate are manifest, its virtues or possibilities are worth exploring. Thus the émigré consciousness—a mind of winter, in Wallace Stevens's phrase—discovers in its marginality that "a gaze averted from the beaten track, a hatred of brutality, a search for fresh concepts not yet encompassed by the general pattern, is the last hope for thought." Adorno's general pattern is what in another place he calls the "administered world" or, insofar as the irresistible dominants in culture are concerned, "the consciousness industry." There is then not just the negative advantage of refuge in the émigré's eccentricity; there is also the positive benefit of challenging the system, describing it in a language unavailable to those it has already subdued: "In an intellectual hierarchy which constantly makes everyone answerable, unanswerability alone can call the hierarchy directly by its name." (CI, 333)[12]

Said's reversal of the normal—his rendering of its enabling categories inoperative, as it were—is startling. In refusing to be answerable to the nation-state's "calling" (I am using this phrase to recall Althusser's invocation of Yahweh's calling of Moses in the Old Testament to explain his concept of interpellation and, not least, God's calling of the Puritan Israelites at the founding of America), the nomadic nobody (who, under the gaze of the dominant culture would be rendered a subjected subject) metamorphoses into an identityless "some-one." He or she becomes positively capable, precisely in his/her spectral elusiveness, of undermining the nation-state's authority—and its borders. Or, more accurately, this refusal of the interpellative call discloses and enables a different way of being-in-the-world from

that vocational subjection demanded by the nation-state, more specifically, a radically secular—and differential—way over which the Western concept of the nation-state (and it logic of belonging), has perennially sought to impose its will to power. Herein lies the essential meaning of the emergence within the nation-states of the modern West and its ventriloquized Third World client regimes—the coming from the margins to center stage—of a multitude of various organizations of migrants, guest workers, displaced persons, stateless peoples, and the undocumented (epitomized by the constituency in France called "les sans papiers"), whose very visible but utterly amorphous status instigates a destabilization of national life and its logic of belonging.[13]

But the insight of Said's exilic intellectual into the potentialities of the disintegrated global demographics produced by the ravages of imperialism under the aegis of the nation-state is not restricted simply to the negativity of resisting the latter's depredations. It also, however tentatively, entails a vision of a radically new human polity, whose directives come, not apocalyptically, but precisely from the disclosure, incumbent on the fulfillment in history of the metaphysical or, more precisely, naturalized supernatural logic that has privileged Identity over difference, of that *aporia* it has been the fundamental purpose of the Western nation-state system to demonize and finally to disavow, i.e., reduce to nothing. To counter this will to reduce diversity to the same, Said, we recall, writes: "From this [exilic] perspective also one can see 'the complete consort dancing together' contrapuntally."

What does Said mean by this resonant, but enigmatic appropriation of a line from T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets,* an ostensibly Christian poem modeled on the tonality of the sonata form, which he renders inoperative not simply by appending a metaphor intrinsic to the counterpoint of Johann Sebastian Bach's musical compositions, but by deliberately identifying this counterpoint as "dissonantly polyphonic" if not exactly "atonal," in opposition to "symphonic."[14] I will address at greater length the polyvalent facets of this difficult question in the last chapter of this book, where I attempt to think the affiliative relationship between Said exilic consciousness and Hannah Arendt's notion of the "conscious pariah." Here, it will suffice to provide an orientation concerning the meaning of this tantalizingly provocative phrase by taking the dislocating caesura that separates its two parts as point of departure, or, to be more specific, by thinking the various related aspects of the nation-state's "other" disclosed to the exilic consciousness *by its contrapuntal attunement* to the consequences of the fulfillment (and self-destruction) of the binarist teleo-logic of belonging of the nation-state. The first thing that can be said about this phrase has to do with what such a coming "polity" (Arendt's term) is not: that is, with the Western nation-state. As Said has shown, the

"fulfillment" of the latter's ostensible historical vocation—the incorporation of all the cultures of the world under the aegis of one "civilized" metropolis—has precipitated paradoxically a global demographics characterized by a vast amorphous multitude of uprooted, displaced or stateless people. What this "end" of the nation-state's imperial and vocational itinerary thus discloses is that its "benign" dialectical logic is essentialist and identitarian (a *secularized* theo-logic) and informed by a relay of hierarchical binary oppositions—Identity over difference, the One over the many, the Sacred over the profane, or, in Carl Schmitt's more politically current language, Friend over foe[15]—which, in Said's terms, necessarily involves a war to the end waged by "Us" against "them."

From the deracinated or, rather, inside/outside, perspective of Said's exilic consciousness, on the other hand, the identitarian self of the nation-state undergoes a de-centering and its binary logic of belonging becomes inoperative. That is, the opposition—the dialectic between Identity and difference, the One and the many, the Sacred and the profane, Friend and enemy, Us and them—remains, but it undergoes a profound estrangement. What was in the previous dispensation a war to the end justified by an assumed exceptionalism becomes a *radically* secular (i.e., profane) intimate antagonism or, to invoke Martin Heidegger's apt term at the risk of censure, a loving strife (*Auseinandersetzung*): not the inclusive/exclusive collective of the exceptionalist nation-state—the "belonging *to*" that precipitates war to the end between Friend and enemy—but a *never-ending* dialectical belongingness *of* opposites. Under the dispensation of the exceptionalist nation-state, its "(native) people" are "called" to a "vocation"—the future fulfillment at all costs of its antagonistic incorporative, de-differentiating, inclusive/exclusive project, which, from the Roman empire through the British empire to the America empire has always been called "peace" (*pax*). The will to power is, therefore, at the heart of the exceptionalist nation-state. In the new dispensation Said envisages from his exilic perspective, on the other hand, this repressive future-oriented vocation is transformed into *agonic play* in the *time of the now,* by which I mean the finite or transient time of the human occasion (immediately from the Latin *occasus,* "the setting of the sun," from a form of which [*occidens*] the English word Occident derives; and ultimately from *cadere,* "to die," "to perish"). The two (or three or four or five . . .) opposing voices (cultures) remain in tension in this new dispensation, but this tension is now contrapuntal, the measure of which is the untethered plural measure of the profane human occasion. This new, dissonant polyphonic measure does not willfully reduce by violence the being of the variety of worldly beings to an undifferentiated symphonic identity (bare life). It always already

produces plurality: differences that enhance, enrich, and deepen the identity-less identities of each.

This is how Said puts this coming polyphonic community in the last paragraph of *Culture and Imperialism:*

> 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. 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. Yet just as human beings make their own history, they also make their own cultures and ethnic identities. 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. Survival in fact is about the connections between things; in Eliot's phrase, reality cannot be deprived of the "other echoes [that] inhabit the garden." It is more rewarding—and more difficult—to think concretely and sympathetically, contrapuntally, about others than only about "us." But this also means not trying to rule others, not trying to classify them or put them in hierarchies, above all, not constantly reiterating how "our" culture or country is number one (or *not* number one, for that matter). For the intellectual there is quite enough of value to do without *that.* (CI, 336)

As I observed at the beginning of this chapter, Edward Said has been increasingly, especially after the 1967 war in Palestine, despite the plurivocality of his work, identified as essentially "one thing": a politically active "anti-Semite" or "anti-American" Palestinian by Zionists and the rightwing custodians of the American cultural memory, on the one hand, or a Palestinian or Arab patriot by all too many of his postcolonial sympathizers, on the other. These misleading representations are, in part, the result of attending—willfully on the part of his neo-con and Zionist opponents—primarily to his public utterances about Palestine/Israel and the Middle East at the expense of perceiving these as instances of the larger, global and cosmopolitan concerns of his widely influential humane scholarship, a scholarship, it should be remembered, whose originative nature was announced in *Beginnings* (1975), in which he decisively rendered the Origin—and its traditional binarist, End-oriented and vocational logic—inoperative. The first travesties the essential openness and generosity of Said's radically democratic ethos. The second,

though clearly more justified than the first, nevertheless, deflects attention from the originality, inaugural force, and global scope of his exilic contrapuntal vision of humanity's future. Both, in short, whether intentionally or inadvertently, have as their end the fossilization of Said's inaugural discourse.

In his posthumously published *Humanism and Democratic Criticism,* Said returns to this, to him, crucial matter of identity indirectly but suggestively, when, in distinguishing his own, exile-induced, contrapuntal humanist method of interpretation from that of the classical humanist tradition, which remained identitarian, univocal, and Eurocentric, he invokes Isaac Deutscher's "insufficiently known book of essays, *The Non-Jewish Jew,* in which Deutscher offers "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."[16] After establishing this resonant paradox of the exilic consciousness, Said adds: "Not many of us can or would want to aspire to such a dialectically fraught, so sensitively located a class of individuals, but it is illuminating to see in such a destiny the crystallized role of the American humanist, the *non-humanist humanist,* as it were" (HDC, 77). I will amplify at length on this fundamental—and revolutionary—paradox later in this book, where I attempt to articulate directly the relay of affiliations between Edward Said and Hannah Arendt (not least their remarkably similar corrosively questioning relationship to their racial/ethnic origins) that emerge by way of pursuing the directives suggested by the dislocations of perspective precipitated by "the exilic consciousness" in the case of Said and the "conscious pariah" in the case of Arendt. Here, it will suffice to underscore provisionally how central this paradox—this non-belonging belonging that renders the vocational binary logic of essentialist-grounded formations such as classical humanism or the nation-state inoperative—is to the question of Said's (and Arendt's) identity as an intellectual by simply pointing to his silent elision of the "non-Jewish Jew," "the non-humanist humanist" and the "non-Palestinian Palestinian" that follows his telling disaffiliation from Richard Rorty's nationalism:

> [I]f I were forced to choose for myself as humanist the role either of patriotically "affirming" our country as Richard Rorty has recently enunciated it (his word is "achieving," not affirming, but it amounts in the end to the same thing) or nonpatriotically questioning it, I would undoubtedly choose the role of questioner. Humanism, as Blackmur said of modernism in another connection, is a technique of trouble, and it must stay that way

> now at a time when the national and international horizon is undergoing massive transformations and reconfigurations. The task is constitutively an unending one, and it should not aspire to conclusion [*sic*] of the sort that has the corollary and, in my estimation deleterious, effect of securing one an identity to be fought over, defended, and argued, while a great deal about our world that is interesting and worth venturing into simply gets left aside. In the post–Cold War world, the politics of identity and partition (I speak only of aggressive identity politics, not the defense of identity when threatened by extinction, as in the Palestinian case) have brought more trouble and suffering than they are worth, nowhere more than when they are associated with precisely those things, such as the humanities, traditions, art, and values, that identity allegedly defends and safeguards, constituting in the process territories and selves that seem to require killing rather than living.[17] (HDC, 77)

In "What Is an Author?" Michel Foucault, it will be recalled, recorded the advent of a new kind of author in the course of the nineteenth century, a kind, epitomized by Marx and Freud, he calls "founders of discursivity," whose uniqueness lay in their producing not only their own texts, but also the "possibilities and the rules for the formation of other texts."[18] In a somewhat similar vein, it should not be forgotten, the late Said invokes, in *Freud and the Non-European* (2003) the example of Joseph Conrad, though for the significant purpose of elucidating the contemporaneity of the "non-Jewish Jew," Sigmund Freud. Echoing, not incidentally, Walter Benjamin's famous VIIth thesis of "On the Concept of History" in solidarity with his own notion of contrapuntal reading, he writes, "Texts that are inertly of their time stay there; those [like Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Freud's *Moses and Monotheism*] which brush up unstintingly against historical constraints are those we keep with us, generation after generation" (FNE, 26–27). Foucault's assertion about the radical novelty of authors such as Marx and Freud is, as Said would no doubt claim, excessive, since even their Herculean effort to break with the discourse of the Western tradition remains bound to it. If, however, Foucault's "founders of discursivity" is interpreted in terms of the imperatives of the "post" of postmodernity—or the "non" of the non-humanist humanist or the non-Jewish Jew or the non-Palestinian Palestinian—then it can be seen that what he says about this new kind of author is indeed true. And, in that light, it could be said that not only he but Edward Said, as well, on the basis of the enormously diverse, enabling, and continuing global influence his contrapuntal "worldly criticism"—the anti-natural supernaturalism that had its origins in his radical reflections on "beginnings"—has had, was, like

Freud and Marx and Foucault, one of these rare authors who produced new "possibilities and rules for the formation of other texts," or, in his own words, authors whose works "we keep with us, generation after generation."

Once, in short, it is acknowledged that Said's exilic consciousness, its radical secularity, its dissonant contrapuntal measure, and its global horizon became increasingly determinative in his scholarship (as the continuity between his inaugural meditations on beginnings in *Beginnings* and his reading of the post-imperial global demographics in *Culture and Imperialism* testifies), it will also be seen that his public writing on the "question of Palestine"—like that, to anticipate, of Arendt on "the Jewish question"[19]—cannot be dissociated in any way from his world-oriented "worldly" discourse. However important and urgent this question is, that is, it must be seen as a particular instance of his inaugural humane, inclusively democratic (contrapuntal)—and radically secular—global vision.

"'The complete consort dancing together' contrapuntally": an inspiring paradoxical vision of multiple cultures living together, not in Hobbesian enmity but in playful polyphony—a productive loving strife engendered by the very damage caused by the Friend/foe logic of nationalism and racism. This, I submit, is Edward Said's secular (anti)utopian vision of the coming community epitomized by his vision of the coming community of the Palestinians and the Jews who inhabit that fraught in-between space at the heart of the world variously called Palestine and Israel. In the final chapter of this book, I will return to Said's vision of the coming *polis* enabled by his exilic consciousness, this time, to show how uncannily affiliated it is with the coming *polis* Hannah Arendt was enabled to envisage by her conscious pariahdom. Here, I end where I began, now, however, knowing it for the first time:

> and no race possesses the monopoly of beauty,
> of intelligence, of force, and there
> is a place for all at the rendezvous
> of victory

CHAPTER 3

The Calling and the Question Concerning the Secular

For Adam,
these pomegranate seeds

> From my childhood, obedience was something I could not get out of my system. When I entered the armed services at the age of twenty-seven, I found being obedient not a bit more difficult than it had been during my life to that point. It was unthinkable that I would not follow orders. Now that I look back, I realize that a life predicated on being obedient and taking orders is a very comfortable life indeed. Living in such a way reduces to a minimum one's need to think.
>
> —Adolph Eichmann, quoted in Richard J. Bernstein, "Arendt and Thinking"

> Paul's profound idea is that the Jewish discourse and Greek discourse are two aspects of the same figure of mastery.
>
> —Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul*

> To return to play its purely profane vocation is a political task.
>
> —Giorgio Agamben, "In Praise of Profanation"

I

In his "Introduction" to *The World, the Text and the Critic* (1983), pointedly subtitled "Secular Criticism," Edward W. Said introduced a theoretical concept that has been smoldering at the bottom of Western critical theory and

practice ever since. But only in the wake of the rise of a Christian evangelical politics at the end of the twentieth century or, rather, the *de facto* demise of the myth of the separation of church and state in Western democratic societies, particularly in the United States, has this potential ignited into flames. I am, of course, referring to the global momentum, instigated by the mythologization of "the clash of civilizations,"[1] epitomized by the George W. Bush administration's declaration, following 9/11/01, of its "war on [militant Islamic] terror" in the name of homeland security as the "calling" of the present generation of Americans.[2]

For Said in the early 1980s, the question of the secular had to do with his early paradigm-shifting recognition that the critical revolution that subordinated history to textuality ("*il n'y a pas hors texte*" [there is nothing outside the text]) inaugurated by the French "poststructuralists"—Jacques Derrida, Jean-François Lyotard, Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthes, among others—in the wake of the events of May 1968 had become, like theological interpretations of historical events, "systematic" and, therefore, "unworldly." Just as theology represented the infinite variety of secular phenomena—that is, the man-made historical world—from "above" (*sub specie aeternitatis*) as a predetermined and systematic teleological and identical whole, in which "lowly" human beings were denied agency, so, according to Said, the new, ostensibly anti-theological, "textuality" came paradoxically to represent secular—man-made—history from above, as a predetermined totalized system of unworldly undecidability in which lowly human beings were denied agency.

For us in the first decade of the twenty-first century with, and under the pressures of, globalization—post-imperial migrancy, transnational capitalist "multiculturalism," the waning of the nation-state (or, rather, the reaffirmation of the sovereignty of the nation-state), recuperative Pétainism (in Alain Badiou's appropriate term),[3] the bombing of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon by al-Qaeda, the American wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the massive propagandistic effort of the deputies of the dominant Western culture to turn the argument of the clash of civilizations (the Judeo-Christian West and the Islamic East) into a self-fulfilling prophecy, and, most recently the Arab Revolution in North Africa and the Middle East in the spring of 2011—the question of the secular, is no longer, as it was then for Said, simply a matter of reaffirmation, but rather of its very (ambiguous) meaning.

This is borne acute witness to, for example, by the anxious effort on the part of contemporary theorists—Giorgio Agamben, Alain Badiou, Slavoj Žižek, among many others—to proffer critical histories of the origins of Christianity by way of retrieving Walter Benjamin's materialist "messianism."[4] I am

referring particularly to those theoretical initiatives that undertake genealogies of the traditional (institutional) Christian representation of the epistles of Paul in order to reaffirm the radical secularity of the secular. I mean, more specifically, critical genealogies that are intended to show that the apostle was preaching a revolutionary interpretation of "Christ the Messiah," in which, as Agamben puts it, the antagonism between "faith" and the "law" are rendered inoperative,[5] or in which, as Badiou puts it, the antagonism between the Law (the Old Testament Jewish tradition) and classical Greek philosophy (the wisdom that accrues from metaphysical thinking) gives way to faith (conviction) in the truth initiative: the voided, the superfluous, uncounted of the structures of domination produced by those who determine what counts disclosed by the situational event (*événement*): in this case Christ's "resurrection."[6] I will return later to these resonant, if highly controversial post-poststructuralist initiatives to retrieve the meaning of the secular. Here, at the outset, it will suffice to say that what the resurgence of religion as a presence in the contemporary global occasion—or, more precisely, the threat it poses to the republican doctrine of the separation of church and state—calls for is precisely what both Said and the poststructuralists he criticized disclosed and occluded: Said by way of his justified but hasty critical identification of poststructuralist theory with "religion" and anti-humanism in the very the process of pointing out the urgency of the "return" to the secular; and the poststructuralists (with the exception of Hannah Arendt)[7] by way of neglecting the meaning of secularity in the very process of interrogating metaphysics—the logocentric interpretation of being—and the humanism of its modern, Enlightenment, phase. It is my intention in what follows not only to proffer a genealogy of secularism that will clarify what Said really meant by "the secular" in calling for its retrieval in what was after all a "secular age" but also, and in so doing, to demonstrate why such a clarification of the meaning of this pervasive but perennially ambiguous term is urgently needed at this fraught moment of the contemporary global occasion.

II

Both the poststructuralists and Said failed to adequately think the implications of the revolution in thinking they inaugurated and in which they were immersed. I am referring to that emancipatory momentum, no doubt the consequence of the fulfillment and demise (the self-destructive end) in the post-imperialist World War I–II period of the (onto)logic that gave the Occident its sustained historical identity, what Heidegger aptly called the "onto-

theo-logical" tradition to articulate the continuity-in-difference of the three defining periods of Western civilization: the onto-logical (Greek and Roman antiquity), the theo-logical (the Christian era), and the anthropo-logical ("Enlightenment" or "humanistic" modernity). The poststructuralists overdetermined the dismantling of this tradition, some like Derrida and Levinas in behalf of retrieving a version of the Hebraic religious tradition from it subordination to Hellenism;[8] some, like Lyotard and Foucault in behalf of putting an end to the hegemony of (humanistic) Man. In either case, the major emphasis of their work was on the negative or critical aspect of destruction or deconstruction over the pro-jective: that which de-construction liberates from the *structuration* of temporality or the differences that, as Derrida put it, temporality always already disseminates. Said, on the other hand, overdetermined a socio-political version of the secular or "worldly" at the expense of its ontological status, thus failing in some disabling degree to perceive or, perhaps more accurately, to underscore 1) that the secular world he sponsored could be all too easily (re)"theologized" and 2) that the "anti-humanism" of the poststructuralists he criticized in the name of Giambattista Vico and Erich Auerbach implied, if it did not overtly articulate, a secularism that was more authentically human than that of the humanists Said invoked as his models.

To overcome these disabling blindnesses concerning the meaning of the secular it will be necessary to retrieve the now all but forgotten destructive critique of the onto-theo-logical tradition inaugurated by Nietzsche and, above all, Heidegger (and Arendt) but continued and amplified, if only in a an erratic way, by the next generation of poststructuralist thinkers, though this time around with the view to attending to the positive or pro-jective possibilities of the de-structive project *vis-à-vis* the question of the secular. The first thing that must be said about the ontotheological tradition in the face of the resurgence of religion and the present indifference of oppositional intellectuals to the question of being (the second forgetting of *die Seinfrage*) is that it refers primarily, though not exclusively, to ontology—the way being has been represented in the West from its origins in Greco-Roman antiquity through the Christian era to the Age of the Enlightenment and after. More specifically, it needs to be emphasized that this ontology has been metaphysical from beginning to end.[9] As its etymology suggests, it perceives the be-*ing* of being—the material spatial and temporal phenomena of the finite realm—from a transcendental perspective (*meta-ta-physika:* from after or above the singular—and transient—things themselves). As such it is informed by a hierarchical binary logic that not only privileges an Unmoved Mover (or "Invisible Hand") over the be-*ing* of being, the Eternal over the finite, Space

over temporality, Identity over difference, the *Logos* (the Word) over *logoi* (words), the Law over free will, but also enables the first term in the series to demonize and colonize the second. Thus to refer to one of the binaries in this relay that pertains acutely to the question of the secular—one, as we shall see, that is underscored by the post-poststructuralists—this hierarchical binarist metaphysical logic enables the Transcendental Sacred to represent the finite as profane or fallen and thus to justify its violent accommodation of the latter's errancy to the inclusive and de-differentiating totalizing project. To use the language I introduced in the previous chapter, this metaphysical logic enables the Sacred to subject the profane to Its (vocational) call.

Secondly, despite the radical transformations in thought and practice in each of the three phases of the ontotheological tradition—and, of course, they should not be minimized—what did not change (until this ontologic self-destructed, i.e., came to its fulfillment and demise),[10] was the absolute authority of a Transcendental *Logos* (the "Big Other")—a principle of (eternal) presence, a fixed center—over the ("fallen" and "errant," i.e., "secular") world. This genealogy of the Western tradition was one of the most revolutionary—and anxiety-provoking—contributions of poststructuralist theory to modern thought. Since it seems to have been forgotten, however, I will retrieve at some length one of its most telling assertions from the oblivion to which it has been relegated, that of Jacques Derrida:

> Thus it has always been thought that the center, which is by definition unique, constitutes the very thing within a structure which while governing the structure, escapes structurality. This is why classical thought concerning structure could say that the center is, paradoxically, *within* the structure and *outside it.* The center is at the center of totality, and yet, since the center does not belong to the totality (is not part of the totality), the totality *has a center elsewhere.* The center is not the center. The concept of centered structure—although it represents coherence itself, the condition of the *episteme* as philosophy or science—is contradictorily coherent. And as always, coherence in contradiction expresses the force of a desire. The concept of centered structure is in fact the concept of a play based on a fundamental ground, a play constituted on the basis of a fundamental immobility and a reassuring certitude, which itself is beyond the reach of play. And on the basis of this certitude anxiety can be mastered, for anxiety is invariably the result of a certain mode of being implicated in the game, of being caught in the game, of being as it were at stake in the game from the outset. And again on the basis of what we call the center (and which, because it can be either inside or outside, can also indifferently be called the origin or end, *arché*

> or *telos*), repetitions, substitutions, transformations, and permutations are always *taken* from a history of meaning [*sens*]—that is, in a word, a history—whose origin may always be reawakened or whose end may always be anticipated in the form of presence. This is why one perhaps could say that the movement of any archeology, like that of any eschatology, is an accomplice of this reduction of the structurality of structure and always attempts to conceive of structure on the basis of a full presence which is beyond play.
>
> If this is so, then the entire history of the concept of structure, before the rupture of which we are speaking, must be thought of as a series of substitutions of center for center, as a linked chain of determinations of the center. Successively, and in a regulated fashion, the center receives different forms or names [ontological, theological, anthropological]. The history of metaphysics, like the history of the West, is the history of these metaphors and metonymies. Its matrix . . . is the determination of Being as *presence* in all senses of this word. It could be shown that all the names related to fundamentals, to principles, or to the center have always designated an invariable presence—*eidos, arché, telos, energeia, ousia* (essence, existence, substance, subject) *alêtheia,* transcendentality, consciousness, God, man, and so forth.[11]

Thirdly, the Western onto-theo-logical tradition should not be understood as simply a matter of ontological representation as it seems to have been since the implosion of deconstruction and the rise of "political" or "cultural" or "worldly" criticism. As the poststructuralist critique of disciplinary knowledge production implied, if it did not make absolutely clear, it constitutes a dynamic, however uneven continuum of multiple "sites" or "field of forces" ranging from the representation of being as such, through the human subject, the *ecos* in which humanity dwells, gender, race, economics, social formation, language, culture, and national and international politics. These sites are, of course, unevenly developed at any particular historical conjuncture. Thus, for example, the industrial revolution at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century made it appear to both the theorists of capitalism and communism that the *economy* was the Base to all the other sites on the continuum of being, which were then called by Marxists, if not by Engels and Marx, "superstructural." But this rigid disciplinary reading of being was revealed to be an illusion when in the next century the rapid rise of electronic means of information retrieval and dissemination precipitated *culture* into privileged, if not determinative status. I am referring, of course, to the revisionist interpretation of the Marxist representation of being (the materialist dialectical interpretation of history) that has come to be called

"Neo-Marxist" announced theoretically by Louis Althusser's appropriation of Gramsci's notion of hegemony in behalf of his interrogation of the Marxist Base/superstructure model and, perhaps, most succinctly articulated by Raymond Williams in his ground-breaking masterpiece *Marxism and Literature:*

> The concept of hegemony often, in practice, resembles these definitions [of ideology as a matter of consciously held beliefs], but it is distinct in its refusal to equate consciousness with the articulate formal system which can be and ordinarily is abstracted as "ideology." It of course does not exclude the articulate and formal meanings, values and beliefs which a dominant class develops and propagates. But it does not equate these with consciousness, or rather it does not reduce consciousness to them. Instead it sees the relations of domination and subordination, in their forms as *practical consciousness*, as in effect a saturation of the whole process of living—*not only of political and economic activity, nor only of manifest social activity, but the whole substance of lived identities and relationships,* to such a depth as the pressures and limits of what can ultimately be seen as a specific, economic, political, and cultural system seem to most of us the pressures and limits of simple experience and common sense. Hegemony is then not only the articulate upper level of "ideology," nor are its forms of control only those ordinarily seen as "manipulation" or "indoctrination." It is a whole body of practices and expectations, over the whole of living: our senses and assignments of energy, our shaping perceptions of ourselves and our world. It is a lived system of meanings and values—constitutive and constituting—which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a sense of reality for most people in the society, a sense of absolute because experienced reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of the society to move, in most areas of their lives. It is, in the strongest sense a "culture," but a culture which has also to be seen as the lived dominance and subordination of particular classes.[12]

Seen in the light of my previous remarks about the Western ontotheological tradition, Williams's summary exposition of hegemony in opposition to the Marxist Base/superstructure model implies two very crucial things pertaining to the secular: 1) Despite the privileged status of one or more sites on the continuum of being at any particular historical conjuncture, no site is *ontologically* prior to and, therefore, has intrinsic priority over, the others. They constitute an indissoluble, however historically uneven, continuum. 2) On the other hand, however, whatever the particular configuration of the sites at any historical conjuncture of this ontotheological tradition, the func-

tion of hegemony is to inscribe—to saturate—the being of the humans who live within it by what can only be called a (fictional) metaphysical—or vocational—perspective that structures all the sites of being in terms of domination, but in such a way that this world structured in dominance is assumed by those subject to its call to be the way things actually are.

Let us now, after this detour, return to that conjuncture of Western history—the ontotheological tradition—during which the issue of secularism (and its correlate, humanism), first emerged as a way of organizing or, to use Edward Said's Vichean terms, of making the world. I mean specifically the third, the anthropo-logical, moment that began with the implosion of catholic Christianity during the Reformation, and the rise of humanism in the so called Renaissance, which is to say, the "re-birth" of the human vision that had produced "Greco-Roman" civilization, and culminated in the "secular" age of the Enlightenment. Seen from the official historical perspective—the perspective of the custodians of the modern Western cultural memory or, to put it in Gramsci's language, of the deputies of the West's dominant bourgeois, nation-state, capitalist, and imperialist culture—and, alas, of far too many contemporary oppositional intellectuals—this era emancipated itself from 1) a polyvalent Judeo-Christian theology that privileged the (sacred) transcendental realm over the (profane) finite earthly or secular world; 2) a Church that represented humanity as fallen and corrupted (profane) and therefore utterly dependent on the mediation of its priesthood—and priestcraft—for its other worldly salvation; 3) a sign system of knowledge production (the great chain of being and its schema of correspondences) that privileges the spatializing or structuring eye over the other more earthly (time-bound or profane) senses and hierarchized every species—man, animals, flora, fauna, the elements—in the secular world according to a preconceived—Providential or, in Erich Auerbach's more precise term, figural—historical design (structure);[13] and 4) an analogous, filially continuous hierarchical monarchical polity justified by the doctrine of "the divine right of Kings." In short, the humanist "revolution," according to this celebratory official perspective on the modern era, freed humanity from the multiple tyrannies of a theological worldview that privileged Transcendence over imminence: God's omniscient vision over the blinding bodily senses of (fallen) humanity, the One over the many, Eternity of time, Essence over existence, the Other World over *this* world, the Pre-ordained Knowledge of Scripture (Revelation) over the knowledge derived from human inquiry (the *Logos* over *logoi*), and a monarchical political system over the naturally errant multitude. With this revolutionary reversal, the "world" (Latin, *saeculum*) gained its independence from religion (Latin, *religio:* to *bind fast in obedience* to a higher or total cause),

and humanity was released, as Said insistently puts Vico's secular humanist project, to make its own ("Gentile") history.

Seen, however, from the de-structive or de-constructive perspective that, beginning with Nietzsche and Heidegger and culminating in the aptly named poststructuralism[14] of the 1970s and 1980s (most notably of Jacques Lacan, Jacques Derrida, and more radically, Louis Althusser, Gilles Deleuze, and Michel Foucault), which increasingly interrogated the (de-temporalizing) structuring imperatives of the ontotheological tradition *at large,* the "worldly" world represented by the Western humanists who celebrate this secular revolution undergoes, in Althusser's Marxian term, an unwitting "change of terrain."[15] To put it baldly at first, it comes to be seen, not as a radical revolution that liberated the "profane"—the various, hitherto degraded worldly sites on the continuum of being (the nothing, time, the appetitive senses, finite humanity, women, people of color, the oppressed multitude, and so on)—for positive thought, but an increasingly *secularization* of the previous religious other world: the substitution and increasing hegemonization of the *Anthropo-logos* for the *Theo-Logos*—Man for All-Mighty God—or to use a phrase that Edward Said borrowed from M. H. Abrams to (rightly) call the secular humanism of Ernest Renan by it right name in *Orientalism,* a "naturalized supernaturalism."[16]

This genealogy of classical Western humanism is not especially new, since it was, as I understand it, the essential project of the poststructuralist occasion. I mean by this last the revolutionary disjuncture that was inaugurated by what Derrida in 1966, referring to the moment in Western history "when language invade[d] the universal problematic . . . [and] everything became discourse," called (remarkably like Alain Badiou's more recent use of the word) an "event" that "ruptured" and "de-centered" the structuring center of Western thinking. This was the moment, he famously claimed, that was epitomized by "the Nietzschean critique of metaphysics, the critique of the concepts of Being and truth, for which were substituted the concept of play, interpretation, and sign (sign without present truth); the Freudian critique of self-presence, that is, the critique of consciousness, of the subject, of self-identity and of self-proximity or self-possession; and, more radically, the Heideggerian destruction of metaphysics, of onto-theology, of the determination of Being as presence" (SSP, 279–80).

Despite its "evental" status, however, the "truth"—about the secular—this rupture disclosed was betrayed by the failure of many of the poststructuralist theoreticians and practitioners to read the eventality of the event as an urgent invitation to include the more sociopolitical sites of the continuum of being along with the ontological and/or textual (or discursive) they privileged. This

infidelity to the event resulted in the institutionalization of poststructuralist thought—and, unfortunately, in a reaction on the part of more politically minded theorists, epitomized by Edward Said's *Orientalism* and all too much of the postcolonialist discourse it enabled, that tends to read this institutionalization of "textuality" as a minimization or denial of human agency. This infidelity to the "event" of language thus transformed what should have been a productive alliance between the poststructuralists' de-centering/de-theologizing project and that of the radical opponents of modern Western politics (the complicity of the nation-state system and colonialism) into a binary opposition, a transformation that resulted in the forgetting of the polyvalent revolutionary potentiality *vis-à-vis* the secular inaugurated by the poststructuralist genealogy of the ontotheological tradition between the late 1960s and the 1980s.[17] It is because of this mutual forgetting that, risking the commonplace, I will undertake a brief retrieval (*Wiederholung*) of three familiar synecdochical moments of this early poststructuralist genealogy of the last, modernist or secularist/humanist (anthropo-logical), phase of the ontotheological tradition with a view to rethinking the received understanding of the secular and its correlate, the human, it called into question. In each of these instances, it should be noted, it is, strangely, the term *humanism* or the Western humanist tradition, not *secularism* as such, that is the object of their genealogical interrogation, an unfortunate discursive accident, no doubt, of the inaugural occasion, that eventually enabled the misrepresentation of the poststructuralist project as basically anti-humanist rather than genealogical. But clearly the term "humanism" (and "anti-humanism") as conceived by the poststructuralists was intended to signify the perspective concerning being incumbent on the shift of the focus of thinking in the West from the "other" to "this," secular, world.

III

This "poststructuralist" interrogation of modern Western humanism/secularism begins with Heidegger's response to Jean Beaufret's question "Comment redonner un sens au mot 'Humanisme'?" (How can we restore meaning to the word "humanism"?), in the immediate aftermath of the carnage of World War II. In the process of identifying the "rapidly spreading devastation of language" in Enlightenment modernity with the dominant "modern metaphysics of subjectivity," i.e., humanism,[18] he offers the following genealogy, which markedly distinguishes the radically time-oriented comportment towards the world of the early, especially pre-Socratic—and, it should

be added, pre-Western—Greeks such as Heraclitus and Anaximander, from the metaphysical orientation toward the world of the late (Hellenistic) Greeks and especially of the Romans, that achieved hegemonic status in the West, especially in the wake of the Renaissance:

> *Humanitas,* explicitly so called, was first considered and striven for in the age of the Roman Republic. *Homo humanus* was opposed to *homo barbarus. Homo humanus* here means the Romans, who exalted and honored Roman *virtus* through the "embodiment" of the *paideia* [education] taken over from the Greeks. These were the Greeks of the Hellenistic age, whose culture was acquired in the schools of philosophy. It was concerned with *eruditio et institutio in bonas artes* [scholarship and training in good conduct]. *Paideia* thus understood was translated as *humanitas.* We encounter the first humanism in Rome: it therefore remains in essence a specifically Roman phenomenon, which emerges from the encounter of Roman civilization with the culture of late Greek civilization. The so-called Renaissance of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Italy is a *renascentia romanitatis.* Because *romanitas* is what matters, it is concerned with *humanitas* and therefore with Greek *paideia.* But Greek civilization is always seen in it later form and this itself is seen from a Roman point of view. The *homo romanus* of the Renaissance also stands in opposition to *homo barbarus.* But now the in-humane is the supposed barbarism of gothic Scholasticism in the Middle Ages. Therefore a *studium humanitatis,* which in a certain way reaches back to the ancients and thus also becomes a revival of Greek civilization, always adheres to historically understood humanism. For Germans, this is apparent in the humanism of the eighteenth century supported by Winckelmann, Goethe, and Schiller. [Heidegger is referring here to the concept of *Bildung,* which, as in the *Bildungsroman,* educates the immature student into taking his or her proper place in the larger social whole.] On the other hand, Hölderlin does not belong to "humanism," precisely because he thought the destiny of man's essence *in a more original way* than "humanism" could.[19]

Much more can be said about this all too brief but extraordinarily resonant critical genealogy of modern humanism.[20] Here, I will restrict my commentary to two of its directives that pertain to the question of the secular: 1) that the West's secular humanist tradition having its origins in Roman antiquity is, insofar as its comportment to being constitutes a "correction" of the "errant" originary comportment of the Pre-Socratic Greeks, a *derivative* comportment and thus metaphysical and vocational; and 2) that this sec-

ond order comportment to the be-*ing*—the radical temporality, the nothingness—of being is not restricted to the site of being in general (ontology) but is polyvalent in its applications.

1) The modern Western exponents of the humanist tradition all too easily annul the distinction between the originative thinking of the Greeks and the derivative thinking of the Romans. They assume that, with the advent of the Renaissance of "Greco-Roman" antiquity in the wake of the "collapse" of the theo-logical dispensation of the Christian Church, humanity freed itself from the thrall of all transcendentally derived authority in locating its dwelling in this secular world. In opposition to this illusory history, Heidegger's genealogy discloses that the Western humanistic tradition has been grounded in metaphysics from the Romans to the present and, therefore, the secular world it has celebrated is in fact a materialized transcendentalism or a naturalized super-naturalism.

Referring back to the "more original" (pre-Socratic) Greek way of thinking the human later in the "Letter on Humanism," Heidegger, by way of contrasting the Greeks' *pre*-metaphysical comportment to being with the metaphysical perspective informing humanism, adds:

> Every humanism is either grounded in a metaphysics or is itself made to be the ground of one. Every determination of the essence of man that already presupposes an interpretation of beings without asking about the truth of Being [*die Seinsfrage,* which, as ontologically prior to the answer, was essential to early, pre-Socratic, Greek thinking], whether knowingly or not, is metaphysical. The result is that what is peculiar to all metaphysics, specifically with respect to the way the essence of man is determined, is that it is "humanistic." Accordingly, every humanism remains metaphysical. In defining the humanity of man humanism not only does not ask about the relation of Being to the essence of man; because of its metaphysical origin humanism even impedes the question by neither recognizing nor understanding it. On the contrary, the necessity and proper form of the question concerning the truth of Being, forgotten in and through metaphysics [its radical temporality, or the nothingness that is ontologically prior to its structuration], can come to light only if the question "What is metaphysics?" is posed in the midst of metaphysic's domination. (LH, 225–26)[21]

To ask "What is metaphysics?" in the light of the difference between the originative—finite-bound and errant—thinking of the pre-Socratic Greeks and the derivative humanistic thinking of the Romans and in the context of its domination in Western modernity as Heidegger (and the poststructuralist

after him) did, is to discover that 1) it involves the perception of *physis*—variously called temporality, nothingness (*das Nichts*), the be-*ing* of being, i.e., the finite and transient secular world of humans, animals, flora, fauna, etc.—from above or beyond or the end, which is to say, from a transcendental *Telos;* 2) that it is informed by a hierarchical binary logic of belonging that privileges Identity over difference, Being over temporality, the One over the many, the Whole over the parts; the Center over the periphery, Something over nothing, etc.; 3) that this binary logic enables the metaphysical perspective to demonize the second terms in this relay, for example, to represent the Identity, Being, Oneness (Totality), the Whole as a "higher cause," the domain of the Sacred ("the Big Other," in Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytic term), and the finite world (be-ing, time, the nothing, difference) as "fallen," "errant," "lowly," "superfluous," "barbaric, "noisy," "profane"; and 4) that, in so doing, this binary logic of belonging justifies the colonization—the imposition of its *will to power*—over the second demonized term, that is, metaphysics's fundamentally "imperialist" essence. In short, to ask "What is metaphysics?" in the light of the difference between the originative thinking of the pre-Socratic Greeks and the derivative thinking of the humanist (secular) Romans is to discover that the former comported themselves freely in the face of the being (the radical temporality) of being, whereas the latter, reading being in term of its *Telos* also read it as a "call" (or "calling") and their relation to it, therefore—as the educational imperative, *eruditio et institutio in bonas artes,* of the *studium humanitatis* testifies—as an unerring collective vocational task that privileged *the future* over *the present occasion*—and servitude (to a sacred cause) over freedom.

2) Heidegger (and his early French followers) overdetermined the ontological sites (metaphysics, the self-identical subject, language) in his genealogy of the Anthropological phase of the ontotheological tradition at the devastating expense of the more practical or worldly sites of the continuum of being, and this overdetermination, above all, is what both traditional humanists and the more radical worldly critics have seized on to delegitimate or marginalize his thought. But if we attend to his marginal explicit and implicit cultural and sociopolitical rhetoric in the concentrated genealogy of humanism I have quoted above at some length, it will be seen that he provides resonant directives for disclosing *the polyvalency of the imperial will to power informing the secular world endemic to and thus produced by traditional Western humanism*—and for thinking the secular in a more radical—and authentically global—way than heretofore.

The first directive derives from Heidegger's explicit reference to the complicity of Roman humanism (the binary logic that puts *homo humanus*

in opposition to *homo barbarus*) with education/culture (*Bildung*). Unlike the Greek *paideia,* which was originative, that is, *always already* engaged in the *question* of being—"errant" in the reductive terms of the binary logic of Roman humanism—the Roman "was concerned with *eruditio et institutio in bonas artes* [scholarship and training in good conduct]," a derivative problematic that privileged the answer over the question, the end of which was the production of good citizens (*virtu:* manliness, power, virtue): citizens, that is, who were responsible to—committed as servants of—the call of the sacred metropolis. The second related directive derives from Heidegger's implicit distinction between the Greeks' understanding of the *polis* and that of the Romans. The Greeks, he implies—and here, as we shall see later in this book, he provides the basis of Hannah Arendt's singular representation of the Greek *polis*—understood their city-state as radically democratic, i.e., "erratic": not end-oriented and thus not vocational, as the end of a futural nation-building process that demanded obedience to the "calling" of the *Anthropologos*.[22] For the Romans, on the other hand, the *polis,* under the aegis of the anthropological eye/center, was understood as an imperial metropolis, the unity, collective strength, and global power of which called for an interpellative *paideia* (*Bildung*), an educational system and culture that instilled in its "naturally" errant youth a sacred sense of vocation in behalf of the "civilizing mission" *vis-à-vis* the "barbarian" and "profane" provinces. Despite Heidegger's overdetermination of the ontological site, a symptomatic reading of the "Letter on Humanism"—and, by extension, *Being and Time,* and essays such as "What Is Metaphysics?," "The Question Concerning Technology," and "The Age of the World Picture," among others—discloses not only that in some degree he understood the modern Western humanist conception of being—its representation of the secular world—in terms of an indissolubly related continuum structured in domination ranging from the ontological through the ecological to the political, but also, in so doing, provided resonant directives for perceiving a radically different and far more generous humanism and secular world.

If this reading of Heidegger's genealogy of humanism in "Letter on Humanism" seems excessive, consider the following resonant, but still neglected, passage from his *Parmenides,* which powerfully discloses the complicity between (Roman) metaphysics—this time its intrinsic concept of the false (*falsum*)—the "lowly," the "barbaric," the "errant," the "noisy," the "profane," the "superfluous," those who "don't count": the antithesis of the truth (*veritas*) or the "high," the "civilized," the "goal- or task-oriented," the "harmonic," the "sacred," the "relevant," those who "do count." I quote at length to underscore the cumulative and decisive force of Heidegger's disclosure of

the complicity between thinking the secular *meta ta physica* and the Roman imperial project:

> The essential domain which prevails for the deployment of "*falsum*" [the demonized binary of *veritas* ("the truth")] is that of the "*imperium*" and of the "imperial." We take these words in their strict and original sense. "*Imperium*" means "command" [*Befehl*]. . . . In passing through French, *befehlen* [which originally meant "to entrust"] became "command"; more precisely, it became the Roman *imperare—im-perare* = to install, to take preliminary measures, that is, *prae-cipere,* to occupy in advance and by so doing to have the "possessed" as domain, to dominate over it, The *imperium* is the domain that founds itself on the basis of the order, and under whose dominion the others are subject. . . .
>
> To commanding as the essential foundation of sovereignty belongs "being on high" [*Obensein*]. That is only possible through constant surmounting in relation to others, who are thus the inferiors. In the surmounting, in turn, resides the constant ability to oversee [supervise and dominate, *Übersehen-können*]. We say "to oversee something," which means "to master it." To this commanding view, which carries with it surmounting, belongs the always-being-on-the-lookout. That is the form of all action that oversees, but that holds to itself, in Roman the *actio* of the *actus.* The commanding overseeing is the dominating vision which is expressed in the often cited phrase of Caesar: *veni, vidi, vici*—I came, I oversaw [*übersah*], I conquered. Victory is already nothing but the consequence of the Caesarian gaze that dominates [*Übersehens*] and the seeing [*Sehens*] which has the character of *actio.* The essence of the *imperium* reposes in the *actus* of constant action. The imperial *actio* of the constant surmounting over others implies that the others, in the case where they raise themselves to a comparable or even identical height of command, will be brought down—in Roman, *fallere* (participle *falsum*).[23]

One could cite many other early poststructuralist versions of Heidegger's genealogy of modern Western humanism that disclose its naturalized supernaturalism—its origins in thinking *meta ta physica* and the complicity of this invisible "over-sight" or "supervision" with the will to power *over* all the sites in the lower, secular world—even though they may not, like Heidegger's, trace it back specifically to the epochal Roman reduction of *a-lêtheia* (unconcealing/concealing, the *intimate strife* between world and earth that always produces the new) to *veritas* (the adequation of mind and thing, which is to say, correctness or the war to the death between Man and finite be-*ing*). It

is, for example, basic to, if not adequately thought by, the early Derrida's decentering—and de-grading—of Western "logocentrism." This is especially evident in the 1968 lecture "The Ends of Man," given in New York at a colloquium on "philosophy and anthropology" at the height of the Vietnam War. Invoking Heidegger's genealogy of Western humanism, he not only identifies its "we," even including the modified "we" of Husserl's and Heidegger's phenomenology, with Eurocentrism:

> To the extent that it describes the structures of human-reality, phenomenological ontology is a philosophical anthropology. Whatever the breaks marked by this Hegelian–Husserlian–Heideggerian anthropology as concerns the classical anthropologies, there is an uninterrupted metaphysical familiarity with that which, so naturally, links the we of the [Western] philosopher to "we men," to the we in the horizon of humanity.[24]

And insofar as the lecture pointedly addresses the United States' appeal to "the free [Western] world" against the "inhuman" to justify its intervention in Vietnam in the aftermath of colonial France's defeat, Derrida's genealogy also demonstrates the necessary complicity of the "we" of secular humanism and America's inordinately violent devastation of the "them" of that Third World country in behalf of the imperial project it calls its historically ordained exceptionalist "errand in [the world's] wilderness."

Similar genealogies of modern Western humanism that disclose its secularism to be a natural supernaturalism encompassing the continuum between ontology and politics—metaphysics, i.e., knowledge production grounded in a transcendent *Logos* (and the secular *polis* structured in domination)—are at the core of a number of other early poststructuralist genealogies of humanism—those of Jean-François Lyotard, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, Jean-Luc Nancy, Gilles Deleuze, Gayatri Spivak, and, not least, Louis Althusser, who disclosed Western humanist education to be an ideological state apparatus of capitalism that, *like God vis-à-vis Moses,* interpellates the human being, that is, reduces him/her to a subjected subject, a "free" self that unknowingly is obedient to the *calling* of the dominant capitalist culture.[25] For the sake of brevity, however, I will restrict further reference to Michel Foucault's decisive identification of modern, i.e., post-theological/monarchical, humanism (anthropologism) as a "regime of truth," which, to recall what seems to have been forgotten, is a natural supernaturalism: a humanist mode of knowledge production that simply secularizes (or, in Foucault's language, "internalizes") the overt knowledge/power relations of the overthrown theological/monarchical dispensation. This, as I have shown elsewhere,[26] can be readily seen

by juxtaposing two of the most decisive passages of Foucault's texts addressing the question of classical anthropologism. The first, a general statement, is from his interview "Revolutionary Action: 'Until Now,'" which, echoing Althusser, condemns modern Western humanist discourse as producing the antithesis of the freedom it claims to enable by way of relocating itself from the theological realm into the secular world.

> By humanism I mean the totality of discourse through which Western man is told: "Even though you don't exercise power, you can still be a ruler. Better yet, the more you deny yourself the exercise of power, the more you submit to those in power, the more this increases your sovereignty." Humanism invented a whole series of subjected sovereignties: the soul (ruling the body, but subjected to God), consciousness (sovereign in a context of judgment, but subject to the necessities of truth), the individual (a titular control of personal rights subjected to the laws of nature and society), basic freedom (sovereign within, but accepting the demands of an outside world and "aligned with destiny"). In short, humanism is everything in Western civilization that restricts the *desire for power:* it prohibits the desire for power and excludes the possibility of power being seized. The theory of the subject (in the double [Althusserian] sense of the word) is at the heart of humanism and that is why our culture has tenaciously rejected anything that could weaken its hold on us.[27]

The second, and more specific, passage is from *Discipline and Punish,* in which Foucault discloses the complicity between (humanist) knowledge and (bio)power, that is, the indissoluble relationship between modern panoptics (metaphysical knowledge production in the spatializing or structuralizing anthropological mode) and the repressive monarchical regime that derives its sovereignty from the Christian *theo-logos:*

> The Panopticon . . . must be understood as a *generalizable model* of functioning; a way of defining power relations in terms of the everyday life of men. No doubt Bentham presents it as a particular institution, closed in upon itself. Utopias, perfectly closed in on themselves, are common enough. . . . But the Panopticon must not be understood as a dream building: it is the *diagram* of a mechanism of power reduced to its *ideal form;* its functioning, abstracted from any obstacle, resistance or friction, must be represented as a pure architectural and optical system: it is in fact a *figure* of political technology that may and must be detached from any specific uses.

> It is *polyvalent* in its application; it serves to reform prisoners but also to treat patients, to instruct school children, to confine the insane, to supervise workers, to put beggars and idlers to work. It is a *type* of location of bodies in space, of distribution of individuals in relation to one another, of hierarchic organization, of disposition of centers and channels of power, of definition of the instruments and modes of intervention of power, which can be implemented in hospitals and workshops, schools, prisons. When one is dealing with a multiplicity of individuals on whom a task or a particular form of behaviour must be imposed, the panoptic *scheme* may be used. It is—necessary modifications apart—applicable "to all establishments whatsoever, in which within a space not too large, to be covered or commanded by buildings, a number of persons are meant to be kept under inspection."[28]

Understood as an indissoluble continuum, these resonant passages from Foucault pertaining to the genealogy of modern Western humanism and its intrinsic representation of the secular—their emphasis, as in the passages from Heidegger I have quoted, on the vocational imperatives of humanism and humanistic education should not be overlooked—epitomize the so-called anti-humanism of the poststructuralist occasion. The post-theological/monarchical Man-oriented perspective spanning the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and beyond, which had its ultimate origins in the Romans' accommodation of originative Greek thinking to the imperatives of thinking *meta-physically* and then, after the Christianization of Rome, theo-logically, did not, they insist, acknowledge the radical autonomy of the secular world and thus did not enable a revolution of free inquiry and political freedom. Rather, this modern Western humanism produced the biopolitical disciplinary society: a society structured in domination like that of the European *Ancien Régime* but infinitely more efficient in that it harnessed (the panoptic) "diagram" of "the truth" to power. It reproduced, in fact, the totalizing and totalitarian transcendental *within* the secular world: a naturalized supernaturalism or, to anticipate, a "political theology" in Carl Schmitt's influential version of this paradox, in which the *Logos,* the Center (or principle of Presence), the hierarchical binary logic (the Friend/enemy opposition), the demonizing of the second term, and the will to power informing the theological era of Western civilization remains essentially intact despite the change of names.[29] The difference, as Foucault reminds us, was a matter of degree. Whereas in the theological age sacred power was imposed arbitrarily (overtly) and therefore inconsistently (inefficiently) on the various sites of the continuum of be-*ing,* in the secular humanist age, it came, as biopower,

to saturate these sites right down to their capillaries. Human beings in this "secular era" of Western history made their history, as Edward Said, invoking Vico, insistently put it in his vigorous defense of humanism, but the secular world they made was scripted by the naturalized supernatural Word, *the Word of Man fully present to Himself,* and the hierarchical binary logic that pitted the "Sacred" Word against the "profane" finite world (word*s*) in a war to the death, a war, that is, that preordained the reduction of the phenomena of this world to "nothing" or, what is more or less the same thing, to "disposable reserve" (Heidegger)[30] or "docile bodies" (Foucault)[31] or "superfluities" (Arendt)[32] or "bare life" (Agamben).[33]

IV

The early poststructuralists from Heidegger through Derrida to Althusser, Deleuze, and Foucault relentlessly overdetermined their critique of classical humanism, so much so that many of their more politically committed opponents came to identify them as "anti-humanist," a collective of contemporary thinkers that denied humans agency, and, by implication, as "anti-secular," or "unworldly," if not overtly "religious." There is, admittedly some justification for this judgment insofar as most of these poststructuralists made no overt effort to deny the charge. But as I have shown elsewhere,[34] these history-oriented "worldly" critics' identification of the poststructuralists as "unworldly" is paradoxically ahistorical. It does not take into account the historical context that the early poststructuralists were addressing in posing the question of the human and the secular. I am, of course, referring to the hitherto invoked decisive "event," which Derrida identifies with Nietzsche, Freud, and Heidegger, "when language invade[d] the universal problematic . . . [and] everything became discourse," that is to say, when, for the first time in the Western humanist tradition language—the transparent medium it privileged as agency for the transmission of objective (secular) truth—came to be seen as a problem: a re-presentation—a naturalized supernatural medium—that spatialized or structured and thus deferred the being of the differential temporal phenomena it would bring to presence. In that inaugural context, which bore witness to a structuralizing discourse of knowledge production (empirical science/disinterested inquiry) that saturated all the sites on the continuum of being, it was not only natural, but imperative that these early poststructuralists would overdetermine the enormous difficulty of achieving human agency posed by a naturalized supernatural humanist/secular discourse that claimed disinterestedness.

It is true, of course, that many of these early poststructuralists—Paul de Man is exemplary—and especially their literary critical followers in the American universities failed or refused to think both the polyvalent, especially cultural, social, and political, implications and positive possibilities of the "*aporia*"—the "absence," the "nothing" the "lack"—they discovered to reside at the origins of the universalist secular humanist notion of identity and to haunt its global hegemony. It is true, in other words, that they failed or refused to go beyond their critique of the Western humanist tradition to think either an alternative to or a new version of the human and the secular. But this failure, as I have been arguing, is not endemic to the "anti-humanism" of the poststructuralist initiative. And this, as the rhetoric I have used to characterize my retrieval of the poststructuralists' genealogy of the Western secular humanist project has insinuated, is where the post-postructuralism, particularly of Giorgio Agamben and Alain Badiou, comes in—not by any means as an end, but as the beginning of the urgent task of thinking a new secular humanism disaffiliated from all relations with the sacred—and with the "West" and its notion of the nation-state. I mean a secular humanism that is neither a naturalized supernaturalism nor a political theology, but one that openly and radically breaks with the transcendent in the finally unnamable name of finitude or imminence—an ek-sistent in-sistent, ontic-ontological, out-side in-side, being-in-the-world of human being—and with the hierarchized binary logic (of belonging) that not simply pits the opposition in a war to the end but also, in sacralizing the first term, presupposes the profanity of the second and authorizes its extermination (with impunity) by one means or another.

In what follows I will not undertake systematic analyses of Giorgio Agamben's and Alain Badiou's work nor distinguish between their substantial differences. Instead, I will focus on those common aspects of their thought that I have called all too crudely post-poststructuralist, that is, on both their continuing fidelity to the poststructuralist "truth"—the ontological "thrownness," "homelessness" (*Unheimliche*), "exilic" condition of humanity—precipitated by the advent of "language"(as re-presentation that defers what it would bring to stand) and on their sustained effort, unlike their predecessors, *to think the positive implications* of this aporetic truth all across the continuum of secular being, from be-ing as such to the site of the political. Further, I will focus my commentary primarily on two texts, Agamben's *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans* and Badiou's *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism,* which bear centrally, however paradoxically, on the question of the relationship between the secular and the religious. I do this not simply for the sake of economy, but also for two

substantial reasons: 1) these texts are representative instances of Agamben's and Badiou's thinking at large; and 2) they contribute a dimension of the history of Western humanism/secularism that the poststructuralist genealogies of this history have occluded, if not entirely effaced, by way of overdetermining the Roman (Renaissance/Enlightenment) reference. I am referring to the role Christianity or, more accurately, the Christianization of Rome (the theo-logical moment of the onto-theo-logical tradition), played in the formation of the Western humanist/secular modernity. My concern in invoking Agamben's and Badiou's Paul is not with the historical legitimacy of their interpretations of the apostle's epistles, but rather with the positive directives they discover in his epochal texts for thinking the question of the secular at this fraught contemporary historical conjuncture. I mean by this last the occasion that has borne witness to the self-destruction of the Western secular humanist tradition—the self-disclosure of its natural supernaturalism at the terminal point of its logical development—that has enjoyed global hegemonic status since the Renaissance, especially in the period of the Enlightenment, to the bankruptcy of the Western nation-state system (its logic of belonging), and to the re-emergence of religion as an active force in the global political domain.

It may seem, of course, extremely paradoxical—and problematic—that both these heirs of the poststructuralist tradition invoke the apostle Paul, one of the alleged founding fathers of the Christian tradition and, in the case of Agamben, Paul's "messianism" via Walter Benjamin. I will return to the substantial problematic aspect of this decision later. Here, at the outset, I will focus on those aspects of Agamben's and Badiou's projects that are viable as directives for thinking the secular anew. In the name of Edward Said, some very persuasive "worldly" opponents of the recent theorists who invoke the "event" (*événement*) as the point of departure of their vision of the coming community refer to the latter critically as "apocalyptic" and "utopian," that is, as theorists who reject history and, in thus embracing a certain "Gnosticism," become complicit with a political right wing and/or an evangelical cohort of born-again Christians that disdains history and politics.[35] Against this accusation that they are "postsecular," I want, in the spirit of dialogue, to insist that Agamben and, especially, Badiou are radically secular thinkers, however different their secularism is from that of their critics. Though Benjamin's messianism has been invoked by some "postsecular" theorists in a desperate nostalgic effort to render theology viable in a post-theological age, this, I submit, is decidedly not the case with Agamben and Badiou, who, each in his own way, take their theoretical point of departure in a radical critique of classical Western humanism—the "anthropological machine," as Agamben

aptly calls it[36]—as essentialist and therefore not radically secular. Indeed, they differ fundamentally from classical humanists precisely in recognizing the latter (like Edward Said *vis-à-vis* the Orientalists Sylvestre de Sacy and Ernest Renan, not incidentally) as inadvertently committed to a naturalized supernaturalism—a secularized theology that internalizes (and conceals) its determinative *Telos* in the human body—that is, to a will-destroying biopolitics. Agamben and Badiou choose the apostle Paul as the paradigmatic instance not of postsecular man, but of the radically secular—and politically activist—human being who breaks the hold of the "Law," whether "theological" (that of the Old Testament Jews' God) or "onto-logical" (that of the "philosophy" of the late Greco-Romans or "Gentiles") in the name of "*pistis*" ("faith" or, in Badiou's translation, "conviction") in the paradoxical potentiality of finitude. Paul, for Agamben and Badiou, is not an apocalyptic visionary or prophet of a promise/fulfillment historical structure, whether theological or dialectical, but, rather, an ek-sistent in-sistent—an irreversibly or, in Agamben's term, "irreparably"[37] outside/inside being-in-the-world. As such an "untimely" exilic figure, he exists, that is, neither to institutionalize Christianity nor to perpetuate the teleological Greco-Roman world view, but precisely to put the contemporary question of the secular (the worldly) in terms of its essential opposite, the *super*-worldly that early poststructuralist genealogies of humanism, most notably Heidegger's, obscured by identifying it primarily with a "secular" (Roman) ontology: metaphysics, i.e., thinking being from above or from the end (of history).

The first, and perhaps most important, thing that needs to be clarified about Agamben's and Badiou's invocation of Paul as a model of post-theological, i.e., secular man, therefore, has to do with his "conversion" on the road to Damascus in the year 33 or 34 A.D. The official histories—and the Church—have, to put a complex story all too simply, represented his experience as an apocalyptic vision—an epiphany or revelation—of Christ's second coming or, what is the same thing, as a "calling" (*kleisis*) coming to him from the resurrected Christ that announces a rupture or caesura in history and commits him to obediently preach faith in the "good news" against the Pharisaic Law. This "apocalyptic"/"vocational" interpretation of Paul's conversion is, *mutatis mutandis,* also that of some of those recent worldly critics who perceive Agamben's and Badiou's invocation of Paul's epistles as symptomatic of their vestigial commitment and subjection to an other-worldly reality if not to one form of the Judeo-Christian religion or other, a critique that relies in some degree on the glosses of their work proffered by some of their sympathizers. Thus, for example, Stathis Gourgouris, with both Agamben and Badiou in mind as the objects of his critique, writes:

> The event of Paul's interpellation on the road to Damascus cannot be labeled simply a conversion. It becomes the arch-event for all subsequent evangelical Christianity and the born-again syndrome. The common enunciation "I have found God!"—to which a genuine believer can only, incredulously, respond "I didn't know He had been lost!"—reveals a truth that is immediately repressed, whereby the (self-)authorized subject occludes the autonomy of the act. The implied is to confirm that God has called me, has found me, lost among the sinners, etc. It must be a real experience of interpellation if it is to have the power of transforming the subject, who will from now on, evidently, begin a new life. But, as all interpellation, it is, in the last instance, a self-interpellation: after all, *I* am the one who got the call; *I* am the one who has been born again in Christ; *I* am the one who is to bear henceforth God's word, etc. Equally evocative is the, henceforth, conventional utterance "God has spoken to me!" which transfers to an anonymous and disembodied voice the fact of my enunciation. What is implied and, one assumes, registers its full force in the unconscious at its moment of oblivion is a self-confirmation: indeed, a bona fide moment of *subjection.* The occlusion of self-authorization is essential to the whole process. There is no image more magically evocative of this than the description of a transformed Paul who is blinded by his eyes being totally opened! (PD, 18)

Gourgouris's argument about Paul's conversion is a powerful one, and it is, admittedly, unwittingly aided and abetted by Badiou's disabling collapsing of the crucial distinction, cited above, that Heidegger makes between (early) Greek and Roman ontology (*a-lêtheia* and *veritas:* truth and unconcealing/concealing and the correspondence of mind and thing) in insistently accusing both the Old Testament Law and Greek philosophy at large of being "discourses of mastery."[38] But Gourgouris's brilliant and resonant psychological way of putting Paul's conversion against Badiou, I suggest, misses a crucial paradox in the latter's logic and thus distorts his (and Agamben's) view of the crucial concept of the calling (interpellation). Despite Badiou's frequent reference to the "event" as "aleatory," for him (and this applies especially to Agamben), what sur-prises—takes over—Paul on the road to Damascus is neither the consequence of a rupture in time understood as an apocalyptic miracle (or a neurotic symptom). It is, rather, a "rupture" understood as a limit situation or, in Agamben's term, a "threshold": the *fulfillment* (and demise) of a historical process which, at the end of its dialectical logical development, its *Telos,* discloses to him the complicity of "Greek philosophy" (metaphysics) with the Judaic Law as truth discourses of mastery, and, in so

doing, precipitates the possibility of an utterly new truth and a radical re-subjectivation of his hitherto subjected or interpellated being.

Indeed, what Paul bears witness to on the road to Damascus, according to Badiou, is neither the vision of an a-historical Absolute or a *Summum Ens* (a Total Being), but the (positive potential of) the nothing(s) that the onto-theological tradition has historically repressed or, according to Heidegger, has known only by "wish[ing] to know nothing about it"[39]:

> One must, in Paul's logic, go so far as to say that the Christ-event testifies that *God is not the god of being, is not Being.* Paul prescribes an anticipatory critique of what Heidegger calls onto-theology, wherein God is thought as supreme being, and hence as the measure for what being as such is capable of.
>
> The most radical statement in the text we are commenting on [Cor. 1.1.17–29] is in effect the following: "God has chosen the things that are not [*ta me onta*] in order to bring to nought those that are [*ta onta*]." That the Christ-event causes nonbeings rather than beings to arise as attesting to God; that it consists in the abolition of what all previous discourses held as existing, or being, gives a measure of the ontological subversion to which Paul's antiphilosophy invites the declarant or militant. (SP, 47)

The conversion of Paul, in other words, is neither the consequence of a miraculous intrusion of the supernatural into the workings of history nor the working out of a dialectical process it sets in motion at an Origin. It is rather a radically historical phenomenon, in Badiou's term, an *event* (*événement*), by which I take him to mean a *historical threshold moment,* or, more precisely, a worldly *occasion*[40] 1) that brings the dialectical (developmental) or prophetic logic of one form of logocentric thinking or another to its fulfillment and demise, i.e., its end in both senses of the word; 2) that, in arriving at that catastrophic end or threshold, it discloses a "void" at the core of the prevailing "truth" situation, that is, a relay of "realities"—in the case of Paul, those varieties of "nobodies"—of human beings who don't count under the aegis of a discursive system (the "Law" or the "wisdom of philosophy") represented as what counts" by the dominant culture—that has been hitherto unperceivable; 3) and thus "seizes" him or her who is attuned to the question of being in the sense of demanding fidelity to its radically new emancipatory directives. As Badiou put the event in his *Ethics:*

> We might say that since a situation is composed by the knowledges circu-

> lating within it, the event names the void inasmuch as it names the not-known of the situation.
>
> To take a well-known example, Marx is an event for political thought because he designates, under the name "proletariat," the central void of early bourgeois societies. For the proletariat—being entirely dispossessed, and absent from the political stage—is that around which is organized the complacent plenitude established by the rule of those who possess capital.
>
> To sum up: the fundamental ontological characteristic of an event *is to inscribe, to name, the situated void of that for which it is an event.*[41]

The event (and the fragile fidelity to the new truth procedure it instigates) is, therefore, indeed, a "calling," but it is radically different from the Judeo-Christian—and secular humanist—understanding of this fundamental and decisively disabling, indeed, damaging, moral category of the Western tradition. In the latter, as Louis Althusser has reminded us, God calls Moses from on high, and, in so doing, interpellates him[42]: turns him into a "*subjected* subject" with a *vocation:* a task oriented from an End, which is to say, from above historical time, that demands the postponement of the radically secular time (and the interest) of the *now* (or of the in-the-midst: *inter esse*) and its singular multiplicity in the commanding name of a dialectically driven, other worldly *Telos.* The calling of the event (*kletos*—from *kaleo,* "to call," on the other hand, is temporal, historical, and worldly (radically secular). The self, which had hitherto been interpellated by ideology, i.e., a hegemonic truth discourse that has been internalized, saturated in the body politic, and rendered natural in its (subjected) subjects, becomes authentically subjectivized. The evental call *liberates* the one it calls from the bondage of the univocal "Law" (*nomos*), whether that of the Old Testament or of Hellenic-Roman philosophy (metaphysics); its hierarchical—Friend/enemy (or Us/them)—binary logic; its deterministic dialectical concept of history (the promise/fulfillment structure); and its slavish vocation to an alienating end-oriented task. As Agamben initially put this paradoxical emancipation from the tyranny of a higher or sacred cause and its deadly binarist logic of belonging,

> According to the apostle, this movement [of the calling] is, above all, a nullification: "Circumcision [the Jews] is nothing, and the foreskin [the Greeks or Gentiles] is nothing." That which, according to the law, made one man a Jew and the other a *goy,* one a slave and another a free man, is now annulled by the vocation. Why remain in this nothing? Once again, *meneto* ("remaining") does not convey indifference. It signifies the immobile

> anaphoric gesture of the messianic calling, its being essentially and for most a *calling of the calling*. For this reason, it may apply to any condition; but for this same reason, it *revokes* a condition and radically puts it into question in the very act adhering to it. (TR, 29; the last emphasis is mine)

The Greco-Roman (Onto-logical), Judeo-Christian (Theo-logical), and Humanist Enlightenment (Anthropo-logical) vocation alienates human beings from the transient or finite time—the time of the now (*ho nyn kairos*), of being *inter esse* (in the midst of the inter-esting, of the occasion)—coercively turns their mind's eye away from *this* (*unheimliche*) world to one (*heimliche*) beyond, to a future *Telos*. The evental "vocation," on the other hand, is, according Agamben, "the revocation of every vocation." In the resonantly suggestive term he borrows from Paul, it renders the Law, its binary logic, its dialectical promise-fulfillment structure, and its vocation to a higher cause "inoperative" (*katargein*).[43] The Law (and Works)—as opposed to faith (*pistis*)—its binary logic, its promise/fulfillment structure, its imperatives of belonging, and its vocation are not annulled; they remain, but they no longer work in the invisible polyvalently oppressive way they did, before the event, under the aegis of the Law.[44]

Whereas in the first (ontotheological) paradigm the vocation of Identity is to negate singularity either by annihilating it or accommodating it dialectically to its (de-differentiating) Center/*Telos*; in the second (the Pauline), identity is enabled to be, yet, as secondary to singularity, it remains always already open to transformation according to the exigencies of differential secular history: what Badiou calls the "universal singularity." Despite other differences, this distinction between a dialectical and a non-dialectical ("messianic") time is at the heart of both Agamben's and Badiou's interpretations of the human and the world in Paul's epistles and their anti-philosophical projects. Following his analysis of Paul's paradoxical assertion that "power [or potentiality] realizes itself in weakness (2 Cor. 12.9)," a rendering of the opposition between potentiality and act (works) inoperative, Agamben, goes on:

> There is another aspect to this messianic inversion of the potential-act relation. Just as messianic power is realized and acts in the form of weakness, so too in this way does it have an effect on the sphere of the law and its works, not simply by negating or annihilating them, but by de-activating them, rendering them inoperative, no-longer-at-work [*non-piu-in-opera*]. This is the meaning of the verb *katargeo:* just as, in *nomos* [law], the power of the promise was transposed onto work and mandatory precepts, *so does*

> *the messianic now render these works inoperative; it gives potentiality back to them in the form of inoperativity and ineffectiveness.* The messianic is not the destruction but the deactivation of the law, rendering the law inexecutable. (TR, 97–98; my emphasis)

Echoing Agamben's, here is Badiou's version of this enabling paradoxical paradigm that renders the Law (and it vocational imperative) inoperative:

> [A]t the very moment in which he sets out to depose the law and elucidate its relation to unconscious avidity, Paul points out that "the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good [*he entole hagaia kai dikaia kai agathe*]" (Rom. 7.12). What is more, apparently overturning at a stroke all the foregoing dialectic, he asserts that "the law is spiritual [*ho nomos pneumatikos*]" (Rom. 7.14).
>
> Thus, it seems necessary to distinguish between a legalizing subjectivation [interpellation by the Law], which is a power of [subjective] death, and a law raised up by faith, which belongs to the spirit and to [subjective] life.
>
> Our task consists in thinking the apparent contradiction between two statements:
>
> 1. "Christ is the end of the law [*telos nomou Khristos*] (Rom. 10.40).
> 2. "Love is the fulfillment of the law [*pleroma nomou he agape*] (Rom. 13. 10).
>
> Under the condition of faith, *of a declared conviction* [incumbent on the event], love names a nonliteral law, one that gives to the faithful subject his consistence, and effectuates the postevental truth in the world. (SP, 87; my emphasis)

As in the case of Agamben's reading of Paul's vocation, the binary logic of the Law in Badiou's becomes enablingly inoperative, or, to use an earlier poststructuralist vocabulary, is put under erasure (*sous rature*). With the evental call, the interpellated subject—the hitherto subjected subject under the aegis of the Law—becomes an unsubjected subjectivity; the binary logic (Friend/enemy; Us/them) becomes love; History becomes historicity in all its transience—and novelty—and rendered *always already* potential (a "means without end," in the terms Agamben uses to undermine the authority of the logic of vocation[45]); and the *Telos* becomes *kairos:* the "time of the now" or, in my terms, of the human "occasion."

To use the inaugural language of poststructuralism, one might say that Agamben and Badiou reverse the principle of principles of the ontotheological tradition—that Identity (the ontotheological Law) is the condition for the possibility of difference—so that difference now assumes priority (in both senses of the word) over identity. Finiteness, transient temporality, nothingness, difference, the superfluous, the profane, i.e., *singularity* (as opposed to Identity: the Law, the One, the All, the Relevant, the Sacred) becomes the *universal,* and identity, insofar as it functions to mobilize individuals into privileged integrated communitarian groupings (those who belong—Jews or Gentiles, for example—to an *ethnos,* a territory, a race, a class, and so on against those who don't) becomes difference in the sense of an inclusive/exclusive identitarian biopolitical configuration. Early in *Saint Paul,* Badiou observes that the event's breaking with the identitarian Law of capitalist modernity (that discursive regime which determines what counts and what does not), precipitates the question: "What are the conditions for a *universal singularity?*" And it is Paul, "our contemporary" (SP, 1), who comes immediately to his to mind, "for this is precisely his question":

> What does Paul want? Probably to drag the Good News (the Gospels) out from the rigid enclosure within which its restriction to the Jewish community would confine it. *But equally, never to let it be determined by the available generalities,* be they statist [*étatiques*] or ideological. Statist generality belongs to Roman legalism, and to Roman citizenship in particular, to its conditions and the rights associated with it. Although himself a Roman citizen, . . . *Paul will never allow any legal categories to identify the Christian subject. Slaves, women, people of every profession and nationality will therefore be admitted without restriction or privilege.* As for ideological generality, it is obviously represented by the philosophical and moral discourse of the Greeks. Paul will establish a resolute distance to this discourse, which is for him the counterpoise to a conservative vision of Jewish law. *Ultimately, it is a case of mobilizing a universal singularity both against the prevailing abstractions (legal then, economic now), and against communitarian or particularist protest.* (SP, 13–14; my emphasis)[46]

Despite his (*questionable*) critique of Badiou on precisely this point (TR, 51–52), Agamben, I suggest, similarly inverts the ontotheological binary that privileges Identity over difference—and renders its logic of belonging (majority/minority) inoperative. Like the Law of the ontotheological tradition, "the [universal] Law [of the Jews]," he writes, following Paul, "operates primarily in instituting divisions and separations" (TR, 47) ("Sacred" and

profane," "Jews" and "non-Jews," and so on). Paul, he shows, renders this division inoperative by way of dividing the old repressive divisions of the Law, thus "forc[ing] us to think about the question of the universal and particular in a completely new [emancipatory] way, not only in logic, but also in ontology and politics" (TR, 51). More specifically, this division of the Law's divisions (Agamben call it "the cut of Apelle") produces a paradoxical "remnant": the "non-non-Jew" (TR, 51)—a universal singularity—that turns the traditional notion of the remnant (as the exclusive diasporic "elect") and its calling (the recuperation or "ingathering" of the disintegrated Whole) into its opposite. Applying this Pauline notion to the contemporary occasion, Agamben writes:

> If I were to mark out a legacy in Paul's letters that was immediately traceable, I believe that the concept of the remnant would have to play a part. More specifically, it allows for a new perspective that dislodges our antiquated notions of a people and a democracy, however impossible it may be to completely renounce them. *The people is neither the all nor the part, neither the majority not the minority. Instead, it is that which can never coincide with itself, as all or as part,* that which infinitely remains or resists in each division and, with all due respect to those who govern us, *never allows us to be reduced to a majority or a minority.* This remnant is the figure, or the substantiality assumed by a people in a decisive moment, and as such is the only real political subject. (TR, 57)[47]

From this rendering inoperative of the polyvalent ontotheological logic—of the All and the part—to the "coming community" that Agamben, attuned to the contemporary occasion as a limit situation (or event), envisions as the "inessential commonality" (CC, 17.8) of "whatever (Qualunque) being" (CC, 1.10) is but a small step.[48] The de-activation of this logic of belonging, that is, points to a "whatever" community that, despite appearances, is, paradoxically, characterized not by the indifference of entities under the aegis of an ontotheological Totality, but to the radical singularity of belonging that is ontologically prior to the Totality that commands "belonging to"—:

> The Whatever in question here relates to singularity not in its indifference with respect to a common property (to a concept, for example: being red, being French, being Muslim), but only in its being *such as it is.* Singularity is thus freed from the false dilemma that obliged knowledge to choose between the ineffability of the individual and the intelligibility of the universal. The intelligible, according to a beautiful expression of Levi

> ben Gershon (Gersonides) is neither a universal nor an individual in a series, but rather "singularity insofar as it is whatever singularity." In this conception, *such-and-such being is reclaimed from its having this or that property, which identifies it as belonging to this or that set, to this or that class (reds, the French, the Muslims* [my emphasis])—and it is reclaimed not for another class nor for the simple generic absence of any belonging, but for its being-*such,* for belonging itself. Thus being-*such,* which remains constantly hidden in the condition of belonging ("there is an *x such that* it belongs to *y*") and which is in no way a real predicate, comes to light itself: The singularity exposed as such is whatever you *want,* that is, lovable. (CC, 1–2)[49]

V

Much more could be said, of course, about the post-poststructuralist theoretical perspective on temporality I have chosen to represent by way of the examples of Giorgio Agamben's and Alain Badiou's provocative meditations on the "anti-law" (Judaism) and "anti-philosophy" (Greco-Romanism) of Paul's epistles. But what I have said about their revolutionary reading of Paul's version of the calling (and the paradoxical vocation that is its absolute imperative) has been enough to indicate what is urgently at stake concerning the question of the secular or, more specifically, concerning my interrogation of the contemporary worldly critics who, taking Said too literally, have represented poststructuralist theory as unworldly, i.e., not secular or "postsecular." What Agamben's and Badiou's reconstellation of Paul's epistles into the context of the question of the secular discloses, on the contrary, is a disabling lack—the consequence of indifference or blindness of insight or a shrinking back from—in the very idea of the worldly or secular they routinely espouse against these "postsecular" thinkers.[50]

In committing themselves to humanistic secularism without (adequately) interrogating its genealogy, these so called worldly critics have unwittingly obfuscated, if not denied the historical reality that the secularism of the Western humanist tradition has by and large been, in Said's own words, "a natural supernaturalism,"[51] or, more tellingly, a *political theology* that, in the phase of its achievement of hegemony called modernity, has become one with the life-damaging and culture destroying global operations of the Western "democratic" nation-state. Giorgio Agamben, no doubt with Carl Schmitt's *Political Theology* in mind, puts this decisive paradoxical momentum in general terms in a recent book significantly entitled *Profanations:*

> [W]e must distinguish between secularization and profanation. Secularization is a form of repression. It leaves intact the forces it deals with by simply moving them from one place to another. Thus the political secularization of theological concepts (the transcendence of God, as a paradigm of sovereign power) does nothing but displace the heavenly monarchy onto an earthly monarch, leaving its power intact.[52]

This recent genealogical critique of secularism is also, and more specifically, articulated by Judith Butler in a chapter of *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (2009)[53] that demonstrates with great force the barely remarked complicity of contemporary secular Western governments (especially in the wake of 9/11) with official Christianity's discrimination against Islam (epitomized by Pope Benedict XVI's tacit but nevertheless egregiously arrogant denunciation of Islam and the *Qur'an* as "'evil and inhuman'").[54] Her evidence is drawn not only from the Netherlands' and France's rationale for discriminating against its Islamic residents or closing its borders to Islamic refugees: "modernity" (as opposed to Islamic "premodernity") in the former, and "*laïcité*" [secularism], which is consciously "defined [by the state] precisely over and against the intrusion of Church authorities into matters of the state (FW, 123), in the latter. It is also and more broadly, but tellingly *vis-à-vis* who counts as grievable life, drawn from the United States in the context of the "war on [Islamic] terror." Following her pointed reference to the neoconservative American policy "expert" Samuel P. Huntington's identification of U.S. democracy with a secular modernity that expresses "the values of a Judeo-Christian tradition," a view that suggests all other religious traditions fall outside the trajectory of modernization [secularization] that constitutes civilization and its "missionary claim to the future," she writes:

> If the Islamic populations destroyed in recent and current wars are considered less than human, or "outside" the cultural conditions for the emergence of the human, then they belong either to a time of cultural infancy or a time that is outside time as we know it. In both cases, they are regarded as not yet having arrived at the idea of the rational human. It follows from such a viewpoint that the destruction of such populations, their infrastructures, their housing, and their religious and community institutions, constitutes the destruction of what threatens the human, but not of the human itself. It is also precisely this particular conceit of a progressive history that positions "the West" as articulating the paradigmatic principles of the human—of the humans who are worth valuing, whose lives are worth

> safeguarding, whose lives are precarious, and, whose when lost, are worth public grieving. (FW, 125)[55]

More important than obfuscating the depredations of the Western secular humanist tradition, however, this anti-poststructuralist "worldly" criticism has also, and more important, inadvertently blocked the way to a more radical secularity, which, following Badiou's and especially Agamben's insistent interrogation of the binary logic of the ontotheological tradition at large, I have insinuated into my text by the name of "the profane" (from the Latin *pro:* "outside" and *fanum* "temple"]. I mean that demonization of life in the midst of transience—and its "common usage"[56]—as "fallen," dispersed," "impure," "superfluous," the absolute other of the "sacred" and thus, in the last analysis, of no account or, in Butler's terms, not "precarious" and "grievable," that had its origins before the institutionalization of Christianity in Rome. As Agamben puts this provocative estranging thought, no doubt with Walter Benjamin's messianic communism in mind, in the paragraph following his critique of secularism quoted above:

> Profanation, however, neutralizes what it profanes. Once profaned, that which was unavailable and separate loses its aura and is returned to use. Both [secularization and profanation] are political operations; the first guarantees the exercise of power by carrying it back to a sacred model; the second deactivates the [separating binarist] apparatuses of power and returns to common use the spaces that power had seized. (P, 77)

What precisely, then, is the *lack* in the secularism that the worldly critics of the poststructuralists tacitly espouse against their "postsecularism" and that the post-poststructuralists I have invoked, in their faithfulness to what I have called the "event of language," inexorably point to and call for thinking? The foregoing suggests that it is the lack of the lack—of absence itself—at its origin. Agamben might call this lack, after Benjamin, "the real state of exception" (understood as the exception to the rule or "Sovereign Law") of the onto-theo-logical tradition that renders its divisive authority inoperable. But I will, in order to recall my beginning, invoke its earlier provenance: the nothingness (*das Nichts*) or the temporality that, according to Heidegger, is ontologically prior to Being, but irrevocably belongs to it: the radical transience of time—its not-at-homeliness—into which mortal human beings are thrown (*geworfen*) and which, in thus being in the midst (*inter esse*), is the inescapable (Agamben calls it the "irreparable") human condition. More

specifically, it is the time of the human occasion, the always already time, without *Arché* or *Telos* or, in Said's (and Arendt's) term, the time of "beginnings,"[57] that is not only the curse but also the blessing of humanity insofar as it is precisely this terrible, dread (*Angst*)-provoking transience—this irreversible passing away of the various phenomena of being—that gives them their precious value. It is, to highlight the ethical possibility of this human occasion, the ontologically exilic—untimely—time that instigates interest or care-fulness or, to risk a word that has become off limits to "advanced" discourse, generates love: that which makes the radically differential phenomena of being always already make a difference.

As we have seen, the modern Western secular/humanist, i.e., anthropological tradition, like its previous avatars, the theo-logical and onto-logical, though far more invisibly thanks to its internalization and naturalization of the sovereign power of the sacred, confronts the dread instigated by the transience of time—the dread that has no-thing for its object—by objectifying or spatializing the latter: by imposing a beginning/middle/end structure, dialectical or otherwise, on time's formless (beginningless and endless) errancy. In thus imposing a privileged End on the errant dynamics of temporality, it supernaturalizes the natural (*physis*)—and theologizes the political—mediates the immediate human condition, and renders the human project a matter of vocation: a calling that postpones the interest or care or love—and the tragic joy—of being in the midst—in the name of slavish obedience to a sacred future goal: the subjection of the subject to a (Sacred) Subject. Modern secularism, in short, as Heidegger observed of Kant, has always "shrank back" from the primordial void in its encounter with temporal being.[58]

In contrast, the radical secularism I am attempting to infer from Said's "worldliness"—one that would be adequate to the postmodern occasion—calls for the courage to be *in the midst* of the dread-provoking Nothingness of temporality. I mean a comportment that precipitates a profound estrangement of Being, a *désoeuvrement* or "sea change," to use a phrase from Shakespeare especially attractive to Hannah Arendt,[59] that transforms the ordinary world—the world structured in domination that has been the legacy of the Law—into something rich and strange and the anxiety in the face of its nothingness into that which I referred to earlier as tragic joy. To invoke Agamben's invocation of Benjamin's version of the Hassidic parable about the coming of the kingdom of the "messiah": "Everything will be as it is now, just a little bit different" (CC, 52.3). The imperial "Sovereign Law" of the older secularism (like its earlier avatars, despite its claims to the contrary), as we have seen, objectifies or spatializes time, that is, imposes a narrative *structure* on the errancy of temporality. In so doing, it privileges Arrival

over exploration, the Sedentary over the nomadic, the (enclosed) Homeland (Nation) over the commons, i.e., the Answer over the question, thus reducing free choice to an obligatory Vocation: obedience to a sacred command. In short, it effectively annuls *possibility.* The courage to be in the midst, on the other hand, enables the possibility—what Agamben, to underscore its positive force, calls "potentiality" as such or "means without end"—that the old secularism annuls: precisely that radical and unending creative freedom of inquiry, the explorative impulse, the nomadic, and commonality; in sum, *the question* that classical Western secularism forecloses in the name of vocation to the sacred cause.

From this in-between—this ek-sistant in-sistent—situation, time becomes untimely: the "time of the now" (*ho nyn kairos*)—the always potential instant. And the phenomena of this (profane) world, including human beings, which, under the aegis of the Law had hitherto been separated and heirarchized (compelled into categories of inclusion and exclusion, of belonging and not-belonging, of owning and not owning, of counting and not counting, of the grievable and not grievable) according to the dictates of the Sacred and Sovereign End, are returned to "common usage." The divisions or binaries produced by the ontotheological Law—Identity and difference, One and many, Us and them, Friend and enemy, the People and the multitude, and so on—i.e., the sacred and the profane—remain, but they have been rendered inoperative by humanity's retrieval of the primordial time of the now from the life-damaging dialectical and vocational time of the End. The secular of the modern humanist tradition becomes indeed "postsecular." But this postsecularity—and, to anticipate, like the post-human—is to be understood, not in the sense of its binary opposite, religion, but in the sense of its having been made inoperative by the rejection of the *Telos* and the acknowledgement of the nothing: as a "*non-secular secularity.*"

VI

Seen in the estranging light shed by acknowledging temporality as the time of the now, the received representation of Edward Said's life-long, militant commitment to secular humanism also undergoes a change of terrain, in which, nevertheless, everything remains the same. In that light, we cannot help but be struck by the irony that, despite his reservations about the poststructuralists' "anti-humanism"—and especially his secular ephebes' rejection of poststructuralist theory *tout court*[60]—Said, too, long before Agamben and Badiou, was committed precisely to the task of rendering the divisive

onto-epistemological and political imperatives of classical Western secular humanism inoperative by affirming the time of the now against the (dialectical) teleological time of a naturalized theology. I mean, above all, the binary logic that, in establishing the categories of inclusion and exclusion, belonging and not belonging, counting and not counting, privileges Western humanity (and its concept of the nation-state) over other peoples, races, and cultures (Us and them) in the name of universal Man. I will proffer an amplified justification of this assertion in the final chapter of this book where I take up the relationship between Edward Said and Hannah Arendt directly. Here it will suffice to refer to two decisive synecdochical gestures in Said's work pertaining to the relay between the onto-epistemological (the idea of the human) and the political (the idea of the human community) to suggest at least the viability of this thesis.

The first is articulated in a passage I take to be at the heart of Said's posthumously published *Humanism and Democratic Criticism,* in which, from the vantage point of exile, of being simultaneously inside and outside a place, to which he elsewhere refers as "the in-between," i.e., the time of the now, he renders the classical definition of secular humanism inoperative:

> The task of the humanist is not just to occupy a position or place, nor simply to belong somewhere, but rather 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. In this connection, it is invigorating to recall . . . 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, Deutscher himself—were in, and at the same time renounced, their tradition, preserving their original tie by submitting it to the corrosive questioning that took them well beyond it, sometimes banishing them from community in the process. Not many of us can or would want to aspire to such a dialectically fraught, so sensitively located a class of individuals, but it is illuminating to see in such a destiny the crystallized role of the American humanist, *the non-humanist humanist as it were.*[61]

The second, more visible, gesture is imbedded in the decisive concluding chapter of *Culture and Imperialism,* where Said, following Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, Paul Virilio, and, not incidentally, recalling Hannah Arendt's singling out of the "refugee" as the central figure of the modern age,[62] and anticipating Agamben, Badiou, Žižek, and Rancière, meditates poignantly on the massive destabilization of the planet's demographics precipitated by

the ravages of the imperialist era. Though this second passage chronologically precedes the first, it nevertheless constitutes a tacit extension of the former's disabling of the classical (identitarian and Eurocentric) idea of the human enacted in the tellingly corrected phrase "the nonhumanist humanist" to include the idea of the coming human community. I quote at length to underscore the remarkable, yet hitherto unremarked, affiliation between this Said, Hannah Arendt, and the post-poststructuralists invoked in this chapter, whom she influenced. The passage begins not only by underscoring the epochal event that precipitated the irreversible momentum bearing witness to the implosion of the nation-state, the destabilization of territorial borders, and the dismantling of the traditional categories of inclusion and exclusion, but also, as Said's incantatory rhetorical reference to the "in between" testifies, to the indissolubly related break in the teleological concept of time that informed the old nation-state/imperial dispensation and its naturalized supernatural vocation and, implicitly, the precipitation of the radically secular or profane "time of the now":

> [S]urely it is one of the unhappiest characteristics of the age to have produced more refugees, migrants, displaced persons, and exiles than ever before in history, most of them an accompaniment to and, ironically enough, as afterthoughts of great post-colonial and imperial conflicts. As the struggle for independence produced new states and new boundaries, it also paradoxically produced homeless wanderers, nomads, and vagrants, unassimilated to the emerging structures of institutional power, rejected by the established order for their intransigence and obdurate rebelliousness. *And insofar as these people exist between the old and the new, between the old empire and the new state, their condition articulates the tensions, irresolution, and contradictions in the overlapping territories shown on the cultural map of imperialism*. (CI, 332; my emphasis)

After establishing this in-between place and time as the radically new spatio-temporal dispensation, Said goes on to articulate the paradoxical potential this damaged and estranged secularized world enables not only for resistance but also, and more important, for envisioning the coming community.

> There is a great difference, however, between the optimistic mobility, the intellectual liveliness, and "the logic of daring" described by the various theoreticians on whose work I have drawn [above all, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari and Paul Virilio], and the massive dislocations, waste,

> misery, and horrors endured in our century's migrations and mutilated lives. Yet it is no exaggeration to say that liberation as an intellectual mission, born in the resistance and opposition to the confinements and ravages of imperialism, *has now shifted from the settled, established, and domesticated dynamics of culture to its unhoused, decentered, and exilic energies,* energies whose incarnation today is the migrant, and whose consciousness *is that of the intellectual and artist in exile, the political figure between domains, between forms, between homes, and between languages.* From this perspective then all things are indeed counter, original, spare, strange. From this perspective also, one can see the "complete consort dancing together" contrapuntally. (CI, 332; emphasis added)

Resistance, according to Said, entails the refusal of the call of the naturalized supernatural *Telos* by those who don't count in the world structured in dominance. Quoting Theodor Adorno in what immediately follows, he asserts: "'The past life of émigrés is, as we know, annulled,' says Adorno, in *Minima Moralia,* subtitled *Reflections from a Damaged Life*. . . . Why? 'Because anything that is reified, cannot be counted and measured, ceases to exist' or, as he says later, is condemned to mere 'background.'" The disabling aspects of this damaged marginalized life are acutely patent. But, Said goes on, in a way that anticipates Agamben's rendering of the calling inoperative, "There is . . . not just the negative advantage of refuge in the emigre's eccentricity; there is also the positive benefit of challenging the system, describing it in a language unavailable to those it has already subdued: 'In an intellectual hierarchy which constantly makes everyone answerable, unanswerability alone can call the hierarchy directly by it name'" (CI, 333).

But this rendering inoperative of the vocational imperatives of the naturalized sacred *Telos* enabled by the exilic consciousness—being apart of and apart from the "world"—is, like Agamben's, not limited to the negative. As in the case of the humanist who becomes paradoxically "a non-humanist humanist" in Said's discourse, the coming community that the in-between perspective enables becomes the "'complete consort dancing together' contrapuntally." I will try to unpack the political meaning of this resonant yet highly enigmatic locution from the domain of music in the last section of the final chapter of this book. Here, it will suffice to offer a brief orienting summary tethered to the question of the secular. Under the aegis of the logic of a naturalized supernaturalism—a political theology—the polity of the classical Western humanistic tradition is characterized essentially by the Friend/enemy binary—a Hobbesian war of all against all, in which those who don't count in the eyes of those who determine what counts don't stand a chance.

The courage to be in the irreparable transience of time—which is to say the time of the now—on the other hand, renders the discreetly repressive imperatives of this traditional secular humanistic polity inoperative. The human community formed according to the logic of the nation-state metamorphoses into a playful polyphonic *polis*—a worldly polity engendered by the very damage caused by the vocational imperative of the Friend/enemy (bio)logic of "belonging to" (a nation, a race, a gender, a class, etc.)—in which the *profane antagonists relate in belongingness as such:* not in the tonal harmony envisioned by the classical humanist tradition, but in the "dissonance," as it were, of a non-humanist humanism[63]: a never-ending and therefore always productive loving strife in which the question is ontologically prior to the cold-blooded sovereign answer. In short, the politics of the coming community Said envisages from within the exilic time of the now becomes a radically secular, non-utopian contrapuntal politics, the measure of which is the (generous) measure of the human occasion, or, in the terms Agamben derives from Arendt via Heidegger, of "potentiality" or, what is the same thing, "means without end." The Jew, for example, remains a Jew and the Palestinian remains a Palestinian in this dissonant contrapuntal paradigm. But the prior terms, hitherto fraught with nationalist hate, become inoperative: enmity becomes intimacy. This rendering of the old dispensation's logic inoperative is, in fact, enacted by the resonant caesura that separates "the complete consort dancing together"—the metonym standing for the Christian humanist city Said appropriates from T. S. Eliot's great poem *Four Quartets*—and the modifying adverb, "contrapuntally." In an uncannily similar way, as I will show at length in the last chapter, Giorgio Agamben, following the directives Hannah Arendt provided in her wartime essay, "We Refugees," in referring to the stateless people precipitated by the implosion of the nation-state during World War II as "the vanguard of their people"[64] will, like Said, not only posit the stateless person—precisely his/her "superfluity" or "profanity" in the biopolitical value system of the nation-state—as the defining political figure of the contemporary occasion, but also as the paradoxical figure of resistance and of the "coming [profane] community" (MWE, 14.5–15.6).

In sum, the reconstellation of Edward Said's reflections on the exilic consciousness, which is to say, the perspective that emerges from the courage to be in the uncanny domain of transience—the always in-between (apart from and a part of the world)—into what I have been calling the post-post-structuralist context epitomized by Giorgio Agamben and Alain Badiou—and proleptically intuited by Hannah Arendt—instigates a remarkable sea change in his secular humanism or, rather, the secular humanism attributed

to him by those who would protect his worldly discourse from contamination by poststructuralist theory or, as one of them puts it, "the Heideggerian turn."[65] All its life-damaging imperatives are rendered inoperative. The naturalized supernatural (sacred) time of classical Western humanism becomes the radically profane time of the now; self-identical Man becomes singular human beings; the human vocation demanded by the *Telos* becomes faith or, rather, conviction (subjectivation without self-subjection); the slavish morality of obedience to a higher cause becomes fidelity to potentiality as such; the oppressive inclusive/exclusive city under the aegis of the anthropological nation-state becomes a differential *polis* characterized by creative play rather than enmity to the death; and the biopolitics of the exceptionalist state of exception becomes the polity of plurality.[66] This, I submit, devoid of the language of messianism, is essentially what Said meant by "worldliness."

In thus relocating Said's reflections on the secular into the recent discursive terrain established by Giorgio Agamben's and Alain Badiou's engagement with the time of the now via Walter Benjamin and Hannah Arendt, I want to make it clear, my intention has not been to claim that these post-poststructuralists have rendered his reflections on the secular anachronistic. On the contrary. Despite the insights concerning the question of the secular gained by Agamben and Badiou by invoking the profane messianism of Benjamin, one wonders whether, in the last analysis, they entirely compensate for the negative implications that accrue to this new messianism from its massive appeal to the language of (Western) religion at such a late date in the history of the West. Doesn't the very use of this religious language even to render it inoperative nevertheless paradoxically reaffirm its authority? Furthermore, and in a related way, the intellectual horizons of Agamben and Badiou remain, like their predecessor, Foucault, remarkably Eurocentric. My purpose, rather, has been to suggest that those Saidian sympathizers who would disaffiliate him from this recent theoretico-political initiative in an effort to immunize his "worldliness" from infection by the "postsecular" virus, are, in fact, not only misreading this "postsecular" initiative but also are inadvertently bent on fossilizing Said's living force. In reconstellating Said's abiding concern with the question of the secular into the post-poststructuralist orbit we not only come to a richer sense of the practitioners of the latter; we also come to know what we have known about Said's secular humanist vision for the first time. We are compelled to acknowledge him as always already our exilic—ek-sistent in-sistent contemporary.

Let me put this last in another, perhaps more important, way. The question of the secular has been a fundamental presence in the West ever since the theoretical revolution precipitated by the self-de-struction of the impe-

rial ontotheological tradition at the end of its last modern (anthropological) phase. Despite its spectral presence, however—and a desperate but increasingly vocal recuperative momentum inaugurated by a politically reactionary evangelical Christianity—this question of the secular has, strangely, remained inadequately thought. This is probably because the meaning of the secular has either seemed to most contemporary Western intellectuals to be, like the *Seinsfrage,* self-evident or, perhaps, easier to write about abstractly than to practice existentially. Whatever the reasons for its marginality, the reconstellation of Edward Said's late-phase reaffirmation of the viability of humanist secularism into the post-poststructuralist context (anticipated by Hannah Arendt), I suggest, will underscore the urgency of the question in the interregnum we fragilely inhabit, and, in rendering this time a threshold moment, spur the thinking of the coming community that the self-destruction—fulfillment and demise—of the Western *anthropologos* and its (democratic/capitalist) nation-state system have disclosed.

CHAPTER 4

The Exodus Story and the Zionist March

There is no Israel without the conquest of Canaan and the expulsion or inferior status of Canaanites—then as now.

—Edward Said, in "Exchange: Michael Walzer and Edward Said," *Grand Street,* 5:40 (1986)

On Gibeon's turrets stand thou still, O sun!
Look down, thou moon, on dreary Ajalon!
Fix'd in high heaven the awful splendors stood,
And flam'd tremendous on the field of blood;
From dread orb ensanguin'd streams aspire,
The skies all mantling in fierce waving fire;
Amaz'd, Canaan's realms the pomp descried;
The world grew pale; the heat of nations died . . .
A sudden blaze gleam'd round the dusty gloom
And plung'd ten thousand warriors to the tomb.
For now, o'er all the fight, the heathens yield;
And Israel triumphs round the dreadful field.
High in the van, sublime great Joshua rode,
Wing'd the dire flight and swell'd the tide of blood . . .
Through the long day, Canaan's widows stood,
And look'd, all anxious, toward the plain of blood.

—Timothy Dwight, *The Conquest of Canaan*, dedicated to George Washington, Commander in chief of the American Armies, the Saviour of his Country, the Supporter of Freedom, and the Benefactor of Mankind. Quoted in Gabriel Piterberg, *The Returns of Zionism: Myths, Politics, and Scholarship in Israel.*

> It seemed to Tyrone Slothrop that there might be a route back—maybe that anarchist he met in Zurich was right, maybe for a little while all the fences are down, one road as good as another, the whole space of the Zone cleared, depolarized, and somewhere inside the waste of it a simple set of coordinates from which to proceed, without elect, without preterite, without even nationality to fuck it up.
>
> —Thomas Pynchon, *Gravity's Rainbow*

I

In articulating the ideological origins of the early European Zionists' justification of its claims on and colonization of Palestine in *The Question of Palestine,* Edward W. Said overdetermines the European, particularly British, imperial model, which had its point of departure in the *mission civilisatrice,* "built on notions about the inequality of men, races, and civilizations, an inequality allowing the most extreme forms of self-aggrandizing projections, and most extreme forms of punitive discipline toward the unfortunate natives whose existence, paradoxically, was denied."[1] To this end, he invokes the example of Chaim Weizmann's letter of May 30, 1918, written to Arthur James Balfour prior to the latter's "Declaration" of November 2, 1917 in which he explains with a "great sense of responsibility" the "problems which confront the Zionist Commission" in Palestine. About this unctuous, yet highly strategic, letter of one of the most prominent European Jewish pioneers of Zionism, Said, following the directives of *Orientalism* (1977), writes:

> Weizmann's candor is instructive. His principal rhetorical device is to identify himself with Balfour as a European who knows the difference between the Oriental and the Occidental mind. From this distinction all sorts of conclusions follow. Arabs are Oriental, therefore less human and valuable than Europeans and Zionists; they are treacherous, unregenerate, etc. Most of all, they do not deserve to own a country, even if their numerical advantage seems otherwise to entitle them to it. . . . Weizmann essentially recapitulates John Stuart Mill's [imperialist] arguments on representative government, by which the Indians were denied the right to rule themselves because they were centuries "behind" the English. Thus the total identification of Zionism with the most reprehensible aspects of European white cultural and racial hegemony is easily made by Weizmann, as is the more useful identification of himself with the expert knowledge of the Orient usually reserved for Orientalists, Eastern experts, Arab Bureau "hands," and the like. The Zionist fuses with the White European against the col-

> ored Oriental, whose principal political claim seems only to be quantitative (his brute numbers) and otherwise lacking in quality; and the Zionist also—because he "understands the Eastern mind from within"—represents the Arab, speaks for him, explains him to the European. Both Zionist and European share in common the ideals of fair play, civilization, and progress, none of which the Oriental could understand. As Weizmann explains it, the conflict in Palestine is a struggle to wrest control of land from natives; but it is a struggle dignified by an idea, and the idea was everything.
>
> Secondly, Zionism's conflict with the Arabs in Palestine and elsewhere in the region was seen as extending, perpetuating, even enhancing (to the advantage of the West) the age-old conflict between the West and the Orient, whose main surrogate was Islam. This was not only a colonial matter, but a civilizational one as well. (QP, 28–29)[2]

But Said's genealogy of the Zionists' "justificatory regime" is not quite as simple as that. Though related to these fundamental ideological aspects of the European imperial project, there is also the matter of the Zionists' representation of the land of Palestine as *terra nullius.* This was the "international law," established by the nation-states of the West, stating that those who lived on land they did not cultivate (work) and settle were legally nonbeings (savages, barbarians). The origins of this "law" extend as far back as the origins of Western civilization, as early as the time when the West, particularly Rome, put its sedentary existence (agriculture/settlement/civilization) in a hierarchical binary opposition to the (indolent) nomadic lives of unsettled tribes or *sylvestris:* (Latin: forest dwellers/savages).[3] Not accidentally, this "international law" became an issue of global import between the fifteenth and the seventeenth centuries, the period that came to be represented euphemistically in the West as the "age of exploration" or, more particularly, of the "discovery," "occupation," "settling," and "planting" of "America" or "the New World wilderness," the age that more recently has come to be identified with the origins of modern colonialism.[4]

In *Colonial Encounters,* Peter Hulme locates the duplicitous source of the justificatory strategies used by Europeans of the age of exploration to expropriate the lands of the indigenous peoples in the latter's "mobility," their unwillingness or inability, because of their brutish instincts, to cultivate and settle the "wilderness" they "roamed." Drawing on Francis Jennings's *The Invasion of America,* among others, Hulme writes:

> In 1612 the Jesuit missionary Pierre Biard, describing Canadian Amerindians, wrote:

> Thus four thousand Indians at most roam through, rather than occupy, the vast stretches of inland territory and sea-shore. For they are a nomadic people, living in the forests and scattered over wide spaces as is natural for those who live by hunting and fishing only. . . .

roam rather than occupy being a translation of Biard's "*non tenetur, sed percurruntur*." In 1625 Samuel Purchas wrote of the Virginian Algonquian:

> so bad people, having little of Humanitie but shape, ignorant of Civilitie, of Arts, of Religion; more brutish then the beast they hunt, more wild and unmanly than that unmanned wild Countrey which they range rather than inhabite.

And in 1629 in New England John Winthrop assimilated Purchas's point to the legal argument of *vacuum domicilium* by which the Indians had "natural" but not "civil" right over the land because they had not "subdued" it.[5]

In thus shifting the focus of the question of the origins of the idea of *terra nullius* from the Old World to the New, from Europe to colonial ("settler") America, I want to emphasize that, as Hulme's reference to John Winthrop suggests, this "legal" rationale for the expropriation and occupation of the lands of the natives are simultaneous with the foundation of the "exceptionalist" American national identity. The English Calvinist Puritans, having come to represent their mother country as "the Old World"—a fallen Christian polity that had abandoned the "Word"—the Logos—of God and thus become tyrannical and degenerate (a land of "fleshpots" as the prefigurative Old Testament has it)—interpreted their exodus from Europe to America not simply as an escape from bondage into liberty, but also as their sacred "calling" (by God) to undertake His "errand in the wilderness"[6] to build His "city upon a hill,"[7] as the fulfillment of God's providential design announced in the Old Testament, particularly in the story of the Exodus from Egypt into the wilderness that was also the Promised Land of Canaan. In this story of "deliverance" (from oppression), which also depended on the "work ethic" that distinguished them from the indolent natives, the Puritans, as Hulme's reference to Winthrop also suggests, followed the directives of the Israelites' interpretation of the land of Canaan as *terra nullius* and the Canaanites as non-beings. They interpreted the New World "wilderness" as *vacuum domicilium* (empty of inhabitants and therefore appropriatable) and the Native Americans as nonhumans in human bodies, since they "roamed" on but

did not cultivate ("work") the land. This providentially ordained narrative, so fundamental to the discourse of the American Puritans, did not die in the aftermath of the demise of the Puritan theocracy. It—and its vocational imperatives—became secularized in the pervasive exceptionalist myth of the frontier epitomized by the American historian Frederick Jackson Turner: the American pioneer (and his settlements), Manifest Destiny, and Westward Expansion—all dedicated to fulfillment of the "American Calling."[8]

In addressing "the question of Palestine" in his numerous writings on this crucial topic, Said refers again and again to the Zionists' representation of Palestine as *terra nullius,* most often in relation to European imperialism. I quote several passages to suggest how fundamental this insight into Zionist ideology was to his critique:

> [I]n order to mitigate the presence of large numbers of natives on a desired land, the Zionists convinced themselves that these natives did not exist, then made it possible for them to exist only in the most rarified forms. (QP, 19)

> [George] Eliot's account of Zionism in *Daniel Deronda* was intended as a sort of assenting Gentile response to prevalent Jewish-Zionist currents. . . . On one important issue there was complete agreement between Gentile and Jewish versions of Zionism: their view of the Holy Land as essentially empty of inhabitants, not because there were no inhabitants . . . but because their status as sovereign and human inhabitants was systematically denied. (QP, 66)

> This doctrine [the "scientific" differentiation of races by Europeans in the nineteenth century] was reinforced in other ways, some of which had a direct bearing, I think, on Zionist practice and vision in Palestine. Among the supposed juridical distinctions between civilized and noncivilized peoples was an attitude toward land, almost a doxology about land, which noncivilized people supposedly lacked. A civilized man, it was believed, could cultivate the land because it meant something to him; on it, accordingly, he bred useful arts and crafts, he created, he accomplished, he built. For uncivilized people, land was either farmed badly (i.e., inefficiently by Western standards) or it was left to rot. From this string of ideas, by which whole native societies who lived on American, African, and Asian territories for centuries were suddenly denied their right to live on that land, came the great dispossessing movements of modern European colonialism, and with them all the schemes for redeeming the land, resettling the natives, civiliz-

> ing them, taming their savage customs, turning them into useful beings under European rule. (QP, 75–76)

> Imperialism was the theory, colonialism the practice of changing the uselessly unoccupied territories of the world into useful new versions of the European metropolitan society. Everything in those territories that suggested waste, disorder, uncounted resources, was to be converted into productivity, order, taxable, potentially developed wealth. You get rid of most of the offending human and animal blight—whether because it simply sprawls untidily all over the place or because it roams around unproductively and uncounted—and you confine the rest to reservations, compounds, native homelands, where you can count, tax, use them profitably, and you build a new society on the vacated space. (QP, 78)

> In short, all the constitutive energies of Zionism were premised on the excluded presence, that is, the functional absence of "native people" in Palestine; institutions were built deliberately shutting out natives. Laws were drafted when Israel came into being that made sure that natives would remain in their "nonplace," Jews in theirs, and so on. It is no wonder that today the one issue that electrifies Israel as a society is the problem of the Palestinians, whose negation is the most consistent thread running through Zionism. (QP, 82)

Said's stress on the European provenance of the Zionist representation of Palestine as *terra nullius,* particularly British and French imperialism of the nineteenth century, is, of course, justified. The Zionist initiative emerged out of the context produced by the British imperial presence in the Orient, particularly the Middle East, and the Balfour Declaration of 1917. But in the process of his genealogy of modern Zionism, especially when he is characterizing its ideological justification after the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 and the United States' assumption of a prominent presence in the Middle East as the tacit protector of Israel's sovereignty, a hitherto unnoticed change occurs in his emphasis.[9] At those points he alludes to this Zionist representation of Palestine and the native Palestinians in terms of the analogy between the early Zionist settlers of Palestine and the early American settlers of the American wilderness, that is to say, in terms of the metaphor of the American pioneer.

> What concerns me a great deal more is the strength of the process of diffusion whose main focus was the Zionist colonization of a Palestine, its

> success, its feats, its remarkable institutions; just as today the strength of Israeli information is its admiring self-regard and the celebration of its "pioneering" spirit, which Americans in particular have found it very easy to identify with. (QP, 21)

> It needs to be remarked . . . that Zionism, like the view of America as an empty land held by the Puritans, was a colonial vision unlike that of most other nineteenth-century powers, for whom the natives of outlying territories were included in the redemptive *mission civilisatrice.* (QP, 68)

> [F]or all its horror, even Deir Yassin [a Palestinian village whose inhabitants were exterminated by Zionists in pursuit of ethnic cleansing in the 1948 war] was one of many such massacres which began in the immediate post–World War I period and which produced conscious Zionist equivalents of American Indian-killers. (QP, 101)

II

This shift of emphasis from Europe to America in Said's writing on the genealogy of Zionism and its justifications becomes marked, I suggest, in his response to Michael Walzer's book *Exodus and Revolution,* published in 1985 not long after Israel's invasion of Lebanon. Walzer, a prestigious liberal (and anti-communist) Jewish-American political scientist, identifies the Old Testament story of Exodus—the departure of the Hebrews under Moses from Egypt into the "wilderness" of Canaan—as the archetypal paradigm of (Western) revolution and liberation:

> This is a book about an idea of great presence and power in Western political thought, the idea of a deliverance from suffering and oppression: this-worldly redemption, liberation, revolution. I have sought to describe the origins of that idea in the story of Israel's deliverance from Egypt and then to give a reading of Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy designed to explain the importance for generation after generation of religious and political radicals. The escape from bondage, the wilderness journey, the Sinai covenant, the promised land: all these loom large in the literature of revolution. Indeed, revolution has often been imagined as an enactment of the Exodus and the Exodus has often been imagined as a program for revolution.[10]

I will return to the provocative contradiction inhering in Walzer's repeated

use of the phrase "deliverance from," which implies the action of an external or transcendent power, to speak of the human or secular act of revolution and liberation from oppression. Here, I want to summarize briefly Said's contrapuntal response to Walzer's argument. For this Palestinian-American—or, to use a term that is more expressive of the exilic consciousness that enables his contrapuntal insight, this non-Palestinian Palestinian—Walzer's influential invocation of the Exodus story as the archetypal model of Western (liberal) revolution at large was, above all, a discursive justification of Israel's settler colonization and occupation of Palestine and its reduction of the Palestinian natives to non-being, its apotheosis of the covenantal (contractual) Western democratic tradition (and critique of Zionist fundamentalism), and *especially its English and American Puritan origins.*[11]

In Said's response—and the following exchange between him and Walzer—he notes that Walzer's celebration of the Old Testament story of Exodus as the founding text of the Western revolutionary tradition is not only intended to lend legitimacy to the present Israeli occupation of Palestine and its undeviating policy of purifying the land of its former Arab Palestinian inhabitants. He claims that Walzer's interpretation was also the appeal of a Jewish-American. In collaboration with the Zionist apologists of the Israeli state (like Albert Camus *vis-à-vis* the French colons of Algeria), that is, Walzer was identifying the unerring Zionist initiative in Palestine with the "linear" and "progressive" Anglo-American origins of the Western "revolutionary" tradition (as opposed to the regressive, i.e., eternally recurrent tradition of "mythic" societies). Indeed, in his opening remarks summarizing Walzer's thesis, Said writes:

> The essential lines of Walzer's argument are quickly rehearsed. Unlike narratives of recurrence and return, the Exodus is linear, Walzer says, and moves from bondage and oppression in Egypt, through the wanderings in Sinai, to the Promised Land. Moses is not an Odysseus who returns home, but a popular leader—albeit an outsider [Egyptian by birth]—of a people undergoing both the travails and novel triumphs of national liberation. What we have in Exodus, therefore, is the "original form of progressive history"—and, Walzer adds, while other slave revolts in antiquity established no really new or influential type of political activity, "it is possible to trace a continuous history from Exodus to the radical politics of our own time."[12]

In referring to instances of this "continuous" and "progressive" history emanating from the Exodus story, Said notes the prominence Walzer gives

to its Anglo-American moment: "Readers of his first book, *The Revolution of the Saints* [1965], will not be surprised to see some of the seventeenth-century Protestant radicals discussed there referred to again in *Exodus and Revolution*" (MW, 162). But Said refers to this example as only one of several Walzer invokes, such as "various American Black leaders of the civil rights movement and Latin American liberation theologians" (MW, 162). These instances are not random; they constitute a "constellation" of affiliated political ideologues which have two features in common: "they all draw upon *divine authority* for 'radical hope' *even as they stress 'this worldly endeavor,*'" and none of them is theoretically systematic or, in the literal sense, revolutionary. Rather, Walzer says, these traits express what he is himself committed to, "the Jewish account of deliverance and the political theory of liberation" (MW, 162). In other words, despite Walzer's assertion that this "continuous history" is secular, and that the "radical politics" accompanying it up to our time (including those of the modern Israeli state) are man-made, Said claims that all Walzer's talk about secularism is, in the end, intended to obfuscate the primary role that God—the *Theo-logos*—has played in producing the Zionist vocation and thus in *shaping* this Judeo-Western history. This political theology is signaled, as I have noted, in Walzer's inaugural remarks when he juxtaposes the "deliverance" or, more specifically, "Israel's deliverance from Egypt," and "revolution." This contradictory locution, which is informed by a teleological understanding of temporality, points to a secularism that is, in fact, a secularized transcendentalism, or, to invoke the telling phrase Said borrows from M. H. Abrams to indict the fraudulence of Silvestre de Sacy and Ernest Renan's secularism in *Orientalism,* a "naturalized supernaturalism,"[13] which, I would add, calls the Jewish "people" to postpone the time of the now in the name of the higher task of building a promised "Israel." It also points to a "progressive linearity" that is, insofar as Walzer reduces the singular plurity of historicity to a *story* (narrative), circular.

Said's critique of Walzer's version of the Exodus story, or more precisely, his disclosure that Walzer's location of the origin of the progressive Western concept of revolution in the Old Testament is finally a Zionist strategy of legitimizing the racist and colonialist, indeed, *apartheid* policies of the Israeli state in Palestine, emphasizes the operations of the *general teleological* model rather than the particularities of the *actual* model that subsumes the "progressive history" traced by Walzer to the Exodus story. By this last, to which I will return, I mean the divinely ordained or providential concept of history derived from the history, both Hebraic and Christian, of the interpretation of the events represented in the Old Testament—the interpretation that, even more fundamental to the European imperial tradition, has sustaining the

Zionist vision of the Promised land.[14] In exposing Walzer's history as one that has been written from the "end"—or as Said, echoing Walter Benjamin, puts it alternatively, "from the perspective of victory" (MW, 177)—this overdetermination of the general teleological model, which, following Althusser, might be labeled "the Western, democratic, capitalist problematic" that has been accommodated to Zionism,[15] enables Said to disclose Walzer's (willful) blindness to anything in history—word or event—that would contradict and thus delegitimize the end of history he begins with. More specifically, his emphasis on this general teleological model foregrounds—brings to center stage—*both* the actualities of the Old Testament account of Exodus *and* of the singular (profane) events effaced by the vocational history produced in the (sacred) name of the Exodus story, especially as it pertains to non-Western or Third World peoples and, not least, the Palestinians.

As a crucial textual example of the "severe excisions and restrictions" (MW, 164) demanded by the vocational teleological problematic informing *Exodus and Revolution*—one, not incidentally, that recalls the general motif of *terra nullius*—Said cites Walzer's muteness in the face of "the injunction [in the Old Testament texts] laid on the Jews by God to exterminate their opponents, an injunction that somewhat takes away the aura of progressive national liberation which Walzer is bent upon giving Exodus." Invoking G. E. M. de Ste Croix's comment in his monumental study, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World,* that Christians, as well as Jews suppress reference to "the merciless ferocity of Jahweh, *as revealed not by hostile sources but by the very literature they themselves regard as sacred,*" Said writes:

> Not only does Walzer refuse to meet these matters head on; what little he does say slides away from the facts. . . . It seems to me inescapably true that during moments of revolutionary fervor, all the monotheistic religions proposed unforgiving, merciless punishments against actual or imagined enemies, punishments formulated by perfervid clerics in the name of their One Deity. This is true of early Islam as it is of Pauline Christianity and of Exodus. Simply to step past all of that into a new realm called "Exodus politics" will not release you from the problem. In other words, it seems unlikely to expect that the kind of secular and decent politics Walzer salvages from Exodus could coexist with the authority of the sole Divinity plus the derivative but far more actual authority of His designated human representatives. But that is what Walzer alleged. (MW, 166)

But the drastic excisions and restrictions compelled by Walzer's teleological problematic are not limited to the site of the Old Testament. Under the aegis

of its monolithic and commanding voice, they are, more importantly, necessarily extended as well into the site of history.

> Similarly, [Walzer] avers, "the original conquest and occupation" of the land plays only "a small part" in Exodus politics. It is difficult to know here what Walzer is talking about, so anxious is he to disconnect from, and yet connect with, the essential parts of Exodus that have inspired the text's later [historical] users, from Indian-killing Puritans in New England to South African Boers claiming large swatches of territory held by Blacks. . . . To say that "thou shalt utterly destroy them" is a command that "doesn't survive the work of interpretation; it was effectively rescinded by talmudic and medieval commentators arguing over its future applications" is, I regret to say, to take no note of history after the destruction of the Temple in which Jews were in no positions at all collectively to implement the commandment. Therefore, I think, it is Walzer who is wrong, not "the right-wing Zionists" in today's Israel whom he upbraids for being too fundamentalist. The text of Exodus does categorically enjoin victorious Jews to deal unforgivingly with their enemies, the prior native inhabitants of the Promised Land. As to whether that should be "a gradual infiltration" or "a systematic campaign of extermination," the fundamental attitude is similar in both alternatives: get rid of the natives, as a practical matter. In either case, Israel's offending non-Jewish population is "excluded from the world of moral concern" [Walzer's words] and thus denied equal right with Jews. (MW, 166–67)[16]

Said goes on in his response to *Exodus and Revolution* to point out other historical realities obliterated by Walzer's identification of "progressive" revolution with the Old Testament story of Exodus, that is, with his promissory Zionist "vision": the history of oppression retrieved by exilic Western revolutionaries or the non-Western victims of Western "Exodus politics,"[17] and, not least, of the oppression suffered by the Palestinians at the hands of the new Israeli state. Said's reading of Walzer discloses in a decisive way that the real ideological intent of *Exodus and Revolution* is, despite its more "liberal" tone (its dissociation from the fundamentalist tendencies of the messianic Zionists), not much different from that of the prominent modern, i.e., post-Balfour, Zionists such as Herzl, Weizmann, and Ben-Gurion during the first past of the twentieth century. He shows that Walzer's purpose is not simply to identify this Western democratic interpretation of revolution with the politics of the post-1948 Israeli state. It is also, in so doing, to obliterate from the Western consciousness the glaring and irrepressible historical reality that the establishment of the Israeli state in 1948, its later occupation of the West

bank in 1967, and its increasing authority in matters pertaining to the Middle East, was accomplished by way of a sleight of hand, fundamental to the "Orientalism" of the imperial West, that rendered the land of Palestine a *terra nullius* and the native Arab inhabitants nomads, that is, legally non-beings, thus "justifying" their conquest, expulsion, and occupation of their land by a benign "higher" authority: the truth of "civilized," "emancipatory," "progressive," or "revolutionary" politics.

III

In what follows, I want to develop Said's powerful anti-teleological critique of the Zionist tradition extending from Herzl and Weizmann through Ben-Gurion to Walzer and beyond—the critique begun in *The Question of Palestine* by focusing on the European (especially British) imperialist roots of Zionism—by way of introducing an argument emerging from the distinction I have been suggesting between the European and the American imperial traditions, which Said tends to minimize. I mean, to put it more pointedly and starkly, an argument that emerges from the difference between the "Old World" and the "New World" that Americans, ever since the founding Puritans, have represented as the difference between a tyrannical and decadent world and an "exceptionalist"—youthful, democratic, progressive, work-oriented, missionary, indeed, "messianic"—world.[18] Such a refocusing will speak to the two major phases of the modern Israeli state's history that Said (especially in *The Question of Jerusalem*)—and those, like Jacqueline Rose, who follow him—tends to perceive as a whole: the early phase (circa 1900–1970) under the aegis of the British and the late phase (*circa* 1970–the present) under the aegis of the United States. It will also, I think, particularize and deepen his occasional commentary on the prominent role exceptionalist America has played in shoring up the political and moral authority of the Israeli state *vis-à-vis* Palestine and the Middle East in the United States and in the West.

In invoking the general myth of American exceptionalism in this context, I have in mind the system of typological or figural interpretation of the otherwise incompatible histories of the Old Testament and the New Testament that the American Puritans used to establish historical reality and to justify their mission in the "New World"—their election or chosenness, their divinely ordained exodus from the Old World, and, as the American Puritan Samuel Danforth puts the Protestant calling in one of the great sermons of the early Puritan era, their "errand into the wilderness" of the New World. I

mean the hermeneutics, as Sacvan Bercovitch has shown in a decisive way,[19] that constituted the origins of the American national identity as exceptionalist and provided the vocational and political directives that determined the westward expansion—settlement, Indian removal, occupation of their (and the Mexicans') lands—undertaken in the middle of the nineteenth century under the aegis of the ideology of "Manifest Destiny."

I could, at this point, directly refer to Bercovitch's classic account of the typological hermeneutics that informed the collective ("covenantal") self of the American Puritans and their (providential) concept of history. But I will, instead, take an indirect route and invoke the general account of figural interpretation Erich Auerbach derives from his brilliant analysis of the history of European Biblical exegesis from St. Augustine to the Medieval Patristic exegetes in his great essay "Figura." I do this for two reasons, besides providing a conveniently precise summary of the essence of figural interpretation and the concept of history it assumes. First, since Auerbach is a constant positive presence in Edward Said's work, especially as it pertains to the theme of exile and philology, such an indirect approach to the question of American Puritan Biblical exegesis and its relation to the question of Palestine will point to a curious and important oversight or elision in his critique of Zionism, particularly of Walzer's *Exodus and Revolution.* Second, and not least, it will dramatize the *continuity* between the European and American Puritan versions of figural interpretation that is concealed behind the Puritans' and their secularized American progeny's exceptionalism. Here is Auerbach's dispassionate account:

> Figural interpretation establishes a connection between two events or persons [in the Old Testament and the New], the first of which signifies not only itself but also the second, while the second encompasses or fulfills the first. The two poles of the figure are separated in time, but both, being real events or figures, are within time, within the stream of historical life. Only the understanding of the two persons or events is a spiritual act, but this spiritual act deals with concrete events whether past, present, or future, and not with concepts or abstractions [as in the allegorical mode of the Philonian tradition]; these are quite secondary, since promise and fulfillment are real historical events, which have either happened in the incarnation of the Word, or will happen in the second coming. Of course purely spiritual elements enter in the conceptions of ultimate fulfillment, since "my kingdom is not of this world"; yet it will be a real kingdom, not an immaterial abstraction; only the *figura*, not the *natura* of the world will pass away . . . and the flesh will rise again. Since in figural interpretation, one

> thing stands for another, since one thing represents and signifies the other, figural interpretation is "allegorical" in the widest sense. But it differs from most of the allegorical forms known to us *by the historicity both of the sign and what its signifies.*[20]

To put it specifically, the medieval European Christian Biblical exegetes, in their effort to reconcile the truths of the Old Testament and the New, read the historical events represented in the former as prefigurations *in history* ordained by God of the historical events, present and future, represented in the latter. The Hebraic hermeneutic tradition was not abandoned; it was accommodated to Western, incarnational Christianity. This feat of the divinely inspired European Biblical exegetes has up until recently been viewed in the West as an epochal achievement in the development of Western civilization, as indeed, in some fundamental sense it was—for the West. Even a scholar as sensitive to historical complexity as Erich Auerbach perceived it as the inauguration of a philological momentum that, in collapsing the hierarchical structure of classical antiquity (*die Stiltrennung:* the separation of styles into high and low, *sermo gravis* and *sermo humilis*), broke down the European hierarchical class structure inherited from antiquity and thus inaugurated the momentum that paved the way to the European Renaissance, humanism, the rise of colloquial languages, and democracy.[21] Seen from the present globalized perspective after the (theoretical) de-centering of the Eurocentric center, this "achievement" undergoes a profound estrangement. The interpretation of the relationship between the events of the Old Testament and those of the New comes to be seen, as a small minority of exilic Europeans throughout history had earlier observed—Rabelais, Spinoza, Cervantes, Voltaire, Sterne, Diderot, for example—not simply as a fantasy of a hyperactive, even lunatic, imagination, but also as a monomania, a paranoia that would reduce the many to the One, with worldly consequences in a persistent history of massive dispossession, unhoming, maiming, torture, and death. As a cursory knowledge of this Biblical exegetical tradition makes clear, the providential concept of being subsuming this method of figural interpretation enabled, indeed, *demanded,* of it faithful the ruthless coercion of the most contradictory and irreconcilable events of the Biblical histories. No detail in time or space of these texts—name, number, object, color, smell, person, event—no matter how remote from the center, could remain unaccounted for, since the superfluity of the smallest detail would undermine the legitimacy of the center (the *Logos*) and the total system. This exegetical history comes to be replete with examples of the torturing of the textual evidence. And when the exegete ran up against an event that utterly resisted accommodation—

refused to be answerable, as it were—to the call of the providential narrative, he resorted to what, following Cervantes' directive *vis-à-vis* the mad interpretive strategy, or in Said's phrase, "textual attitude," of Don Quixote, I call the principle of last resort: the enchanter:

> Sancho, what is your opinion about this grudge that the enchanters bear me? You can see how far their malice and hatred extend; for they have deprived me of the joy that I could have experienced on beholding my lady in her true being. I was indeed born to be a mirror of misfortune, the eternal target of the arrows of adversity. And you should also note, Sancho, that those traitors were not content just to transform Dulcinea, but had to transform her into a figure as wretched and ugly as that peasant wench, and at the same time they took away from her what is so characteristic of fine ladies, the sweet smell that they derived from living among ambergris and flowers. Because I would have you know, Sancho, that when I went to replace Dulcinea on her palfrey (as you call it, although I thought it was a donkey), I was half suffocated by a blast of raw garlic that poisoned my very soul.[22]

This coercive violence—this brutal excising, to recall Said's term—was not restricted to the verbal details of the Biblical texts or the historiography they jointly authorized. It also extended to the very real minds and bodies that inhabited the earth—not simply "deviant" Europeans, but Islamic "infidels"—as the savage history of the Christian West, particularly at the height of the authority of the Patristic exegetical tradition (the period of the Crusades and the Inquisition), bears witness against itself. Like the apparently recalcitrant differential words of the texts, the deviant Western humans who refused to be answerable to the call of God (interpellated, Althusser would put it) were often represented as heretics and either tortured into submission to the One Word or burned at the stake. The humans outside the West were represented as an inferior species of mankind (black Africans and Native Americans, for example) or as degenerate (the Arabs of the Middle East, the Hindus of the subcontinent, the Chinese, etc.) and subjected to colonization or, in the rhetoric informing the Western understanding of progress to which I will return, "the *march* of civilization."

Let me now turn to the American Puritans' appropriation of Patristic figural interpretation so brilliantly analyzed by Sacvan Bercovitch, the liberal Canadian-Jewish scholar whose reading of the literature of American Puritanism against the grain was, I suggest, inaugural in the development of the momentum in scholarship and criticism that has come to be called New

Americanist Studies. Curiously, Bercovitch does not refer to the Patristic figural exegetical tradition in his path-breaking books, *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* (1975) and *The American Jeremiad* (1978). That he was aware of Auerbach's work in this field is suggested by a passing quotation from "*Figura*" distinguishing the Puritan "type" in Biblical exegesis from the "symbol": "What makes the type 'completely different' from the symbol, Erich Auerbach has observed, 'is that figural prophecy relates to an interpretation of history . . . while the symbol is a direct interpretation of life.' The symbolist, that is, finds significance through the interaction of experience and imagination, the figuralist through a sacred design that is prior to, and independent of, the self."[23] But nowhere in his work does Bercovitch address the relationship between American Puritan and European Patristic exegesis. This is probably because he wanted to stress the (spurious) exceptionalist aspect of the founding ideology of the American national identity. Be that as it may, I will show that American Puritan biblical exegesis (and the concept of history subsuming it) was radically similar to that of the Patristic fathers that Auerbach analyzed. The difference was, as I noted earlier, that the American Puritans *appropriated* the figural method of Biblical exegesis, particularly the story of Exodus that Michael Walzer interprets as the origin of progressive revolution, to their own unique historical occasion and vocation.

Similarly, Walzer makes no reference to Bercovitch in *Exodus and Revolution,* despite the fact that the latter's analysis of the origins of the American national identity relies in a fundamental way on the same Old Testament story of Exodus that Walzer invokes to determine the origins of revolution and progressive politics. This is possibly because, being a scholar in a different discipline, he was unaware of Bercovitch's seminal work in American studies, even though he notes that *Exodus and Revolution* was instigated by his Princeton dissertation on the English Puritan Revolution of 1640. Indeed, Walzer implies awareness of the figural method of biblical interpretation in the following passage, where he provides a tortured positive, i.e., "gradualist" covenantal, as opposed to "Leninist," exegesis of Moses' brutal order to slay the idol worshippers (i.e., the "murmurers," backsliders, heretics) in the episode of the Golden Calf.[24]

> For Calvin and his followers, this sort of thing [the interpretation that downplayed Moses' command by insisting that "the Levites acted at God's direct command . . . and so the slaughter of the idol worshippers was properly His act and not their own"] was mere cowardice. Exodus 32 was obviously a precedent and it was a precedent that they were more willing than

> Augustine or Aquinas to set within a history. Since they thought they were reenacting the entire Exodus they were able to read the entire text. The journey through the wilderness was in part a metaphor for their own politics, and in part a model. They too had escaped from (popish) oppression only to find themselves caught up in a long and difficult struggle with their own people, God's elect against what a Puritan preacher, citing Exodus, called "the opposing rage of a hardened multitude." In Calvin's mind it was more important that the Levites had killed brethren than they had killed idolators. (ER, 63–64)

Whatever the reasons for the absence of Bercovitch's scholarship in Walzer's history of the Exodus story, the fact remains that, like Walzer's study of the origins of progressive Western democracy, Bercovitch's study of the Puritan origins of the American national identity has its point of departure in the Old Testament story of Exodus. The conclusion about politics Bercovitch draws from his analysis of the consequent political history enabled by the story of Exodus is, however, remarkably antithetical to Walzer's and, I wish to suggest, to the modern Zionist apologists for the Israeli occupation of Palestine, for which Walzer is an eloquent spokesperson. And it is primarily for this reason, among others, that I wish to overdetermine the American Puritan history to which Said occasionally refers but marginalizes in favor of the European imperialist tradition and that Walzer minimizes in favor of the Exodus story as it was appropriated by the English Puritans—Oliver Cromwell, John Milton, John Owen, John Knox, etc.—of the Revolution of 1640.

Before offering an account of American Puritan figural interpretation, the concept of history it entailed, the covenantal vocation it demanded, and the political history it contributed heavily to produce, however, I want to address a historically dubious but influential enabling ontological distinction—what Said would no doubt call a "structure of attitude or reference"[25]—that underlies and is fundamental to Walzer's, as well as many modern Zionists,' interpretation of the Old Testament story of Exodus and the liberal and progressive political history it allegedly has produced. I am referring to the perennial ideological distinction, epitomized by the Hebraic/Hellenic opposition between, on the one hand, the circular and regressive concept of time broadly identified with primitive, hierarchically structured, myth-oriented societies and particularly with ancient Greece, and, on the other, the linear and progressive biblical/Western concept of time Walzer privileges, together with its accompanying metaphorics of "marching" forward:

> A political history with a strong linearity, a strong forward movement, the Exodus gives permanent shape to Jewish conceptions of time; and it serves as a model, ultimately, for non-Jewish conceptions, too. We can think of it as the crucial alternative to all mythic notions of eternal recurrence—and hence to all cyclical understandings of political change from which our [*sic*] word revolution derives. The idea of eternal recurrence connects the social to the natural world and gives to political life the simple closure of a circle: birth, maturity, death, and rebirth. The same story is enacted again and again; men and women and the timely deeds of men and women alike lose their singularity; one represents another, in a system of correspondences that extends upward, hierarchically, into the mythic realm of nature and of nature's gods. Biblical narrative generally, Exodus more particularly, breaks in the most decisive way with this kind of cosmological story. In Exodus historical events occur only once, and they take on their significance from a system of backward- and forward-looking interconnections, not from the hierarchical correspondences of myth. (ER, 12–13)[26]

For Walzer this linear concept of history derived from the story of Exodus is not only progressive and democratic, but also, as he repeatedly asserts to distinguish his humanist from religious or messianic Zionism, secular—man-made. Taking my directives from the poststructuralists' ontological critique of Western linear interpretations of historical time—the beginning, middle, and end structures they show to be informed by an end or principle of presence or center—I want to point out that, because Walzer's distinction perceives linear history as end-oriented, that is, as a *promise/fulfillment structure,* it too is *circular,* indeed, in a way that may be more negative in its effects on human consciousness than the circular time of the Greeks.[27] As I have been implying, the conception of history informing figural interpretation, a method for bringing open-endedness to closure, the "progress" of the linear model of history—along with the metaphorics of the relentless forwarding march—rationalizes and thus obscures or minimizes ("excises," in Said's vocabulary) the *necessary* violence that the promised end does to the historical obstacles (differing perspectives) encountered by the chosen people in the process of fulfilling their task. These are the very singularities that, according to Walzer, eternal recurrence reduces to the same but the linear time of Exodus leaves intact. As he begins to perceive some of its negative implications, Walzer will modify this linear narrative structure by distinguishing between an "Exodus politics" that is covenantal and gradualist in its approach to the "end" and a "messianic politics," the "Leninist" politics of the vanguard, that would force the achievement of the end. But, as we

shall see, this modification of the end will not negate these negatives; it will accommodate them to the inexorable exigencies of its monovocal linearity.

It is, I want to suggest, precisely this violence against the "noise" of singularity that Sacvan Bercovitch points to in his analysis of the linear promise/fulfillment structure of American Puritan Biblical exegesis in *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* and, especially, *The American Jeremiad.* In these ground-breaking books, which depart radically from Perry Miller's standard interpretation of the literature of the American Puritan period, Bercovitch's purpose is not simply to offer a disinterested scholarly account of the American Puritan canon. As the titles suggest, his purpose is genealogical (in the Foucauldian sense): to trace the origins of the contemporary "progressive/democratic"—*and imperial*—American national self. In them, he not only establishes the continuity between the Puritan moment of American history—the moment of the theocratic "errand in the wilderness" determined and justified by the figural interpretation of the Old and New Testaments—and modern "progressive" democratic America, but also demonstrates the profound influence that the Puritan providential concept of history had on post-Revolutionary, "secularized" America.

Although Bercovitch inaugurates his genealogy of modern American identity in *The Puritan Origins* by invoking Cotton Mather's figural reading of John Winthrop as "Nehemias Americanus," the second "Moses" of the Babylonian captivity, who "led the Israelites back from Babylon to their promised land" (PO, 1), I will take my point of departure from the beginning of *The American Jeremiad,* where Bercovitch invokes Winthrop himself and his epochal sermon on board the *Arabella.* This, not incidentally, is the same Winthrop who announced that the land the Puritans were expropriating from the Pequods was a "wilderness," and a "*domicilium vacuum*":

> The passengers were entering into a covenant with God, as into a marriage bond—and therefore, charged Winthrop, they might expect swift and harsh affliction. Invoking the ominous precedent of Israel, he explained that henceforth the Lord would survey them with a strict and jealous eye. They had pledged themselves to God, and He to them, to protect, assist, and favor them above any other community on earth. But at their slightest shortcoming, for neglecting the "least" of their duties, He would turn in wrath against them and be revenged:
>
> > If wee shall deale falsely with our god in this worke wee have undertaken and soe cause him to withdraw his present help for us, wee shall open the mouthes of enemies to speake evill of the wayes

> of god and all professours for Gods sake; wee shall shame the faces of many of Gods worthy servants, and cause theire prayers to be turned into Cursses upon us, till wee be consumed out of the good land whether wee are going.

> Winthrop's grim forecast struck a familiar chord. Only several weeks before, as the passengers prepared to embark from Southampton pier, John Cotton had similarly warned them about the perils of their high enterprises. Where much is given, he intoned, much is demanded. The same God who had sifted them as choice grain from the chaff of England, and who would soon plant them in the New World, might "also roote [them] out againe." Men generally succumbed to carnal lures, leaned toward profits and pleasure, permitted their children to degenerate. . . . Should the emigrants fall prey to such temptations, God would surely withdraw their "special appointment," weed them out, pluck them up, and cast them irrevocably out of his sights. (AJ, 3–4)

In this account of the inaugural moment of the American Puritans' migration to and errand in the "New World" wilderness, Bercovitch points to five motifs that are fundamental to the Old Testament Exodus story as Walzer characterizes it: 1) figural interpretation: the Puritans' belief that, like the Israelites of the Old Testament, they were God's chosen people and that they were *literally* fulfilling what the Old Testament Israelites had prefigured; 2) the Exodus story itself: the migration from a tyrannical and decadent Europe to the wilderness of New England was the historical beginning of the fulfillment of the Israelite's Exodus from a tyrannical and corrupt Egypt (the land of "fleshpots"; 3) the divinely ordained or providential history subsuming the new Israelites' labor in the New World: a history informed by the promise/fulfillment structure, the purpose of which was to (re)plant the Word of God in the New World "wilderness" as the Israelites of the Old Testament had done in the "wilderness" of Canaan; 4) the Puritan's compact or covenant with God, which, like that of their Israelite precursors', both promised His commitment to their ultimate well-being and warned them of the immense difficulty of their global task; and 5) the threat posed to the Puritans' "calling," covenant, and vocation by backsliding, as the Puritans realized from the beginning and increasingly in the face of the community's members' generational separation from the original event.

Bercovitch goes on to distinguish his own interpretation of the Puritans' covenantal vocation from that of Perry Miller by invoking the "jeremiad": that aspect of the Exodus story that spoke of the backsliding of the Israelites

after their deliverance by God and Moses from Egypt (which Walzer, following the Old Testament, repeatedly refers to as "murmuring"). Where Miller interpreted the jeremiad simply as castigation announcing the end of the Puritan theocracy, Bercovitch, anticipating Walzer's discussion of Israelite murmuring (and it is this luminous insight that, in my mind, inaugurated the New Americanist critical perspective), points instead to the paradoxical optimism that inheres in the providential history underlying the America jeremiad:

> But the Puritan clergy were not simply castigating [As Perry Miller contended]. For all their catalogues of iniquity, the jeremiads attest to an unswerving faith in the errand; and if anything they grew more fervent, more absolute in their commitment from one generation to the next. The most severe limitation of Miller's view is that it excluded (or denigrated) this pervasive theme of affirmation and exultation. . . . *The essence of the sermon that the first-born American Puritans inherited from their fathers, and then developed, amplified, and standardized, is its unshakable optimism*. In explicit opposition to the traditional mode, it inverts the doctrine of vengeance into a promise of ultimate success, affirming to the world, and despite the world, *the inviolability of the colonial cause.* (AJ, 6–7; my emphasis)

This thematizing of the paradoxical optimism inhering in the linear providential history derived by the Puritans from their figural interpretation of the biblical texts enabled Bercovitch to understand the American Puritan jeremiad as, first, a means of converting any threat to the covenantal community into a productive advantage (the hostility of the Native Americans, for example, in the case of Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative).[28] The jeremiad also served as an instrument for renewing or rejuvenating the covenantal community at large. Invoking the inaugural distinction between linear history and the history of eternal recurrence that Walzer uses to characterize the Exodus concept of time, but turning it implicitly on its head, Bercovitch writes:

> The American Puritan jeremiad was the ritual of a culture on an errand—which is to say, a culture based on a *faith in process. Substituting teleology for hierarchy, it discarded the Old World ideal of stasis for a New World vision of the future. Its function was to create a climate of anxiety that helped release the restless "progressivist" energies required for the success of the venture.* . . . Like all traditionalist forms of ritual, it used fear and trembling to

> teach acceptance of fixed social forms. But the American Puritan jeremiad went much further. *It made anxiety its end as well as its means. Crisis was the social norm it sought to inculcate.* The very concept of errand, after all, implied a state of unfulfillment. The future, *though divinely assured,* was never quite there, and New England's Jeremiahs set out to provide the sense of insecurity that would ensure the outcome. Denouncing or affirming, their vision fed on the distance between the promise and fact. (AJ, 23; my emphasis)

As in the case of Walzer's Old Testament Israelites, the end (termination and goal) of the linear vocational process in the providential history of the American Israelites is always there—a presence—*but it is never fulfilled.* There will always be, indeed, there *must* be, a cause for anxiety: a wilderness inhabited by nomads or vagabonds, a frontier at the edge of "civilized" settlements, or a threatening enemy that must be subdued. This "distance between promise and fact" (and the violence it entails) guarantees the perpetual renewal, the rejuvenation of the covenanted people, and thus saves them from the fate of the Old World: tyranny and decay, Pharaoh and fleshpot. Equally important, this ontologically produced state of unending crisis also guarantees their paradoxically optimistic and "progressive" "errand in the wilderness," which, to recall the underscored passage in the above quotation, is "the inviolability of the colonial project."

Much more could be added to extend and particularize the story of Exodus that, according to Bercovitch, determined the structure and development of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the Promised Land of the New Canaan, not least about the particularly self-aggrandizing way the Puritans represented the Native Americans and their land, a discursive regime that eventually "justified" the brutal extermination, i.e., racial cleansing, of the Peqots during the King Philip's War. But having suggested the remarkably sustained parallel between the American Puritans' and Walzer's versions of the Exodus story, I want to turn now to the radically *different* moral and political evaluation of this story that Bercovitch suggests, if he does not fully develop, when he identifies the Puritan invocation of figural interpretation in general and the Exodus story in particular with the "inviolability of [their] colonial project." As I have noted, Bercovitch's purpose is genealogical. He intends, in Foucault's terms, a "history of the present":[29] the formation of the modern American national identity or, as he puts its, "the persistence of the Puritan jeremiad throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in all forms of literature, including the literature of westward expansion" (AJ, 10–11).

Walzer, on the one hand, interprets the Exodus story and the Western "Exodus politics" to which it gave rise as basically benign—a revolutionary nation-building model that fostered progressive "covenantal" (constitutional) democracies everywhere in the world, from the England of the Protestant Revolution through the United States of the American Revolution to the Israel of the founding settler period beginning in the 1930s. More specifically, this visionary nationalist model privileged the equality of all the members of the covenanted people in opposition to the Leninist/messianic vanguard type, and, presumably, though this is tellingly never worked out in Walzer's book, all of mankind. Bercovitch, on the other hand, points to the negative consequences of the nation-building model inhering in the Exodus story: the covenantal people's exceptionalism, their exclusionary nationalist Us against them logic of belonging, and, not least, their expropriation of the land of and violence against the "other" of nationalist logic. This significant difference is epitomized in the profound contrast between Walzer's and Bercovitch's passing, but resonantly significant, references to Virgil's *Aeneid,* a promise/fulfillment narrative that played a decisive historical role in shaping the West's identity when it was itself read as the historical *prefiguration* of Christian Europe.[30] In Walzer's version, the *Aeneid* supports his enabling distinction between the "progressive" linear time of the Old Testament Jews and the circular time of the ancient Egyptians and Greeks:

> The strength of the narrative [of the Book of Exodus] is given by the end, though it is crucial that the end be present at the beginning, as an aspiration, a hope, a promise. What is promised is radically different from what is: the end is nothing like the beginning. . . . The Exodus bears no resemblances to those ancient tales of voyages and journeys that, whatever the adventures they include, begin and end [like the *Odyssey*] at home . . . for the living Israelites the promised land is a new home, and no one is waiting there to greet them. In the literature of the ancient world only the *Aeneid* resembles the Exodus narrative structure, describing a divinely guided and world-historical journey to something like a promised land. That is why the *Aeneid* was the only rival of the Exodus in the arguments over the American Great Seal. But Rome, though it represents for Virgil a "new order of the ages," is not, after all, significantly different from Troy; it is only more powerful. (ER, 11–12)[31]

And here, on the other hand, is Bercovitch's figural version:

> [Cotton] Mather's millenarianism at this time is worth special empha-

> sis because the *Magnalia* has so often been read as a cry of despair. . . . The significance of those deliverances are indicated by the title of the last section of this last Book, "Arma Virosque Cano," a title that recalls the Virgilian invocation with which Mather opens the History (as well as the numerous echoes from the *Aeneid* thereafter), and so suggests the epic proportions of his narrative. For Mather, of course, New England's story not only parallels but supersedes that of the founding of Rome, as his literary "assistance" from Christ excels the inspiration of Virgil's muse, as the "exemplary heroes" he celebrates resemble but outshine the men of Aeneas' band—not only as Christians but as seafarers and conquerors of hostile pagan tribes—and, more spectacularly, as the millennium toward which the Reformation is moving provides the far more glorious antitype of the Augustan *Pax Romana.* Undoubtedly, the proper title for Mather's work is the exultant one he gave it: *Magnalia Christi Americana:* "The Great Acts of Christ in America." (AJ, 87)

It is difficult to decide from Walzer's contradictory identification and then separation of the linearity of the Virgilian story and the linearity of the story of Exodus what exactly he means. (The same contradiction informs his account of the Exodus story.) But insofar as Walzer associates the Aeneid essentially with Exodus and the American Great Seal, one has to infer that, for him, its beginning-middle-and-end (promise/fulfillment) structure signals the benign democratic potential that is fulfilled in the "Exodus politics" of the American Revolution. Bercovitch, on the other hand, focuses squarely on what Walzer would repress: for him, the "linear" structure of Virgil's epic is fundamentally complicitous with the Roman imperial project, and its appropriation by the Puritan historian of the "Great Deeds of Christ in America," Cotton Mather, points to the peculiar kind of imperialism, the imperialism that Jefferson was to name "the empire of liberty," that came to inform American democracy in the post-Revolutionary era.

After establishing the relationship between the Puritans' figural interpretation of the Exodus story, their errand in the wilderness, and the imperial project, Bercovitch goes on to show decisively the continuity between the inaugural moment of the Puritan theocracy, the transition "from Puritan to Yankee New England," and the post-Revolutionary history of America. Over this period of time, the Puritan theocracy collapsed because of its inadequacy to "New England's 'wilderness-condition.'" But the system of figural interpretation, including the jeremiad, remained intact. This, according to Bercovitch, was inaugurated by the latter day heirs of the Puritans such as Jonathan Edwards:

> Seeking to defend the Good Old Way, they abstracted from its antiquated social forms the larger, vaguer, and more flexible forms of symbol and metaphor (*new chosen people, city on a hill, promised land, destined progress, new Eden, American Jerusalem*), and so facilitated the movement from visible saint to American patriot, sacred errand to manifest destiny, colony to republic to imperial power. In spite of themselves, as it were, the latter-day orthodoxy freed their rhetoric for the use and abuse of subsequent generations of Americans. (AJ, 92)

In the pre- and post-Revolutionary era, America *secularized* the providential history informing the Puritans' appropriation of the Exodus story. In the phrase Said borrows from M. H. Abrams to characterize Ernest Renan's Orientalist humanism, it rendered history a "natural supernaturalism." The deliverance from tyranny and the errand in the wilderness became increasingly and overtly identified with the processes of westward expansion (the incremental building of settlements and removal of natives that were indispensable to the "march" of American democracy across the continent). And the Promise accompanying election and subsuming these became Manifest Destiny. As Jefferson put it at the moment between the establishment of a constitutional government separating church and state and the acquisition of the Louisiana Territory, America became an "empire of liberty" such "as the world has never seen surveyed since the creation and I am persuaded no constitution was ever before so well calculated as ours for extensive empire and self-government."[32]

Following Bercovitch's lead, but radicalizing his demystification of American democracy, the "New Americanists" (Richard Drinnon, Richard Slotkin, Donald Pease, Amy Kaplan, John Carlos Rowe, and David Reynolds, for example) have produced an entire archive in American studies that has radically revised the canonical history and literature of the United States. Under the influence of poststructuralist and postcolonial global theory, they have read this received history—the history represented from the American exceptionalist perspective intrinsic to the Puritan tradition—in a way that has rendered the continuity between the Puritan Israelites' violent comportment toward the "wilderness" and its inhabitants and the forwarding comportment of their later, secularized post-Revolutionary progeny incontrovertible: Indian removal amounting to genocide; filibustering, the Mexican War that annexed all of northern Mexico (the Southwest) to the United Sates; and, with the settlement of the Pacific Coast, the re-opening of the frontier by way of the annexation of Hawaii, of the Spanish-American War

in the Philippines and later, of the United States' intervention in Southeast Asia in the name of John F. Kennedy's "New Frontier."

Nevertheless, this incontrovertible disclosure of the complicity of the Exodus story with brutal conquest in the name of liberty or deliverance from tyranny has not, as far as I know, been reconstellated centrally and fully into the contemporary global historical conjuncture. I mean specifically the epochal occasion that is bearing witness to an America whose planetary imperial hegemony is epitomized by its unmovable presence in North Africa and the Middle East and, above all, by its unshakeable and massive ideological, economic, military, and cultural support of the Israeli nation-state: the latter's representation of the land of Palestine as *terra nullius,* its dehumanization of the Palestinians, its occupation of the West Bank since 1967, the strategic building of "settlements" in that occupied territory, the systematic ethnic cleansing of Palestinian villages, and, not least, the labeling of its refusal to hear the voice of its victims as "the peace process."

IV

> The day will yet come when the victorious march of which our people is so proud today, will seem to us like a cruel detour.
>
> —Martin Buber, "Should the Ichud Accept the Decree of History?"[33]

The foregoing reading of Walzer's version of the Exodus story—my thematizing the colonial violence inhering in its linear "progressive" promise/fulfillment structure—has been intended to deepen and extend Bercovitch and the New Americanists' disclosure of the complicity between the Puritan Israelites' figural system of biblical exegesis and the emergence of the American "empire for liberty" by way or undertaking this reconstellation. What I have offered all too briefly, in focusing on the difference between Bercovitch's and the New Americanists' versions of the Exodus story, on the one hand, and Walzer's, on the other, is not simply a genealogy of America's benign representation of its presence in the Middle East, but also, *pace* Walzer, the genealogy of the contemporary, post-1967 Zionists' representation of the Israeli nation-state, its history, and its relations to the Palestinian people. I mean the representation, minimized by but latent in Said's (and Jacqueline Rose's) genealogy, that marginalized the European model of the original Zionist leaders when, in the wake of post–World War II decolonization, the

postcolonial worlds began to speak back to the colonial powers, in favor of the "democratic" American model, which focused the essence of the Book of Exodus on the benignly positive aura bestowed by the "great American experiment" on such key words and phrases of the Exodus story as "calling," "chosen people" (exceptionalist), "covenant," "wilderness" (or "empty land"), "errand" (vocation), "pioneer," "promise," "settlement," and "betterment" (or "improvement").

These key Exodus words and phrases, it seems to me, are the ideological words and phrases *par excellence* that have increasingly saturated the discourse of the dominant culture of America and become hegemonic—fundamental to the American national identity—indeed, to recall Hannah Arendt's indictment of Eichmann, the European the everyman, symptomatic of that modern virus that has infected its language: the banality of evil. They have also, not accidentally, as Walzer's rhetoric itself testifies, become fundamental to the justificatory regime of the contemporary Zionists ever since the United States replaced Britain as Israel's main supporter in the wake of the emergence of Arab resistance at the beginning of the Cold War. Throughout his writings on the question of Palestine, Said, as I have shown, repeatedly invokes several of these same terms—their resonantly positive aura—in noting the extraordinary effectiveness of Zionist discourse in demonizing the "Canaanites" and either obliterating them from the consciousness of the dominant first world or rendering them their own worst enemies. But he finds their provenance within the European imperial tradition. The genealogy of the Zionist discourse I have discovered is not intended to challenge Said's (and those, like Jacqueline Rose's, that follow his lead); its purpose, rather, is to particularize it. Though the notion of "*terra nullius*" or "empty land," for example, to which Said repeatedly refers historically precedes its adoption by the American Puritans, its essential modern meaning has more current origins. As the testimony of the canonical (or canonized) and popular cultural production of the post-Revolutionary United States everywhere testifies, it derives from its relationship to the relay of terms that, beginning with the American Puritans' figural appropriation of the Exodus story, became hegemonic in American discourse and history:[34] "Election" (God's choosing the Puritan dissenters as His agents in the world), "Calling" (the sacred hailing that subjects the hailed ones to Its errand), "Covenant" (the contract the hailed made with the hailing God), "Promise" (the inaugural guarantee that their "story" of liberation will end positively no matter what the obstacles they encounter on the way of their labor), "Exceptionalist Errand" (the epochal uniqueness and newness of their divinely ordained vocation), "Wilderness" (*terra nullius,* a land that is uninhabited, i.e., unoc-

cupied and uncultivated by its denizens, who, therefore, are less than or non-human beings), "Settlement" (the fundamental act, simultaneous with cultivation of the land, of the hailed that distinguishes their civilized community from the "wandering" or "vagabond" and "indolent" savages), "improvement" or "betterment" (the progressive rationalization and development of the raw and threatening wilderness to make it yield the "milk and honey" latent in it), "pioneer" or "backwoodsman" or "borderer" or "frontiersman" (the vanguard—those who possess the Word of the calling) at the forefront between civilization and the wilderness who *always already* rejuvenate (by violence) the covenantal community always threatened by overcivilization, i.e., the "murmuring" and "backsliding" (regression) into "Old World" tyranny and decay), the "(Westward) March" (the manifestation of the absolute certainty and Oneness of the Promised End); "Fulfillment" (the End promised in the beginning that is always a Presence but always in the future).

Put in this summary but not inaccurate way, the story of Exodus Walzer tells in Exodus and Revolution to justify his "progressive" "Exodus politics"—and the Israeli state's presence in Palestine—can be seen to be closer to the American version, with its origins in the American Puritans' figural appropriation of the Old Testament story, than with the English Revolution of 1640 with which Walzer identifies it. This becomes especially evident when we consider the "conclusion" of his interpretation of the Exodus story, that is, when Walzer comes overtly to apply the covenantal "Exodus politics" he derives from the Old Testament to the contemporary Israeli/Palestinian occasion, or, rather, when the imperatives of his story compel him to address the disturbing question of the "idolatrous Canaanites," who live in the "wilderness," that is, on the land promised to the Israelites by God.

Here, Walzer is compelled to differentiate between the liberal or "secular" Zionists of which he is an ally, and the fundamentalist or religious Zionists (as well as the latter's secular analogue, the vanguard communists)—what he calls "Exodus Zionism" and "messianic Zionism," respectively (ER, 138).[35] This distinction involves a significant revision of his inaugural thesis privileging the linear concept of time, which he claims is intrinsic to the Old Testament, over the circular concept of time in mythical cultures such as that of Homeric Greece. Where earlier he had asserted the end of the linear structure of Exodus history as a definite end, here, after the issue of the difference between "Exodus Zionism" and "messianic Zionism" emerges, he defers the end (or fulfillment) of the linear structure he privileges. Messianic Zionism, a "right-wing creed," he writes, is characterized by three "features of a certain kind of radical politics": 1) "an extraordinary sensitivity to and something

like a longing for apocalyptic events"; 2) "the readiness to 'force the End'—which doesn't mean merely to act politically for ultimate purposes. . . . Force itself is sanctified when it is used to bring about the end of days, and so it can be used without guilt"; and 3) "the calm of unconditionality":

> The victory of 1967 posed a difficult choice for religious Jews. They could hold the newly conquered territories against all opposition, viewing the conquest as a fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham, or they could remember the Exodus command—"Thou shalt not oppress a stranger in the land of Egypt" (Exod. 23:9)—and seek a political compromise. . . . But within the world of political messianism the argument is foreclosed. There is no need to surrender territory for the sake of morality, for morality comes, so to speak, with the territory. Both are guaranteed. (ER, 140)

Though Walzer admits that "within the terms of Exodus politics one can make an argument either way"; that though "there is much in the text that supports a harsh politics," he is "inclined to think that [the] argument for compromise is a strong one." Unlike messianic Zionism, which would "force the End," then, "Exodus Zionism," for him, is aware of the realities of the human condition and thus defers the end indefinitely in favor of what he has insistently called a gradualist progressive democratic politics. Invoking Gersholm Scholem's rejection of apocalyptic political messianism of the right-wing Zionists, he writes, "the decisive difference between the two for Scholem was that Zionism meant acting within history and accepting the limits of historical reality, while messianism represented a utopian refusal of those limits. 'We must accept the decree of history without a utopian cover. And obviously, we must pay for that. One encounters others who have . . . interests and rights . . . [and must] succeed in coming to terms with them'" (ER, 141).[36]

At this end point in his book, when the tension between Exodus Zionism and Messianic Zionism has pressured him into revising the inaugural meaning of the linear structure of the Exodus story, Walzer reluctantly introduces the question of the "Canaanites"—the Israelites' "Other"—which Said, on the other hand, addresses at the very beginning of his reading of Exodus and Revolution:

> There is a moment in the Exodus story that fits or seems to fit into the radicalism of right-wing Zionists and that I have avoided until now: the conquest of the land. In Exodus politics as it has been interpreted and elaborated over the centuries, the conquest plays only a small part. It fig-

> ures in the writing of some of the American Puritans, confronting the Indians of New England, and then again among the South African Boers. But it is missing, for obvious reasons, from the political theory of liberation. If the movement from Egypt to Canaan is taken as a metaphor for a transforming politics, then attention is focused on internal rather than external wars, on the purges of the recalcitrant Israelites rather than on the destruction of the Canaanite nations. And so I have focused my own attention in this book.
>
> Read the text as it stands, however, and there is clearly no tension between the concerns for strangers and the original conquest and occupation of the land—*for the Canaanites are explicitly excluded from the world of moral concern.* According to the commandments of Deuteronomy they are to be driven out or killed—all of them, men, women, and children—and their idols destroyed (20:17–18). (ER, 142; my emphasis)

Walzer's resolution of this spectral obstacle takes the overt form of rationalization. First, he says that the all-out war God wanted "against idolatry and idolators" was "an extension of the struggles in the wilderness. Revolutionary wars take on something of the ferocity of civil wars and political purges, even when the enemy is not satanic and the end of days is not at hand. But the people are reluctant warriors; they, or many of them, prefer peace. So the divine commandment and the failure of the Israelites to fulfill the commandment are, both of them, further examples of biblical realism" (ER, 143). He goes on to suggest that evidence in the Old Testament text suggests that the Israelite biblical writers were anxious about God's conquest commands, since "they were (and knew they were) establishing a precedent"—the destruction of the idolatrous Canaanites—that might, should the Israelites backslide into idolatry, "one day be used against their own people":

> Because of this parallelism, perhaps, the commandment, "Thou shalt utterly destroy them," does not survive the work of interpretation; it was *effectively rescinded* by the talmudic and medieval commentators arguing over its future applications. If there was another Exodus, would there be another conquest—and would the inhabitants of the promised land once again be placed under the ban? The commandment applied, the commentators argued, only to specified groups of people, named in the text, who no longer exist or can no longer be recognized. (ER, 143–44)

In response to this extremely labored Zionist argument, Said writes quite decisively:

> Walzer . . . claims rather lamely that commandments like 'thou shalt utterly destroy them' should not be taken literally. Similarly, he avers, "The original conquest and occupation" of the land plays only "a small part" in the Exodus politics. It is difficult to know here what Walzer is talking about, so anxious is he to disconnect from, and yet connect with, the essential parts of Exodus that have inspired the text's later users, from Indian-killing Puritans in New England to South African Boers claiming large swatches of territory held by Blacks. Maybe it is true (although Walzer provides no evidence) that the conquest of Canaan was "more like a gradual infiltration than a systematic campaign of extermination"; but he seems unperturbed that for the Jews "the Canaanites are explicitly excluded from the world of moral concern." This does not suggest a very elevated model of realistic politics, and it isn't clear how the dehumanization of anyone standing in Moses's way is any less appalling than the attitudes of the murderous Puritans or of the founders of *apartheid.* To say that "thou shalt utterly destroy them" is a command that 'doesn't survive the world of interpretation; it was effectively rescinded by talmudic and medieval commentators arguing over its future applications' is, I regret to say, to take no note of history *after* the destruction of the Temple in which Jews were in no position at all collectively to implement the commandment. Therefore, I think, it is Walzer who is wrong, not "the right-wing Zionists" in today's Israel whom he upbraids for being too fundamentalist. The text of Exodus *does* categorically enjoin victorious Jews to deal unforgivingly with their enemies, the prior native inhabitants of the Promised Land. As to whether that should be "a gradual infiltration' or 'a systematic extermination," the fundamental attitude is similar in both alternatives: get rid of the natives, as a practical matter. (MW, 167)

Said's response is a powerful indictment of Walzer's "confrontation" with the "question of the Canaanites" precipitated into being by the latter's need to distinguish the messianic politics of right-wing Zionism from the "Exodus politics" of the liberal Zionism he espouses: the difference between an apocalyptic politics that would "force the End" of the linear history of the Exodus story (by annihilating any obstacle on its march toward achieving it) and a liberal gradualist politics that would delay this End indefinitely while affirming Its presence. It discloses the apocalyptic right-wing messianism he ostensibly opposes to be, in the end, not substantively different from gradualist Zionism and the gesture of accommodation it entails (epitomized, not incidentally, by the "peace process"), but the fulfillment of the latter's progressive" logic: "In either case, Israel's offending non-Jewish population

is 'excluded from the world of moral concerns' and thus denied equal right with Jews" (MW, 167).

There is, however, another way to interpret the labored conclusion Walzer draws in the process of revising the linear structure of the Exodus story, not in opposition to Said's decisive reading, but as a collaborative extension of it, one suggested by my reconstellation of the Puritan appropriation of the story into the modern Zionist context and the question of Palestine. I am referring particularly to the American jeremiad, whose origins, as we have seen, derive in a fundamental way from the Israelite "murmurings," the threat of "backsliding" that permeates the Old Testament text and that Walzer overdetermines in his interpretation. I mean, more specifically, the leaders' deliberate instigation of a climate of anxiety (as a social norm) that, as Bercovitch put it *vis-à-vis* the American Israelites, "helped release the restless 'progressive' energies required for the success of the venture," that is, in order to sustain the *unity* of the covenantal people and to *rejuvenate* their missionary zeal in the face of the inevitable danger of relapsing into the tyranny and corruption of the Old World. At the end of *Exodus and Revolution,* Walzer writes:

> [T]he Exodus provides the chief alternative to messianism—as Oliver Cromwell's dispute with the Fifth Monarchy suggests. For Exodus begins with a concrete evil and ends (or doesn't quite end) with a partial success. To be sure, the partial success is a problem. *So far is the end of the story from the end of days that there is more than enough room for the backsliding and renewed oppression that repeatedly transform the hope of Exodus into messianic fantasy.* Messianism has its origins in disappointment, in all those Canaans that turn out to be "almost barren." Yet who can doubt that it is better to be in Canaan than in Egypt. And better to work for one more local deliverance than to risk terrors of the next-to-last days. In every revolutionary movement there are men and women who want to be able to say, with Cromwell, "We are thus far . . ." and to know, in fact, where they are. For them, Exodus history gives rise to Exodus politics. (ER, 147; my emphasis)

In this culminating moment of his argument, where Walzer again invokes backsliding as a reality of human history, he chooses to emphasize the alternative to the American Puritans' resolution of the problem of recidivism. The Puritans chose to emphasize the threat to the unity of the community and the progressive vitality of its vocation posed by backsliding and resolved the problem by perpetually postponing the fulfillment of the Promise, that

is, by representing their settlements as always at the frontier between civilization and wilderness, themselves as always "borderers," "backwoodsmen," "pioneers," and the natives as always nomadic denizens of the wilderness and thus always (terrorist) enemies. Walzer, on the other hand, chooses to focus on the other potential response to the problem of backsliding—the terror of apocalyptic messianism, of "forcing" the End—and he resolves the problem by way of a gradualist and accommodational politics that is at the same time *revolutionary.* But are these alternatives incompatible? Are they not, in fact, two faces of the same coin to which Said points in claiming that Walzer's gradualist and accommodational Exodus politics is no different from the messianic politics of the right-wing Zionism he criticizes, insofar as in both the Palestinians are "excluded from the world of moral consciousness"? Is not this complicity suggested by Walzer in the distinction he makes between the three possibilities of politics he invokes in what immediately follows?

> Compared with political messianism, Exodus makes for a cautious and moderate politics. Compared with "the old type of social struggle" and with the even more common passivity and acquiescence of the oppressed, *it makes for a revolutionary politics.* . . . For men and women working within the Exodus tradition . . . choice more commonly takes on a different character [than the "You are either for us or against us" of messianic politics]. *There is no ultimate struggle, but a long series of decisions, backsliding, and reforms.* The apocalyptic war between "the Lord's people" and "their enemies" can't readily be located within the Exodus. (ER, 147)

Walzer's "third" alternative seems to be a form of political struggle for liberation that is neither an apocalyptic "forcing of the End" nor a pacific or acquiescent passivity. It is, rather, one that is gradualist—that ostensibly eschews the violence of the messianic option—and *yet* remains, as he repeatedly insists, always *revolutionary.* As such, what else could this third alternative be but an implicit version of the "revolutionary" Puritan politics *vis-à-vis* their Native American "enemies" and their land, or, more precisely, the jeremiad-driven politics that was eventually secularized into the myth of American exceptionalism? This myth continues to determine American domestic and foreign policy to the present day, as its substitution, most visibly during the George W. Bush administration, of Islam for Communism as its rejuvenating enemy bears decisive witness.[37]

This "revolutionary Exodus politics," however, is not only endemic to the accommodational "gradualism" Walzer finds in the Israelites' conquest of Canaan and the expropriation of the land of the "Canaanites" who inhabit it.

It has also, I submit, become a fundamental aspect of the justificatory discursive regime of Israel's Zionist apologists, especially in the wake of its becoming a client state of the United States. This is suggested by the long-lasting tension between the Israeli state's practice of ethnic cleansing, its building of "settlements" in the "wilderness" of the West Bank, and the lip service it has given for decades to negotiating with its Palestinian enemy, that is, its tacit rendering of "the peace process" interminable. . . . This telling contradiction suggests that the Zionists realize that to force the Promise of the Exodus story to its final end not only entails self-defeating violence (and global condemnation), but also, and apparently more important, the eventual regression (backsliding) of the Israelite community to the conditions of "Egypt" ("tyranny and corruption" in Walzer's words). To guarantee their "revolutionary politics," the perpetual rejuvenation of the covenantal people and their missionary vocational zeal, the Zionist apologists for Israeli policies toward the Palestinians choose instead, like the modern secular American heirs of the Puritans and the Mosaic Israelites, to represent their location as a perpetual wilderness or frontier world and themselves as a progressive civilized people beleaguered by a subhuman humanity that knows nothing but terror.

Let me make clear the anti-essentialism of Edward Said's (and my) confrontation with Zionism in addressing the question of Palestine, though such a clarification should not be needed, given how often Said made it. His anti-Zionism was *not* driven by identity politics. It was not undertaken from the single-minded perspective of an expropriated Arab, as his opponents and, unfortunately, some sympathizers have claimed. Though he recognized the necessity of nationalism in the struggle of colonized peoples for self-determination and liberation, he saw this as a strategic, not an essentialist need. Indeed, his confrontation was motivated precisely by his abhorrence of the essentialist identity politics of nationalism and/or racism, as his insistent expression of sympathy for the horrific fate of the Jews under Nazi anti-Semitism testifies. His fundamental perspective on the question of being-in-the-world was, rather, radically secular: that of an ontological and ontic exile—neither a part of nor apart from the identical whole, but, as we have seen, always already between: outside inside, de-centered, untimely, a-part. In the paradoxical terms I have tentatively drawn from Said's encomium to the "non-Jewish Jew" celebrated by Isaac Deutscher and embodied by Freud to suggest his affiliation with the "conscious pariah" Hannah Arendt, he was a non-Palestinian Palestinian. Accordingly, his criticism of Zionism, like that of Arendt, as we will see at length in the last chapter, was directed precisely against its "political theology": its divinely ordained, naturalized super-

naturalist perspective, an essentialist nationalism whose logic of belonging separated the human beings who inhabit the land of Palestine into a fixed, hierarchal binary: Us (the Zionists) against them (the Palestinian Arabs) or, in the language of the Exodus story, settler against nomad. Accordingly, too, his vision of Palestine's future was neither of an enclosed land inhabited by a single, self-identical people (Jewish or Arab) nor one separated into two racially pure nation-states (*apartheid*). It was, rather, as it was for Arendt, a single, bi-national state in which two historically constructed peoples live together in intimate strife. As Said put this richly suggestive vision of the anti-identitarian exilic consciousness for an increasingly globalized world in *Culture and Imperialism:*

> [I]t is no exaggeration to say that liberation as an intellectual mission, born in the resistance and opposition to the confinements and ravages of imperialism, has now shifted from the settled, established, and domesticated dynamics of culture to its unhoused, decentered, and exilic energies, energies whose incarnation today is the migrant, and whose consciousness is that of the intellectual and artist in exile, the political figure between domains, between forms, between homes, and between languages. From this perspective then all things are indeed counter, original, spare, strange. From this perspective also, one can see the "complete consort dancing together" contrapuntally.[38]

As Said and other exilic figures—not least Hannah Arendt—have made persuasively clear in the last half century, the modern Western nation-state/imperialism nexus has left contemporary humanity heir to an irreversible, de-centered, and mobile globalized world. Following the imperative to think the positive possibilities of the aporias disclosed by the self-destruction of the binarist logic of the Western nation-state and its imperialist project, particularly the "nothing," the "other," and the "errancy" that this logic of belonging has willfully and systematically had nothing to do with, Said has called this culturally diverse humanity to a radically new—non-identitarian, non-nationalist, globally oriented, and polyphonic—way of comporting itself toward being and the world. In contrast to Said's contrapuntal vision, Walzer prescribes the Exodus story and its "Western," linear- and end-oriented covenantal politics, not simply as the resolution of the question of Palestine, but also, by universalizing this "progressive" narrative, as a cure for the destabilized modern world. This prescription is not only anachronistic in its continuing apotheosis of the sovereign nation-state (the polity of "the People"). Like that of his contemporary Zionist colleagues, liberal and

messianic, in relation to Palestine, it also constitutes a recuperative appeal to the very binarist and relentlessly progressive nationalist logic whose fulfillment in totalitarianism, according to Hannah Arendt, produced the horrific plight of the Jews and the imperialism whose consequence was the unhoming and destabilization of the world in the name of a metropolitan global order.

More immediate to my point, however, Walzer's "Exodus politics" constitutes a mirror image of the arrogant unilateral exceptionalist logic that has characterized American domestic and foreign policy from the Puritan theocracy to the present post–Cold War occasion. Blinded by his optimistic insight to the consequences foreseen by the minority of non-Zionist Zionists to which Hannah Arendt belonged—and epitomized by Martin Buber in the epigraph that introduces this section—Walzer writes at the end of his book:

> We still believe, or many of us do, what the Exodus first taught, or what it has commonly been taken to teach, about the meaning and possibility of politics and about its proper forms:
>
> —first, that wherever you live, it is probably Egypt;
> —second, that there is a better place, a world more attractive, a promised land;
> —and third, that "the way to the land is through the wilderness." There is no way to get from here to there except by joining together and marching. (ER, 149)

However qualified in the process of his argument, one cannot help but hear echoes in Walzer's reiterations of the progressive "march" (collective action and musical form) inhering in the Exodus narrative, if not of Nazi jackboots, of the relentless forwarding "errand in the wilderness" to "build a city upon the hill" that pervades the American Puritans' election sermons and also of secular America's westward "march" into the Promised Land that saturates both canonical and popular American literature and art in the post-Revolutionary centuries. They echo in the last paragraph of James Fenimore Cooper's first Leatherstocking novel, *The Pioneers:*

> This was the last they ever saw of the Leather-stocking, whose rapid movements preceded the pursuit which Judge Templeton both ordered and conducted. He had gone far towards the setting sun,—the foremost in the band of Pioneers, who are opening the way for the march of the nation across the continent.

They echo in the paintings of George Caleb Bingham ("Daniel Boone Escorting Settlers through the Cumberland Gap, 1851–52)," in John Gast's "American Progress" (1872), and, not least, in Julia W. Howe's "The Battle Hymn of the Republic":

> Mine eyes have seen the glory
> Of the coming of the Lord.
> He is trampling out the vintage
> Where the grapes of wrath are stored,
> He hath loosed the fateful lightning
> Of his terrible swift sword
> His truth is marching on.

And, perhaps most resonantly, they echo in the passage from Timothy Dwight's *Conquest of Canaan* I have taken from Gabriel Piterberg's revelatory genealogy of Zionist discourse as one of the epigraphs of this chapter.

Given the de-centering and globalization of humanity and the consequent mobility these have produced, which is to say, the now visible terror inflicted on the world's "Canaanites" by the "progressive" politics of the Exodus story, it is not difficult to perceive the relentless "march" to the Promised Land to which Walzer and his fellow Zionists adhere as not simply anachronistic, but also, as most postcolonials would now say, disablingly provincial and, as such, dangerous. Surely modern humanity's perilous post-national/imperial occasion would be better served in this interregnum between the waning of the nation-sate and the emergence of a diverse global polity were we to forego the monotonal drum beat measure of the march in favor of attending to the possibilities of human relationality in the agonic play of the polyphonic dance to which Said called us all to think.

CHAPTER 5

Hannah Arendt and Edward W. Said

An Affiliation in Counterpoint

> The exile knows that in a secular and contingent world, homes are always provisional. Borders and barriers, which enclose us within the safety of familiar territory, can also become prisons, and are often defended beyond reason or necessity. Exiles cross borders, break barriers of thought and experience.
>
> —Edward W. Said, "Reflections on Exile"

> A life without speech and without actions . . . is literally dead to the world; it has ceased to be a human life because it is no longer lived among men.
>
> —Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*

> It is only because she was both a Jew and a European who through the darkest of times repudiated neither of these heritages and experiences but rather combined and built on them both that Hannah Arendt achieved distinction as one of the most profound thinkers of our age. Arendt's solution to her own "Jewish problem" was not to repudiate her Jewishness nor blindly affirm it, but to adopt the stance of a conscious pariah—an outsider among non-Jews, and a rebel among her own people. It was because of this marginal position that she was able to gain a critical insight into both the Jewish and non-Jewish worlds.
>
> —Ronald H. Feldman, "Introduction: The Jew as Pariah: The Case of Hannah Arendt"

I. Introduction

In two of his last published works, Edward W. Said, the Palestinian exile, in a telling gesture that has yet to be thought, compares his peculiar intellectual identity to "the non-Jewish Jew."[1] His avowed exemplary instances of this paradoxical figure are Sigmund Freud and Isaac Deutscher. But, I suggest, what becomes striking in the process of his all too brief analysis of the character of this figure is that it could be applied as well, if not more precisely, to Hannah Arendt. Despite the rather obvious biographical and intellectual parallels—particularly their exilic condition and their remarkably similar visions of the future of Palestine—Said rarely refers to Arendt.[2] Nor, as far as I know, have the vast number of scholars, pro or con, who have written on Said or Arendt addressed this tantalizing connection.[3] The absence of sustained discussion about this relationship at the present global occasion is, in my mind, a troubling matter not only because the remarkable common elements of the two apparently antithetical discourses cry out for commentary, but also, I suggest, because they point with symbolic force to the "resolution" of the urgent question of community precipitated by the self-destruction of the idea of the nation-state in the modern era. In the case of Arendt, her silence was, of course, a matter of chronology: Said came to prominence after she died in 1975. As for Arendtian scholars, the silence no doubt has to do with three related circumstances: 1) the fact that her precipitation into global visibility in the 1970s and 1980s came at a time when the scholarship that counted in the West, especially in the United States, was still being undertaken in the name of "disinterested inquiry" and thus precluded identifying the intellectual with race or ethnicity; 2) the fact that her work at that time (particularly *The Human Condition*) was read, not in terms of the global question of being—the onto-theo-logical context of Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger—but of the question of Western sociopolitics—the "communitarian" political-scientific context made prominent, above all, by Jürgen Habermas; [4] and 3) the equally decisive fact that the issue of her ethnicity and her writing on the Jewish question had more or less been claimed by Jewish intellectuals concerned—emotionally and strategically[5]—with the Holocaust, the question of Zionism, and the state of Israel. This last became especially the case after the publication of *Eichmann in Jerusalem* in 1963, whose representation of Adolf Eichmann, not as an anti-Semitic monster but as exemplary of "the banality of evil" that had infected European modernity at large, turned the dominant Jewish culture, including the Zionists, against her.[6] As for the Saidian scholars, their apparent indifference to Arendt has been, no doubt, the

result of two disabling circumstances: 1) the Eurocentric political perspective into which the post–World War II Habermasian/communitarian initiative had coerced her work at the expense of the more global issues she addressed. Exemplary of the early phase of Arendt commentary, for example, is its relative indifference to her writing on the question of Palestine,[7] and within this, to her intense interest in, indeed, commitment to, the pariah figure, which is to say, the question of the exilic consciousness; and 2) the understandable but limiting partisanship of those Saidians who, in practice, if not in theory, overdetermine Said's Palestinian identity at the expense of his repeated calls for one form of reconciliation or another between the two peoples.

With the emergence of Giorgio Agamben to prominence in the domain of theory in the 1990s, Arendt's discourse has undergone a sea change or, rather, a de-centering of, if not a shift away from, the earlier Habermasian focus to incorporate and underscore the contemporary global occasion. I am, more precisely, referring to Agamben's initiative that has brought into an affiliative relationship Heidegger's critique of the (Western) ontotheological tradition, Foucault's analysis of modern biopower, and Arendt's proleptic, but hitherto largely unexamined, underscoring of the emergence of the refugee or stateless person in the wake of the self-destruction of the Western nation-state system and imperialism after World War II as the defining figure of the post-imperial global occasion: a constellation which, though Agamben curiously does not name it, could, I think, equally, if not more pertinently, include Edward Said as well. Whatever the reasons for the strange indifference or silence to this affiliative relationship between Arendt–Said, it is my contention, on the basis of the directives suggested by this paradigm shift in Arendtian studies, not only that such a relationship does exist, but also that it is replete with potentiality *vis-à-vis* the recalcitrant question of Palestine and, more generally, of the coming community: the new *polis* that the self-destruction of the nation-state has rendered paradoxically possible.

II. The Exilic Consciousness

Said's most relevant invocation of the figure of the "Non-Jewish Jew" occurs, as I have shown, in his posthumously published *Humanism and Democratic Criticism,* and it comes, not incidentally, at the moment when, in explaining his "humanist" philological method (HDC, 77), he stresses the "resistance" phase of the reading process in which "reception" and "resistance" belong together:

> [W]e need to keep coming back to the words and structures in the books we read, but, just as these words were themselves taken by the poet from the world and evoked from out of silence into the forceful ways without which no creation is possible, readers must also extend their readings out into the various worlds each one of us resides in. It is especially appropriate for *the contemporary humanist to cultivate that sense of multiple worlds and complex interacting traditions, that inevitable combination I've mentioned of belonging and detachment, reception and resistance. The task of the humanist is not just to occupy a position or a place, not simply to belong somewhere, but rather 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.* (HDC, 76; my emphasis)

As the emphasized sentences manifestly imply, this kind of reading, which simultaneously involves "belonging and detachment," has as its enabling source the exilic consciousness, the one who is at the same time a part of but also apart from a homeland. The dis-affiliated reader, Said says, does not "occupy a position or a place"—i.e., is not a self-identical entity grounded in (native or filiated to) a fixed territorial location; he/she is, rather, "both insider and outsider" in relation to the discursive and practical world in which he/she exists: a "double consciousness" in W. E. B. Dubois's phrase.[8] It is to clarify this paradoxical—difficult, indeed, mutilating, but enabling—two-in-one condition, as it were, that Said invokes the figure of the "non-Jewish Jew":

> In this connection, it is invigorating to recall . . . 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. Not many of us can or would want to aspire to such a dialectically fraught, so sensitively located a class of individuals, but it is illuminating to see in such a destiny the crystallized role of the American humanist, the non-humanist humanist as it were. (HDC, 77)

Said, admittedly, is here drawing a parallel not between the "non-Jewish Jew" and "non-Palestinian Palestinian," but with the "non-humanist humanist"—the humanist, like himself, who renounces his/her tradition but preserves his/her original tie "by submitting it to the corrosive questioning that took [him/her] well beyond it." But clearly—in fact, the familiar anti-identitarian rheto-

ric of the analogy demands such a reading—it would not violate his point if "non-Palestinian" Palestinian were substituted for "non-humanist humanist." Indeed, Said, often and systematically, opposed identity or "filial" politics in general and dissociated himself from racial- and/or nativity-based Palestinian nationalism.[9] If this ethnic extension of Said's non-humanist humanism is reconstellated into the question of the relationship between Said's and Hannah Arendt's discourses, particularly her pervasive, if still to be fully thought, concept of "the conscious pariah"—and, not least, the Socrates, who unlike Hippias, goes home at the end of the day to confront his other self[10]—the "a-ffiliation" I am suggesting comes to be seen not only as viable, but also as productive. It is no accident, I think, despite the lack of further amplification, that the Marxist/Jewish scholar Gabriel Piterberg, a follower of Arendt and an avowed "conscious pariah," dedicates his recent powerful revisionary cultural history of Zionism to the "memory of Edward W. Said (1935–2003), the conscious pariah par excellence" (RZ, v), and that the Saidian scholar Aamir Mufti, clearly with Said's exilic consciousness in mind, inaugurates his ground-breaking study of the Jewish question as it pertains to the postcolonial world by invoking Arendt's notion of the "conscious pariah": "Arendt's formulation of what she calls the 'hidden' Jewish tradition of the 'conscious pariah,' derived from the fin de siècle polemics of Bernard Lazarre but which may also be read as a reinscription of Max Weber's ultimately dismissive characterization of the Jews as a 'pariah' people, was key in formulating my own concept of minority experience as a site for the critique of dominant conceptions and narratives of collective life. I am interested, in other words, in the figure of the Jew as *subject,* not just object, of the processes we know as emancipation and assimilation" (EC, 8).

Let me first briefly consider the biographical parallel between Arendt and Said. As is well known, Said's Palestinian family was forced into exile by the Israelis after 1948 when the project of the inaugural Balfour Declaration of 1917 was fulfilled by the arbitrary establishment of Israel as a nation-state in Palestine and the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians. As his memoir, *Out of Place,* poignantly chronicles, from that "evental" moment in his life, which catapulted the question of (national) identity into his consciousness, exile, crystallized in his displacement from the Arab world of his birth to the United States, specifically to a preparatory school in New England whose work ethic epitomized the dominant Anglo-Protestant core culture, became increasingly the supreme theme of his private and public life. Indeed, as we have seen, it not only instigated his peculiar polyvalent insider-outsider "humanist" perspective, the sense of being simultaneously a part of and apart from the "world," and, more particularly, of being a "non-American Ameri-

can" or a "non-Palestinian Palestinian." I mean that eccentricity or, two-in-one consciousness, the painful yet potentializing "estranging" power of which enabled him to perceive, contrapuntally, the *aporias* that the "structures of attitude and references"[11] of the familiarized at-homed (nationalized) world or, in the phrase Said appropriated from Theodor Adorno, the "administered society,"[12] blinds one to.

Unlike the mass of commentary and criticism on Said's work, that on Hannah Arendt has strangely—and, I think, disablingly—undervalued the role her exilic condition played in shaping her comportment to the world. This, as I have suggested, has been, in part, the result of the marginalization of her writing on the Jewish question by Western (Gentile) scholars and critics in favor of the overdetermination of her powerful work on Western political modernity as exemplified by such prominently visible texts as *The Human Condition* (1958), *On Revolution* (1963), *On Violence* (1970), and, the posthumously published *The Life of the Mind* (1978). To put it alternatively, the minimizing of Arendt's exilic condition was the consequence of the tendency on the part of critics and commentators to emphasize her (assimilated) "Germanness" over her "Jewishness." The immediate result of this tendency has been largely to marginalize, if not entirely efface, the role that Arendt's version of the exilic consciousness, as she articulated it early in her career in her "biography," *Rahel Varnhagen: A Life of a Jewess;* in the topical essays on the Jews as a pariah people; and, especially, in *Antisemitism* (volume 1 of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*), plays in the articulation of her argument about the modern Western political world in her work.[13] The ultimate consequence of this marginalization of her exilic condition has been to obscure the unique characteristics of the positive idea of the "pluralist" human *polis* she envisaged. For these reasons it will be necessary, despite its obviousness, to briefly retrieve her exile from the margins to which it has been relegated and to think the impact it made on her consciousness of the "worldliness" of her "world" or, to use the language she appropriated from Heidegger, on her sense of "being-in-the world." This retrieval, I hope to show, will go far to validate the affiliation between Arendt, the "non-Jewish Jew," and Said, the "non-Palestinian Palestinian" I am hypothesizing. As we shall see, it will also show—and deriving from this peculiar exilic consciousness—the remarkable similarity of their "worldliness," their understandings of the figure of the refugee, their visions of the future Palestine, and, more generally, their projections of the coming *polis*.

In referring to the parallel between Hannah Arendt's and Edward Said's exilic condition, I am not only pointing to her status as a member of the Jewish community in a hyper-nationalist Germany, the land of her birth,

in which, like the Palestinians in the eyes of both the Orientalist West and of the modern Israeli state, the Jews have come increasingly to be seen, in the term Arendt appropriates from Max Weber, as "a pariah people."[14] I am also referring to her actual biography: her, like Said's, enforced exile beginning with her escape from Germany to Paris in 1933, following her arrest for her political activist work in behalf of (a certain aspect of) the Zionist cause, through her internment as an "enemy alien" in Pétain France in 1940, to her flight to the United States in 1941. There, in an inaugural—and proleptic—but neglected essay, "We Refugees,"[15] to which I will return, she not only invokes her status as a refugee or stateless person as a synecdoche of the global demographics produced by the self-destruction of Europe—and the European nation-state system—in World War II, but also that particular type of a pariah people—"the *conscious* pariah" (my emphasis)—that alone could redeem its pariahdom and render refugees in general "the vanguard of their peoples." I quote from this early essay at length not only to underscore its inaugural importance for Arendt's later, more visible political writing, and to establish the relay it articulates as a constant,[16] but also to point prolegomenally to its remarkable affiliation with the local/global project Said's exilic consciousness enabled:

> The attitude of these few [the Jewish minority that refused the imperatives of assimilation in favor of exile] whom, following Bernard Lazare, one may call "conscious pariahs," can as little be explained by recent events alone as the attitude of our Mr. Cohn [Arendt's model of the pariah as a parvenu] who tried by every means to become an upstart. Both are sons of the nineteenth century which, not knowing legal or political outlaws, knew only too well social pariahs and their counterpart, social parvenus. Modern Jewish history, having started with court Jews and continuing with Jewish millionaires and philanthropists, is apt to forget about this other trend of Jewish tradition—the tradition of Heine, Rahel Varnhagen, Sholom Aleichem, of Bernard Lazare, Franz Kafka or even Charlie Chaplin. [Note that Heine is, for Said, an exemplar of the "non-Jewish Jew."] It is the tradition of a minority of Jews who have not wanted to become upstarts, who preferred the status of "conscious pariah." All vaunted Jewish qualities—the "Jewish heart," humanity, humor, disinterested intelligence—are pariah qualities. All Jewish shortcomings—tactlessness, political stupidity, inferiority complexes and money-grubbing—are characteristic of upstarts. There have always been Jews *who did not think it worthwhile to change their humane attitude and their natural insight into reality for the narrowness of caste spirit or the essential unreality of financial transactions.*

> History has forced the status of outlaws upon both, upon pariahs and parvenus alike. The latter have not yet accepted the great wisdom of Balzac's "*On ne parvient pas deux fois*" [One does not arrive/succeed twice]; thus they don't understand the wild dreams of the former and feel humiliated in sharing their fate. Those few refugees who insist upon telling the truth, even to the point of "indecency," get in exchange for their unpopularity one priceless advantage: *history is no longer a closed book to them and politics is no longer the privilege of Gentiles. They know that the outlawing of the Jewish people in Europe has been followed closely by the outlawing of most European nations. Refugees driven from country to country represent the vanguard of their peoples—if they keep their identity.* For the first time Jewish history is not separated but tied up with that of all other nations. The comity of European peoples went to pieces when, and because, it allowed its weakest member to be excluded and persecuted.[17]

What I want to suggest, in other words, is that the key, indeed, enabling, term—the "conscious pariah"—in Arendt's discourse about European Jewish identity and history, a term that emerges from her existential experience of exile, resonates with a meaning that is remarkably analogous to what Said means by the "exilic consciousness." On the surface, Arendt's articulation in the above paragraphs of the meaning of this term seem to suggest little more than a Jew who is aware of and resistant to his/her status as an outcast: one who is resolutely and courageously committed to his/her racial identity as Jew despite his/her pariah status. This, in fact, could be inferred from Ron Felman, who, in the oppositional minority tradition of the "conscious pariah"—and as a corrective to the prevailing perspective on her work—collected and published the "Jewish" writings of Hannah Arendt after her death. But, on closer examination, the term not only resists this inference; it also asserts something quite different, if not exactly the antithesis of such a simple identitarian meaning. This becomes clear when, as her repeated usage demands, Arendt's privileged term is understood in the context of its indissolubly related negative counter-term, the ventriloquized "Pariah as parvenu": her critical characterization of the dominant Jewish culture that, perhaps more than any other, has drawn its wrath, that is, rendered her an alien in the Jewish community. Invoking the "conscious pariah," the French Jewish anarchist, Bernard Lazare, as her authority, Arendt writes:

> He saw that what was necessary was to rouse the Jewish pariah to a fight against the Jewish *parvenu.* There was no other way to save him from the latter's own fate—inevitable destruction. Not only, he contended, had the

> pariah nothing but suffering to expect from the domination of the *parvenu,* but it is he who is destined sooner or later to pay the price of the whole wretched system. "I want no longer," he says in a telling passage, "to have against me not only the wealthy of my people, who exploit me and sell me, but also the rich and poor of other peoples who oppress and torture me in the name of my rich." And in these words he puts his finger squarely on that phenomenon of Jewish life which the historian Jost has so aptly characterized as "double slavery"—dependence, on the one hand, upon the hostile elements of his environment and, on the other, on his own "highly placed brethren" who are somehow in league with them. Lazare was the first Jew to perceive the connection between these two elements, both equally disastrous to the pariah. His experience of French politics [during the Dreyfus Affair] had taught him that whenever the enemy seeks control, he makes a point of using some oppressed element of the population as his lackeys and henchmen, rewarding them with special privileges, as a kind of sop. (JP, 76–77)[18]

Arendt's understanding of the conscious pariah needs to be amplified, but for the time being it will suffice to say that, in dislocating the self from its self, she consciously undermines the identitarianism that lies at the core of both the Jewish parvenu and that anti-Semitism that relies on the parvenu for its life-damaging power—without, at the same time doing away with it.

III. Identity

Arendt never lost sight of the disabling conditions imposed by the history of anti-Semitism that made it impossible for Jews to participate *as human beings* in the political life of modern Europe. She nevertheless was insistently, courageously, and severely critical of the tendency of modern Jewish leadership (the powerful court Jews and international bankers of the European nation-states and those bourgeois Jews who were culturally associated with them) to use its wealth to achieve acceptance: a superficial assimilation as, in the insidiously degrading language of the Gentiles, "exceptional Jews" that de-historicized and dehumanized the vast population of ordinary, mostly poor Eastern, Jews, reduced them to what, in a striking parallel with Said's humanist commitment to the Vichean idea that humans make their history, Arendt insistently called "worldlessness,"[19] that is, to a reduced or "bare" life that disabled the possibility of transforming a *pariah* people into a *political* people (a *polis*):

> Jewish history offers the extraordinary spectacle of a people, unique in this respect, which began its history with a well-defined concept of history and an almost conscious resolution to achieve a well-circumscribed plan on earth and then, without giving up this concept, avoided all political action for two thousand years. The result was that the political history of the Jewish people became even more dependent upon unforeseen and accidental factors than the history of other nations, so that the Jews stumbled from one role to the other and adopted responsibility for none. (AS, 8)

The modern Jewish parvenus, she writes repeatedly, deny their historical relation with the mass of ordinary Jews in order to become "assimilated" into the Gentile European world; yet at the same time they systematically maintain their ontological/racial identity. Thus, their pariah status—their intensely worldly exilic condition—and the estranging double consciousness dislocation is capable of enabling—is politically neutralized. In their public or "worldly" capacity their vocation is to achieve "belongingness"—"at-homeness"—in the world that at best only tolerates them; in their private capacity, they remain self-identical Jews, indifferent to the immediate political imperatives of exile, of being in the time of the now: between or in the midst; i.e., radically secular. Despite the enormous historical pressure to become "worldly," they settle for (a passive) survival and thus remain, like their messianic predecessors in European history "unworldly"—and foster Jewish unworldliness.

It is, above all, against this powerful body of "unworldly" parvenu pariahs—and the vocation to belong (assimilate)—that Arendt pits the small minority of "conscious pariahs," among whose number she repeatedly cites the French-Jewish political theorist of the Dreyfus Affair, Bernard Lazare; the German Jewish poet Heinrich Heine; the Englishman Charlie Chaplin (whom she mistakenly takes to be of Jewish origins); the German-Jewish novelist Franz Kafka; and the German-Jewish Marxist Walter Benjamin. (Others include Rahel Varnhagen and Sholem Aleichem.) In her provocative essay "The Jew as Pariah: A Hidden Tradition" (1944), Arendt distinguishes four types of rebel Jewish pariahs: the "*Schlemihl*" (Heine), the "conscious pariah" as such (Lazare), "the suspect" (Chaplin), and "the man of good will" (Kafka), though their common rebellion against *both* the degradations of the "lowly" (the "nobodies") (JP, 82) by the dominant (parvenu) Jewish culture *and* the racist anti-Semitism of the Gentiles in the name of a common humanity is more important. I will focus on Arendt's analysis of "the conscious pariah," not only for the sake of brevity, but because it is, above all, this type, as exem-

plified by the *doubly outcast,* Bernard Lazare, that Arendt unfailingly identifies as a person and overdetermines in her writing.

Obviously, Arendt understands the phrase "conscious pariah," as the Jewish outcast who, unlike the parvenu, is disturbingly aware of the degrading dislocation his/her *humanity* has suffered under the aegis of Western anti-Semitism or, more broadly, of a definition of humanity determined by the West:

> No one fares worse from this process [the increasing "tendency to conceive of the Jewish people as a series of separate territorial units and to resolve its history into so many regional chronicles and parochial records," thus leaving "its great figures" "perforce to the tender mercies of assimilationist propaganda"] than those bold spirits who tried to make of the emancipation of the Jews that which it really should have been—an admission of Jews *as Jews* to the ranks of humanity, rather than a permit to ape the gentiles or an opportunity to play the *parvenu.* Realizing only too well that they did not enjoy political freedom nor full admission to the life of nations, but that, instead, they had been separated from their own people and lost contact with the simple natural life of the common man, these men yet achieved liberty and popularity by the sheer force of imagination. As individuals they started an emancipation of their own, of their hearts and brains. Such a conception was, of course, a gross misconstruction of what emancipation had been intended to be; but it was also a vision, and out of the impassioned intensity with which it was evinced and expressed it provided the fostering soil on which Jewish creative genius could grow and contribute its products to the general spiritual life of the Western world. (JP, 68)

Read superficially, as this aspect of Arendt's thought has all too often been, the above inaugural general characterization of this type of pariah as one who understands the end of Jewish emancipation as "admission of the Jew *as Jew*" could be taken to suggest that the conscious pariah is simply an impassioned proponent of Jewish nationalism.[20] But this, I submit, as her prioritization of the Jews' humanity against the Western racist tradition *and* dominant Jewish culture's own racist self-representation suggest, would constitute a gross misreading. For, as his/her alienation from both the essentialist self-representation of the gentile world and of the worldless dominant Jewish culture in the name of a prior common humanity suggest, the conscious pariah, in his/her enforced double exile, sees him/herself as neither one nor the other, or, more precisely, as both at the same time: two-in-one. To invoke

Heidegger, Arendt's mentor, the conscious pariah is an "ek-sistent in-sistent" being characterized essentially by care (*Sorge*).[21] Driven out of both worlds, this type of pariah becomes existentially conscious of his/her unique thrownness in the world, where he/she is compelled to resort to his/her "own heart and brain," not to the (filial, collective, and vocational) dictates of a race or a nation, which are cultural constructions. In Kierkegaard's terms, the source of Heidegger's notion of *Sorge*, the fundamental existential structure of common humanity (*Da-sein*), the animated consciousness of the conscious pariah becomes consciousness of being *inter esse*—and interested—that is, carefully in-the-midst—or what is the same thing, always already in between (beginning and end, *Arché* and *Telos*):

> Reflection is the possibility of relationship. This can also be stated thus: Reflection is *disinterested*. Consciousness on the contrary is relationship, and it brings with it interest or concern; a duality which is perfectly expressed with pregnant double meaning by the word "interest" (Latin *inter esse,* meaning (i) "to be between," (ii) "to be a matter of concern."[22]

As such a *conscious* outcast in the (secular) world, the pariah becomes, in Edward Said's remarkably similar, paradoxical terms, an outside insider, a part and apart, or, more specifically, a "non-Jewish Jew."

As in the case of Said's unhomed exilic consciousness—his being a "non-Palestinian Palestinian"—this care-provoking in-betweenness, this simultaneous being a part of and apart from the Jewish "world," this being two-in-one—enables the conscious pariah—the "non-Jewish Jew"—to perceive in the world (contrapuntally, as it were) the ontological, racial, cultural, and political aporias to which its familiarization by metaphysical (racial, filial, and national) codes has blinded the assimilated Jew, the parvenu, and the Jewish masses, each in its own way, not least, as Arendt makes proleptically clear in volume 2 of *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* the very idea of the pariah,[23] that is, of its increasingly historical universalization in the modern world at large:

> That the status of the Jews in Europe has been not only that of an oppressed people but also of what Max Weber has called a "pariah people" is a fact more clearly appreciated by those [conscious pariahs; that is, "non-Jewish Jews"] who have had practical experience of just how ambiguous is the freedom which emancipation had ensured, and how treacherous the promise of equality which assimilation had held out. In their own position as social outcasts such men reflect the political status of their entire

> people. *It is therefore not surprising that out of their personal experience Jewish poets, writers, and artist should have been able to evolve the concept of the pariah as a human type—a concept of supreme importance for the evaluation of mankind in our day and one which has exerted upon the gentile world an influence in strange contrast to the spiritual and political ineffectiveness which has been the fate of these men among their own brethren.* Indeed the concept of the pariah has become traditional, even though the tradition be but tacit and latent, and its continuance automatic and unconscious. Nor need we wonder why: for over a hundred years the same basic conditions have obtained and evoked the same basic reactions. (JP, 68; my emphasis)[24]

I will return to this remarkable insight about the demographics of the (post)modern world—so proleptic of the insights of such more recent contemporary theorists of globalization as diverse as Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Aamir Mufti, Antonio Negro and Michael Hardt, Giorgio Agamben, Alain Badiou, Slavoj Žižek, Jacques Rancière, Ernesto Laclau, and Judith Butler (among others)—later in this chapter. Here, I want to remain focused on the dis-affiliating, de-familiarizing and disclosive uniqueness of the conscious pariah's perspective on the world, not least on racial and national identities, that, according to Arendt, his/her in-betweenness enables. For it is precisely this demystifying inside/outside perspective of the nomad that, as I have shown, characterizes Edward Said's "exilic consciousness." That this affiliative relationship is not an exaggeration is suggested by thinking Arendt's famous response to Gershom Scholem's bitter critique of Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem,* particularly his accusation of her betrayal of her filial Jewish heritage and of the "Jewish people,"[25] in relation to Said's characterization of and identification with Isaac Deutscher's dis-affiliative account of "the Non-Jewish Jew":

> To come to the point: let me begin, going on from what I have stated ["I have always regarded my Jewishness as one of the indisputable factual data of my life, and I have never had the wish to change or disclaim facts of this kind"], with what you call "love of the Jewish people" or *Ahabath Israel.* . . . You are quite right—I am not moved by any "love" of this sort, and for two reasons. I have never in my life "loved" any people or collective—neither the German people, nor the French, not the Americans, nor the working class or anything of that sort. I indeed love "only" my friends and the "only" kind of love I know of and believe in is the love of persons. Second, this "love of the Jews" would appear to me, since I am myself Jewish, as some-

> thing rather suspect. I cannot love myself or anything which I know is part and parcel of my own person.[26]

Seen in the estranging light thrown by such a reconstellation of Hannah Arendt's "conscious pariah" into the context of Said's "exilic consciousness," the unlikely affiliation I am arguing becomes incontrovertible. Both enable a nomadic double, or two-in-one, consciousness—an in-between or outside/inside perspective on the world that perceives an alternative—or, to anticipate, contrapuntal—reality in a worlded world that is foreclosed to the familiarized, assimilated (in the strong etymological sense of the word), and self-identical self: not only the common singular humanity that is ontologically prior to racial and ethnic (filial) labels, but also, and more important, to the dialectics between identity and difference that enables living and thinking responsibly (carefully) *between* two worlds: the Jewish world and Europe in the case of Arendt and the Palestinian and the European/American in the case of Said. If we register the remarkable similarity of the language Ronald Feldman uses to represent Hannah Arendt's exilic life *and* work with the language Said later uses to represent his exilic life *and* work—and keep in mind his insistent sympathy for Arendt's acknowledgment of the Palestinian presence in Palestine—this productive estrangement and its affiliation with Said—particularly his notion of counterpoint—is precisely what he unwittingly but enablingly implies in his early courageous, impassioned, and masterful (but apparently futile), defense of Hannah Arendt—this "non-Jewish Jew"—against the dominant (Zionist) Jewish culture that, especially after *Eichmann in Jerusalem,* condemned her, which is to say, exiled her from the Jewish "nation," for having brazenly betrayed the cause of the Jews so soon after the Holocaust:

> Not only did Hannah Arendt formulate and celebrate the Jewish pariah *as a human type* [as opposed to filial racial and national labels], she epitomized it in her life and thought. As a conscious pariah who was committed to, yet critical of, both her Jewish and European inheritances, her intellectual project as a whole *was founded* in the problematic of Jewishness in the modern world. The transformation of Judaism into Jewishness in an increasingly secular world meant that, like Kafka [or Varnhagen, Heine, Lazare, and Benjamin, as well as Deutscher and Freud], she had lost the Judaic heritage of her fathers *without gaining a firmly rooted place in the European polity,* which itself was in the process of collapse. As pariah, her work is characterized by the dialectical tension between her Jewishness and modern Jewish history, on the one side, and her European and

> generalized human experience in the modern age, on the other. *The result was a unique outlook on both Jewish and European concerns in which the specifically Jewish and broadly European experiences constantly inform one another.* Arendt's most lauded work [at the time of Feldman's defense], *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* is clearly the product of a conscious pariah, without equal as an intricate and beautiful pattern into which both Jewish and European concerns and history are intentionally woven together. (HAJP, 19; my emphasis)

IV. The Secular World

> Those masterful images because complete
> Grew in pure mind, but out of what began?
> A mound of refuse or the sweepings of a street,
> Old kettles, old bottles, and a broken can,
> Old iron, old bones, old rags, that raving slut
> Who keeps the till. Now that my ladder's gone,
> I must lie down where all the ladders start,
> In the foul rag-and-bone shop of the heart.
>
> —W. B. Yeats, "The Circus Animals' Desertion," quoted in Edward W. Said, *Beginnings* (p. 348)

The affiliation between Edward Said and Hannah Arendt I am pointing to is by no means restricted to the parallel between the exilic consciousness and the conscious pariah. Their terrible but enabling unhoming is not simply a political event; it is also and more fundamentally, as I have been suggesting, an ontological event, a de-centering from a Center (or Principle of Presence), a dis-lodgment from the fixed and eternal *Logos* hitherto endemic to Western history, what Heidegger called the "onto-theo-logical" and Jacques Derrida the "logocentric" tradition: not only, I want to emphasize, to the "old" Western world—the religious world determined by the arbitrary Judeo-Christian *Theo-Logos*—but also, and more immediately, the modern world of the Enlightenment—the world under the aegis of the *Anthropo-Logos,* which has all too loosely—and disablingly—been called the "secular age." I mean by this last, with Said, the world that has concealed its reliance on a transcendental Principle of Presence or *Logos* or Oneness that has been internalized in the so called finite world of time: a "naturalized supernatural" world epitomized, according to Said, by such exemplary Western "humanist" scholars of the Orient as Sylvestre de Sacy and, above all, Ernest Renan:

> My thesis [in *Orientalism* at large] is that the essential aspects of modern Orientalist theory and praxis (from which present-day Orientalism is derived) can be understood, not as a sudden access of objective knowledge about the Orient, but as a set of structures inherited from the past, secularized, redisposed, and re-formed by such disciplines as philology, which in turn were naturalized, modernized, and laicized substitutes for (or versions of) Christian supernaturalism. In the form of texts and ideas, the East was accommodated to these structures.[27] (O, 122)

In de-centering him, Said's enforced exile, in other words, throws him out of an essentialist world, a world having a Beginning and End, *Arché and Telos,* in which the End (in both senses of the word) is present from the beginning, into a *radically* secular world. In the naturalized supernatural world of Enlightenment modernity, the differential dynamics of temporality are accommodated (and reduced) to a *structure* in which all the "parts" (or "details") are assumed to *belong* properly, i.e., integrally—and hierarchically—to a privileged larger total—and *spatialized*—whole: to anticipate, a tonal or harmonic or sym-phonic world. Human history, as in the obvious example of Hegel, *is made by* a *Summum Ens* (some Total Thing) that, despite the appearance of being inside, is actually outside of and superior to the temporal "realm": in short, by (dialectical) History or, in the terms Hannah Arendt appropriates from Enlightenment (and Eurocentric) thinkers as diverse as Hegel, Adam Smith, and Marx, an "invisible hand."[28] In the radically secularized world into which the exile is thrown, on the other hand, temporality becomes radically differential, i.e., infinitely finite, devoid of Origin and End. In this care- or interest-provoking midst (*inter esse*), the exilic consciousness, like Said, via Giambattista Vico, realizes that humanity must make its own history, which is to say, a history that, unlike the history made by God or History (which is the spatialized end of a developing organic and dialectical Truth in the manner of Hegelianism or orthodox Marxism), is a humanly willed construct and, therefore, subject to willful change when historical circumstances arise that the logical economy of the construct cannot accommodate. Invoking Vico's crucial distinction between the views concerning the divine of the Jews and the Gentiles, Said writes:

> For the searching [secular/humanist] modern mind, as for our savage first fathers, a principle of "divinity" arrived at through fear and not reason "reduces a liberty gone wild." Only by *imagining* (divining = inventing) a force anterior to our origin, a force for Vico capable of preventing further regress into irremediable savagery, can we begin to intend to be human.

> The coincidence between bridles upon the primitive and the philosophical man is not gratuitous. Both the savage and the philosopher are alien to God's temporal order, to *sacred* [as opposed to profane] *history;* for according to Vico, most history is a human and *gentile* affliction, whereas for the Jews there is a life "founded by the true God." Here Vico is at his most profoundly suggestive, and he uses etymological puns to make his point beautifully. A gentile savage or philosopher is tamed by the frightful thought of some divinity; "by contrast the Hebrew religion was founded by the true God on the prohibition of the divination on which all gentile nations arose." *The crucial distinction is between the gentiles who divine or imagine divinity, on the one hand, and the Hebrew whose true God prohibits divination, on the other.* To be a gentile is to be denied access to the true God, to have recourse for thought to divination, *to live permanently in history, in an order other than God's, to be able genetically to produce that order of history. Vico's concerns are everywhere with the other order, the word of history made by men.*[29]

It is for this reason—this dispersal of linear/circular History precipitated by the exilic condition—it seems to me, that Said's decisive posthumous reiteration of his abiding commitment to the "secular world" and to "secular criticism" (or in Aamir Mufti's more precise ("catachrestic") reformulation, "critical secularism,"[30] must be read in the context of his one and only extended excursion into ontology. I am referring to his inaugural, but increasingly neglected *Beginnings,*[31] which, following the directives suggested by Vico and an emergent post-metaphysical discourse exemplified by Nietzsche (and developed in Said's time by the "poststructuralist" thinking of Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze), calls radically into question the prevailing (Western) law of the Origin that, in tethering it to the End,[32] *subordinated* historical humanity to the *call* of a "higher synthesis."

> The state of mind that is concerned with origins is . . . theological. By contrast, and this is the shift, beginnings are eminently secular, or gentile, continuing activities. Another difference must be noted here . . . : a beginning intends meaning, but the continuities and methods developing from it are generally *orders* of *dispersion,* of *adjacency,* and of *complementarity.* A different way of putting this is to say that whereas an origin *centrally* dominates what derives from it, the beginning, especially the modern beginning, encourages nonlinear development, a logic giving rise to the sort of multileveled coherence of dispersion which we find in Freud's text, in the texts of modern writers, or in Foucault's archeological investigations. (B, 372–73)

Let me put the above in a way that Hannah Arendt's multiple meditations on temporality under the aegis of metaphysical thinking orient us. The notion of the secular world that Said's exilic consciousness enables by way of its de-structuration of the ontological Origin (or Center or *Logos* or Homeland) must, in opposition to a supernatural or naturalized supernatural representation of *physis* (spatialized temporal nature), be understood as a condition of *radical transience,* a locution the meaning of which, not incidentally, is more precisely suggested by the word "profane," the demonized term Said, explaining Vico, implies in saying above that the savage and the philosopher are "alien to God's order, to sacred history," than the term "secular."[33] It is, to anticipate by way of drawing Said's "beginnings" into the language Arendt deliberately and insistently uses to characterize the world disclosed by the destruction of the Origin-and-End constellation, a condition which is always already "new" or "natal." To return to the probable source of Arendt's language—another one, not incidentally, of her "conscious pariahs," Walter Benjamin—it is a "time of the now" (*ho nyn kairos; nunc stans*): not in the sense of a present devoid of past or future (as in the notion of *carpe diem*), but of an emergent/immersion in a (man-made) "world" utterly subject to the transience of time: in short, a realm of radical freedom, in which one must reject both the security of a higher or sacred cause or, what is the same thing, resist its futural pro-spective—time-suspending, end-oriented, and vocational—imperatives in the name of a comportment toward being that is always already in between and therefore always already a beginning.

Hannah Arendt's intellectual sources are different from Said's: they are, above all, Nietzsche and Heidegger, whereas Said's are Vico and Auerbach, on the one hand, and Foucault and Deleuze, on the other (though they do have Theodor Adorno in common). Nevertheless the logic intrinsic to her conscious pariah, like that informing Said's exilic consciousness, de-structures or de-centers the originating Center and thus throws him/her into an uncanny (*unheimliche*), radically secular world—this not-at-homeness is "the human condition" she brilliantly diagnoses in *The Human Condition*. In this world of transience, in which humanity is divested of the cartographed reference points established by metaphysical—supernatural or naturalized supernatural ontologies (the "Archimedian point," HC, 11, 257–68)—humans, as in Said's radically secular world, are compelled/enabled, always already, to make their own history or, in Arendt's Heideggerian terms, to "world" the earth.

In concluding that the exilic condition—the in-betweenness, the *inter esse*—of the conscious pariah enables him/her ultimately to perceive that human beings make their own history, I by no means want to imply an equation between this enabling figure and the figure Arendt calls *homo faber* (man

as maker). I mean by the latter the figure who, according to Arendt, in the disabling process of the total "socialization" of the private sphere (the *oikos*) of *animal laborans*—the annulment of the public sphere, the *polis* (speech, action, the political)—in modernity, became the measure of the human in the world. Unlike premodern *animal laborans,* whose bodily labor produces that which enables his/her survival, *homo faber* "fabricates [with his/her hands] the sheer unending variety of things whose sum total constitutes the human artifice, the world we live in. They are not consumer goods but use-objects, and their proper use does not cause them to disappear [as in the case of man the laboring animal]. They give the world the stability and solidity without which it could not be relied upon to house the unstable and mortal creature that is man."[34] But intrinsic to the logical economy of *homo faber*'s fabrication is violence—the imposition of the will to power over the differential phenomena of nature. "This is no longer the earning of one's bread 'in the sweat of his brow,' in which man may indeed be lord and master of all living creatures but still remains the servant of nature, his own natural needs, and of the earth. *Homo faber* becomes lord and master of nature herself insofar as he violates and partly destroys what was given to him" (LWA, 174).

Despite a certain superficial similarity with Said's Vichean version of man as maker of his/her world, Hannah Arendt's critique of *homo faber* should not be read as an implicit critique of Vico (and, proleptically, of Said). What needs underscoring in her account of *homo faber* and its kind of world- or history-making is that the violence it entails is "justified" by a concept of temporal process that, unlike Vico's and Said's, which is tethered to *beginnings,* is determined by the metaphysical *Arché/Telos* dyad, which is to say, a secular theology: the naturalized supernaturalized or, more specifically, *the means/end structure:*

> The process of making is itself entirely determined by the categories of means and ends. The fabricated thing is an end product in the twofold sense that the production process comes to an end in it and that it is *only* a means to produce this end. Unlike the laboring activity, where labor and consumption are only two stages of an identical process—the life process of the individual or of society—fabrication and usage are two altogether different processes. The end of the fabrication process has come when the thing is finished, and this process need not be repeated. (LWA, 174; my emphasis)

Though the instrumentalist logic of the means and end structure as such renders the end another means, this unending process, according to Arendt, is brought to its dehumanizing closure with Man's representation of him/

herself as "the measure of all things," that is, when the *Theo-logos* becomes the *Anthropo-logos* and the supernatural is naturalized in modernity.

Unlike the Vichean/Saidian version of man, the maker of his/her world, the immediate consequence of this apotheosis of *homo faber* for humanity's ethical comportment toward the world he/she makes is the inscription of an anthropomorphically *envisioned* totalized world as End from the Beginning—a naturalized supernatural realm and, therefore, a secular pro-spective—and *vocational*—orientation toward temporality and historicity epitomized by that task-oriented ethos intrinsic to the concept of Providence as developed by Calvinist Protestantism—particularly the American Puritan/Capitalist tradition—and analyzed by Max Weber.[35] Under the aegis of this indirectly coercive vocation, human beings as a singular plurality become a collective subjected subject—a differentiated dedifferentiated one (a mass)—which is ordained to devote its time, energy, and labor exclusively to the fulfillment of a collective task that, having its origins outside of the temporal world, annuls the radical freedom that is the imperative of the human condition. To put it alternatively, as radically plural, humanity as *homo faber is called* by the *Anthropo-logos*[36] to postpone its immediate concerns—the existential "care" instigated by having been thrown into "the midst" (*inter esse*), the realm of the radically secular or "profane" or, in Vico's and Said's equally radical language, of the "Gentiles"—in the inexorably ordained name of the "End" envisioned by this "sovereign" "higher" or "sacred" cause. And in answering (obeying) that call—in rendering its vocational logic operative, as it were—humanity renders itself "worldless,"[37] or what to Said, I think, is much the same thing, forfeits the always creative *potential* of "beginnings" for the sake of the fabricated End. It abandons, that is, what, following Benjamin—and Arendt—Giorgio Agamben calls the profane "time of the now" (*ho nyn kairos*), which he understands as the time of the humanizing ethics of "potentiality" *as such*—and Arendt as the time of the "worldly" or the "political."

> The fact that must constitute the point of departure for any discourse on ethics is that *there is no essence, no historical or spiritual vocation,* no biological destiny that humans must enact or realize. This is the only reason why something like an ethics can exist, because it is clear that if humans were or had to be this or that substance, this or that destiny, no ethical experience would be possible—*there would be only tasks to be done.*[38]

In the language Arendt uses in *The Human Condition,* which derives immediately from her opposition to the domination of man as *animal laborans* and, especially, *homo faber,* in postwar modernity, but whose ultimate

origin, I suggest, resides in her outrage at the horrific plight of the dehumanized inmates of the Nazi concentration camps,[39] this ethics and politics of "beginnings" and "potentiality" as such is, as I understand it, intrinsic to what she calls "action." I mean the *saying and doing* of a plurality of "others" in a radically finite temporal world that enables them—these otherwise superfluous nobodies—to "appear" in all their singularity, that is, to emerge from the unworldly (and identityless) world of necessity (of *animal laborans)* and of utility (*homo faber*) to create their "stories" and thus, like Vico's and Said's man-as-maker of his/her own world, *not once and for all, but always already.* Arendt's references to the theological tradition in the following passage should, of course, be understood as radical irony:

> With word and deed we insert ourselves into the human world, and this insertion is like a second birth, in which we confirm and take upon ourselves the naked fact of our original physical appearance. This insertion is not forced upon us by necessity, like labor [*animal laborans*], and it is not prompted by utility, like work [*homo faber*]. It may be stimulated by the presence of others whose company we may wish to join, but it is never conditioned by them; its impulse springs from the beginning which came into the world when we were born and to which we respond by beginning something new on our own initiative. To act, in its most general sense, means to take an initiative, to begin (as the Greek word *Archéin,* "to begin," "to lead," and eventually "to rule," indicates), to set something into motion (which is the original meaning of the Latin *agere*). Because they are *inititium,* newcomers and beginners by virtue of birth, men take initiative, are prompted in to action. [*Initium*] *ergo ut esset, creatus est homo, ante quem nullus fuit* ("that there be a beginning, man was created before whom there was nobody"), said Augustine in his political philosophy. This beginning is not the same as the beginning of the world; it is not the beginning of something but somebody, who is a beginner himself. With the creation of man, the principle of beginning came into the world itself, which, of course, is only another way of saying that the principle of freedom was created when man was created but not before. (HC, 176–77)[40]

The long range consequence of the apotheosis of *homo faber* in modernity has been, according to Arendt, the "socialization" of the public sphere (the "space of appearance," the *polis* of speech and action),[41] which is to say, the projection of the ancient private sphere—the *oikos,* in which, in opposition to the radically democratic *polis,* the *paterfamilias* ruled absolutely over its economy—into the public sphere, the space of the political. This epochal

occupation—this substitution, which could also be characterized as the normalization of the state of exception, manifested itself in three indissolubly related ways. 1) It replaced action (speaking and doing, words and deeds, in the time of the now) by the collective task imposed by a repressive, statistically oriented "household [or family] economy," which is to say, the agonic perspectivalism of the public realm, by a single, sovereign and monolithic perspective: the production of mass society under the aegis of the nation-state (the "national household" [HC, 44]), or, to invoke Theodor Adorno's similar but more radical evaluation, the "administered society." As Arendt puts this reduction of the public realm to the household pointedly to recall Nietzsche's perspectivalism and to suggest the connection between the dehumanizing administered society and the nation-state:

> This [the destruction of the many aspects in which "the common world presents itself to human plurality"] can happened under conditions of radical isolation, where nobody can any longer agree with anybody else, as is usually the case in tyrannies. But it may also happen under the conditions of mass society or mass hysteria, where we see all people suddenly behave as though they were members of one family, each multiplying and prolonging their perspective of his neighbor. In both instances, men have become entirely private, that is, they have been deprived of seeing and hearing others, of being seen and being heard by them. They are imprisoned in the subjectivity of their own singular experience, which does not cease to be singular if the same experience is multiplied innumerable times. The end of *the common world* has come when it is seen only under one aspect and is permitted to present itself in only one perspective. (HC, 57–58; my emphasis)[42]

In thus overdetermining belonging (nativity and citizenship)—the "one perspective"—at the expense of "the world held in common by the human plurality"—the agonic play of multiple perspectives—the logical economy of this socialization of the public sphere in modernity also and simultaneously 2) produced the massive category of the "outlaw," the "refugee," the "émigré," the "unhomed," the "displaced," the "superfluous," the "migrant," the "stateless person," in short, of the "pariah people": those on the other side of the filial (biological), and national divide—the unwanted aliens who, existing in between spatial and temporal boundaries, have been bereaved of "speech" and "action" ("all other qualities and specific relationships—except that they were still human" [OT, 299]—which constitute "a polity")—and thus become dehumanized bodies subject to what can only be called the biopolitics of

deportation, sequestration, ethnic cleansing, and ultimately of the concentration camp without recourse. Attempting to plumb the depths of the abyssal condition of this new biopolitical category of humanity produced by the (bio) logic of belonging of the "socialization" or "familization" of the public sphere, Arendt writes in the proleptic chapter of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* entitled "The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man" (to which I shall return later):

> Yet in the light of recent events [the institutionalization of the concentration camp and the gas chambers in Germany] it is possible to say that even slaves still belonged to some sort of human community. . . . To be a slave was after all to have a distinctive character, a place in society—*more than the abstract nakedness of being human and nothing but human.* Not the loss of specific rights, then, *but the loss of a community willing and able to guarantee any rights whatsoever,* has been the calamity which has befallen ever-increasing numbers of people. Man, it turns out, can lose all so-called Rights of Man without losing his essential quality as man, his human dignity. *Only the loss of a polity itself expels him from humanity*. (OT, 297; my emphasis)

As the rhetoric that underscores the metamorphosis of human to animal (*bios* to *zoé* in Aristotle's terms) suggests, with the "socialization" of the public sphere in modernity (though Arendt does not say so overtly), the vocational means/end (teleo)logic of *homo faber* fulfills itself in the reproduction of the "worldless" *animal laborans* as the defining figure of the contemporary global occasion, *now, however, in its extremest form, that is, as a bare body, which, having been expelled from "humanity," can be, as the Jews were, killed with impunity.* This, at any rate, is the conclusion Giorgio Agamben, following the directives Arendt (and Foucault) offers by way of her meditations on *animal laborans,* seems to draw in claiming that *homo sacer* (bare life: *la vita nuda*) has become the representative "political" figure of the contemporary occasion, in which the state of exception has become the rule—

> Let us now observe the life of *homo sacer.* . . . He has been excluded from the religious community and from all political life: he cannot participate in the rites of his *gens,* nor (if he has been declared *infamis et intestabilis*) can he perform any juridical act. What is more, his entire existence is reduced to a bare life stripped of every right by virtue of the fact that anyone can kill him without committing homicide; he can save himself only in perpetual flight or a foreign land. And yet he is in a continuous relationship with the power

> that banished him precisely insofar as he is at every instant exposed to an unconditioned threat or death. He is pure *zoé* [as opposed to *bios*], but his *zoé* is as such caught in the sovereign ban, and must reckon with it at every moment, finding the best way to elude or deceive it. In this sense, no life, as exiles and bandits know well, is more "political" than his.[43]

and the thanatopolitical "concentration camp," the paradigmatic public space

> Along with the emergence of biopolitics, we can observe a displacement and gradual expansion beyond the limits of the decision on bare life, in the state of exception, in which sovereignty consisted. If there is a line in every modern state marking the point at which the decision on life becomes a decision on death, and biopolitics can turn into thanatopolitics, this line no long appears today as a stable border dividing two clearly distinct zones. This line is now in motion and gradually moving into areas other than that of the political life, areas in which the sovereign is entering into an ever more intimate symbiosis not only with the jurist but also with the doctor, the scientist, the expert, and the priest. . . . From this perspective, the camp—a pure, absolute, and impassable biopolitical space (insofar as it is founded solely on the state of exception)—will appear as the hidden paradigm of the political space of modernity, whose metamorphoses and disguises we will have to learn to recognize. (HS, 122–23)[44]

But in thus overdetermining belonging—nativity, citizenship—at the expense of the "world held in common by the human plurality," the socialization of the public sphere incumbent on the "triumph" of *homo faber* and the means/end paradigm, which ultimately reproduced the "outlaw" who could be transformed into the extreme form of *animal laborans* (bare life) also, according to Arendt, produced 3) the figure of the "conscious pariah" or "exilic consciousness." That is, the fulfillment of its reductive familial "household logic" (HC, 28–38) during the catastrophic time between World War I and the end of World War II also transformed this same outlaw into a specter that haunted the sovereignty of that bio-nationalist logic. In short, it made irreversibly visible the limits of the concept of the modern, biopolitical nation-state. Here, too—at this liminal point between the idea of the nation and of globalization, one cannot help but be struck by the affiliative relationship between Arendt and Said that I have been suggesting by way of thinking the possibilities inhering in this "non-Jewish Jew's" and this "non-Palestinian Palestinian's" understanding of their exilic condition.

V. The Refugee

As I observed earlier, Said concludes his magisterial genealogical history of the modern West, *Culture and Imperialism,* with a diagnosis of the paradoxical volatile global demographics precipitated by the fulfillment of Western imperialism's cultural logic. Despite the familiarity of his diagnosis, I will requote at length from this conclusion, not only to retrieve the indissoluble relationality of his "exilic consciousness" with his diagnosis of these postcolonial global demographic conditions, but also to suggest now through such a retrieval the remarkable similarity of this relationship and that between Hannah Arendt's "conscious pariah" and her diagnosis of the post–World War II demographic conditions in volume 2 of *The Origins of Totalitarianism.* Invoking the theoretical directives offered by Deleuze and Guattari's "Treatise on Nomadology" (among others) as a means by which "the liberating energies released by the great decolonizing resistance movements . . . of the 1980's" might "elude the homogenizing processes of modern life, hold in abeyance the interventions of the new imperial centrality," Said, we recall, writes:

> We can perceive this truth on the political map of the contemporary world. For surely it one of the unhappiest characteristics of the age to have produced more refugees, migrants, displaced persons, and exiles than ever before in history, most of them as an accompaniment to and, ironically enough, as afterthoughts of great postcolonial and imperial conflicts. As the struggle for independence produced new states and new boundaries, it also produced homeless wanderers, nomads, and vagrants, unassimilated to the emerging structures of institutional powers, rejected by the established order for their intransigence and obdurate rebelliousness. And insofar as these people exist between the old and the new, between the old empire and the new state, their condition articulates the tensions, irresolutions, and contradictions in the overlapping territories shown on the cultural map of imperialism.
>
> There is a great difference, however, between the optimistic mobility, the intellectual liveliness, and "the logic of daring" described by the various theorists on whose work I have drawn, and the massive dislocations, waste, misery, and horrors endured in our century's migrations and mutilated lives. *Yet it is no exaggeration to say that liberation as an intellectual mission, born in the resistance and opposition to the confinements and ravages of imperialism, has now shifted from the settled, established, and domesticated dynamics of culture to its unhoused, decentered, and exilic energies, ener-*

> *gies whose incarnation today is the migrant, and whose consciousness is that of the intellectual and artist in exile, the political figure between domains, between forms, between homes, and between languages.* From this perspective then all things are indeed counter, original, spare, strange. From this perspective also, one can see "the complete consort dancing together" contrapuntally. And 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 and then articulating the predicaments that disfigure modernity—mass deportation, imprisonment, population transfer, collective dispossession, and forced immigration.[45]

In this resonant passage, Said is succinctly identifying the essential characteristic of the world precipitated by the self-destruction of the logical economy of Western imperialism: a diasporic globalization that anticipates the demise of the inclusive nation-state. More particularly, he is envisioning two new but related, hitherto unthinkable modes of comportment toward the world. One is a form of resistance to colonial re-incorporation that derives its force precisely from the condition of being "between the old empire and the new state"—of displacement, of superfluity, of not counting, of being disposable—produced by the systematic economy of belonging intrinsic to the logic of the nation-state, a condition that enables a comportment of "*not* belonging," *of refusing to be answerable to the call* of the nation-state. The other, the positive face of resistance, is a form of political "belonging" grounded precisely on the "not belonging"—the "not counting"—that authorizes the nation-state: a polity Said's exilic consciousness envisions as "'the complete consort dancing together' contrapuntally."

I will return to the enigmatic positive phase of this indissolubly related novel liberatory initiative later in this chapter. Here, I want to amplify on the first—the resistance phase—since its unique dis-operative operations—its enablement of uncountability to count, as it were—is so closely tied to the eccentric perspective of the exilic consciousness in the interregnum precipitated by the demise of the logic of Western imperialism. Immediately following the passage quoted above, Said, invoking another exilic thinker, contemporary with Hannah Arendt, whom he might also have called a non-Jewish Jew, writes:

> "The past life of émigrés is, as we know, annulled," says Adorno in *Minima Moralia,* subtitled *Reflections from a Damaged Life*. . . . Why? "Because anything that is not reified, cannot be counted and measured, ceases to exist"

> or, as he says later, is consigned to mere "background." Although the disabling aspects of this fate are manifest, its virtues or possibilities are worth exploring. . . . Adorno's general pattern is what in another place he calls the "administered world" or, insofar as the irresistible dominants in culture are concerned, "the consciousness industry." There is then not just the negative advantage of refuge in the émigré's eccentricity; there is also the positive benefit of challenging the system, describing it in language unavailable to those it has already subdued:
>
> > In an intellectual hierarchy which constantly makes everyone answerable, unanswerability alone can call the hierarchy directly by its name. The circulation sphere, whose stigmata are borne by intellectual outsiders opens a last refuge to the mind that it barters away, at the very moment when refuge no long exists. He who offers for sale something unique that no one wants to buy, represents, even against his will, freedom from exchange. (CI, 333)

Put starkly, the very "eccentricity" of the émigré, in Said's and Adorno's formulation, enables a resonant reversal of power relations: a re-vocation of vocation, as it were. The caller becomes the called; the visitor becomes the visited. Like Arendt's conscious pariah, Said's exilic intellectual/artist—the "political figure between domains, between forms, between homes, and between languages"—is enabled by his organic relationship to his/her damaged fellow migrants to perceive in this estranging interregnum what the traditional revolutionary is blind to: that "liberation as an intellectual mission . . . has now shifted from the settled, established, and domesticated dynamics of culture to its unhoused, decentered, and exilic energies," that is to say, from the overt—and futile—binary opposition inscribed in the nation-state system to an indirect, globally oriented opposition that turns the very (hegemonic) weapons of the nation-state against themselves. As I have observed, following Arendt's directives, the modern nation-state system, especially in its fulfilled form as "administered world" (or normalized state of exception) draws its power from the apotheosis of man as *homo faber* and from the consequent means-and-end structure of making the world. It thus renders the "calling" of a *Telos*—a higher or "sacred" cause—humanity's vocation at the expense of his/her radically secular condition and its potentialities—the time of the now and freedom. In the new dispensation suggested by Said and Adorno's meditations on the exilic consciousness and the new, de-centered global demographics, the hierarchical binary system of the nation-state structure—the dominant and dominated, the native and the alien, the citizen and the deni-

zen, the insider and outsider—those who count and those who don't in its established scheme of things—is, in Agamben's apt term, rendered "inoperative."[46] In refusing (like Melville's Bartleby, the scrivener, not incidentally)[47] to be answerable to the interpellative/vocational call, the uncounted become unaccountable: specters whose gaze now haunts (i.e., *visits*) a hegemonic system in which the victors hitherto always determined what counts (were the visitors).[48] Ultimately, they are enabled to reorient their previously imposed teleological perspective away from the task demanded by the call, toward *this* world and time of the now. Under the tutelage of the potentiality opened up by the exilic consciousness, those who don't count—the multitude, in a more recent language—are, as the etymology of "potentiality" suggests, empowered. They regain the ability to begin, which is to say, to speak and to act in "the space of appearance": the fundamental conditions, as Arendt observes, for the establishment of someonenness and thus of a common polity or polity of the common, i.e., the political sphere.

The *mise-en-scène* of Hannah Arendt's meditations on the volatile globalization of the refugee in modernity, especially in volume 2 of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* ("Imperialism"), is located at a time and place that precedes Said's by a generation. Whereas in Said it is the postcolonial occasion precipitated by the self-destruction of imperialism in the wake of World War II, in Arendt, as we have seen, it is the Europe of the period between World War I and World War II that bore witness to the self-destruction of the European nation-state system: the "fulfillment" of its structural logic of belongingness in the precipitation of the "refugee" or "stateless person" as the spectral epitome of human life on the planet. Despite this chronological difference, however, Arendt's account of the global demographics of modernity—its causes and it essential character—is remarkably similar, indeed proleptic, of Said's. And though her diagnosis is on the whole more pessimistic, close attention to the rhetoric she employs to articulate the essence of this de-centered and destabilized demographics—not least the de-politicization, which is to say, the silencing, the depriving of the stateless of speech (and action)—reveals that her dark analysis intimates the positive possibilities of resistance inhering in the terrible predicament of the stateless, the possibilities that Said overdetermines.

Anticipating Said (and, not incidentally, other post-poststructuralist theorists such a Giorgio Agamben and Alain Badiou), Arendt, in the mid-1950s, not only points to the expanding territorial scope of the "refugee problem." Equally, if not more important, she also underscores the rapid deterioration of the damaged lives of the massive number of stateless, i.e., "rightless," people being increasingly produced by the very fulfillment of the logical econ-

omy of belonging (citizenship) that inheres in the nation-state—*totalitarian and democratic*—a deterioration that ends in the thanatopolitical internment camp, where, stripped of the possibility of speech and action (of a "polity" or "common world"), they are reduced to "the abstract nakedness of being human and nothing but human" (I, 297), or, in Agamben's more recent formulation as I have suggested, to "*homo sacer*" or "bare life." The insistent rendering visible of the incremental erasure of the visible publicness of the stateless—by "nontotalitarian" nation-states—in what follows should not be overlooked:

> No paradox of contemporary politics is filled with a more poignant irony than the discrepancy between the efforts of well-meaning idealists who stubbornly insist on regarding as "inalienable" those human rights, which are enjoyed only by citizens of the most prosperous and civilized countries, and the situation of the rightless themselves. Their situation has deteriorated just as stubbornly, *until the internment camp—prior to the Second World War the exception rather than the rule for the stateless—has become the routine solution for the problem of domicile of the "displaced persons."*
>
> Even the terminology applied to the stateless has deteriorated. The term "stateless" at least acknowledged the fact that these persons had lost the protection of their government and required international agreements for safeguarding their legal status. *The postwar term "displaced persons" was invented during the war for the express purpose of liquidating statelessness once and for all by ignoring its existence. Nonrecognition* of statelessness always means repatriation, i.e., deportation to a country of origin, which either *refuses to recognize* the prospective repatriate as a citizen, or, on the contrary, urgently wants him back for punishment. Since nontotalitarian countries, in spite of their bad intentions inspired by the climate of war, generally have shied away from mass deportations, the number of stateless people—twelve years after the end of the war—is larger than ever. The decision of the statesmen to solve the problem of statelessness *by ignoring* it is further revealed by the lack of any reliable statistics on the subject. This much is known, however; while there are one million "recognized" stateless, there are more than ten million so-called "*de facto*" stateless; and whereas the relatively innocuous problem of the "*de jure*" stateless occasionally comes up at international conferences, *the core of statelessness, which is identical with the refugee question, is simply not mentioned. Worse still, the number of potentially stateless people is continually on the increase*. Prior to the last war, only totalitarian or half-totalitarian dictatorships resorted to the weapon of denaturalization with regard to those who were citizens by

> birth; now we have reached the point where even free democracies, as, for instance, the United States, were [*sic*] seriously considering depriving native Americans who are Communists of their citizenship. The sinister aspect of these measures is that they are being considered in all innocence. Yet, one need only remember the extreme care of the Nazis, who insisted that all Jews of non-German nationality "should be deprived of their citizenship either prior to, or, at the latest, on the day of deportation" (for German Jews such a decree was not needed, because in the Third Reich there existed a law according to which all Jews who had left the territory—including, of course, those deported to a Polish camp—automatically lost their citizenship) in order to realize the true implication of statelessness. (I, 279–80; my emphasis)

As I have noted, Arendt prognosis of the global future following World War II and the beginning of the Cold War is rightly a dark one in comparison with Said's in the wake of the emergence of the hitherto muffled voices of the colonized peoples in the postcolonial era. Dark as it may be, however, it nevertheless is informed by the fundamental aspects of Said's Adornian diagnosis of the diasporic postcolonial global occasion that enabled him to envision the paradoxical positive possibilities inhering in the "massive dislocations, waste, misery and horrors endured in our centuries migrations, and mutilated lives." This is especially evident in Arendt's insistent emphasis on the *silencing*—the deprivation of speech and the common world it implies ("nonrecognition")—that stateless peoples underwent as they were increasingly led from the ghettos to the internment camps by the cruelly clumsy logic of the nation-state. For Arendt, to deprive humans of the speech (*logos*) that, according to Aristotle, rendered human life a *bios politicos,* meant not simply to deny them that which enabled a human being to "appear": to become someone who counts in—to participate as a citizen of—the nation-state. That language, after all, was the hegemonic instrumentalist—means-and-end—language of the modern nation-state under the aegis of *homo faber,* the language, as I have suggested, that, in calling human beings to an end-oriented vocation, demonized the time of the now, which is the time of beginnings and freedom—rendered it "profane"—and, in the end, reproduced *animal laborans* in its most degraded form. The wish of the stateless or outlawed person to gain or regain this hegemonic statist language was, it will be recalled, the tragic folly of the assimilated Jew—the Jewish pariah as parvenu—in modern Germany. For Arendt, then, the condition of silence to which the stateless have been reduced in the name of the nation-state's logic of belonging implies a radically different—a subversive—form of language. Initially it implies a

positive, i.e., *spectral,* "speechlessness"—that of the "nobody" or "conscious pariah"—that, in reversing the direction of the gaze of the instrumentalist language of the modern nation-state (of *homo faber*), haunts its life-damaging hegemony. As such, this silence in the face of "the call" is remarkably analogous to the "unanswerability" of the "émigré" which, according to Said and Adorno, "alone can call the hierarchy ["which constantly makes everyone answerable"] by its name."

Ultimately, this condition of silence implies the kind of *speech and action* that, in opposition to the vocational instrumentalist—means-and-end or "can do"—language of the modern nation-state, is intrinsic to a being-in-the-world who is radically secular: not the secularity of the naturalized supernatural world, but that which acknowledges the absolute transience of time, of always being in the midst (*inter esse*): the secularity that the Western tradition, both in its theological and anthropological phases, has demonized and represented as profane. This, that is, is not the language endemic to thinking *meta-ta-physica* (from after or above or beyond things as they are)—from an "Archimedean point" outside the world in Arendt's language; it is, rather, the untimely language intrinsic to the time of the now. This becomes clear, despite its indirection, in her commentary on the totalitarian strategy (the ultimate manifestation of the logic of the nation-state) of depriving its others completely of human rights before it could challenge their "right to live," that is, before undertaking the project of killing them with impunity.

> The fundamental deprivation of human rights is manifested first and above all in the deprivation of *a place in the world which makes opinions significant and actions effective.* Something much more fundamental than freedom and justice, which are rights of citizens [of the nation-state], is at stake when belonging to the community into which one is born is no longer a matter of course and not belonging no longer a matter of choice, or when one is placed in a situation where, unless he commits a crime, his treatment by others *does not depend on what he does or does not do.* This extremity, and nothing else, is the situation of people deprived of human rights. *They are deprived, not of the right to freedom, but of the right to action; not of the right to think whatever they please, but of the right to opinion.* Privileges in some cases, injustices in most, blessings and doom are meted out to them according to accident and without any relation whatsoever to what they do, did, or may do. (I, 296; my emphasis)

Understood in the light of this ultimate deprivation of a "place" in the world that "makes opinions (speech) and action effective," this dreadful

silencing—the reduction of human beings to nonbeings or naked life that is incumbent on the fulfillment of the logic of the nation-state and that the establishment of the concentration camp renders visible (*precipitates consciousness of*)—not only discloses the menace this spectral condition of the stateless poses to the authority of the nation-state. It also implies, if it does not actually articulate, a revolutionary mode of resistance remarkably similar to that paradoxical mode proffered by Said in suggesting that "liberation as an intellectual mission [of the post-imperial age] has now shifted from the settled, established, and domesticated dynamics of culture to its unhoused, decentered, and exilic energies, energies whose incarnation today is the migrant, and whose incarnation is that of the intellectual and artist in exile, the political figure between domains, between forms, between homes, and between languages."

Resuming her meditation on the calamitous consequences for humanity of the fulfillment of the nation-states' logic of belonging—the deprivation of speech and action to the stateless on a global scale—Arendt writes:

> *We became aware* of the existence of a right to have rights (and that means to live in a framework where one is judged by one's actions and opinions) and a right to belong to some kind of organized community, only when millions of people emerged who had lost and could not regain these rights because of the new global political situation. The trouble is that this calamity arose not from any lack of civilization, backwardness, or mere tyranny, but, on the contrary, that it could not be repaired, because there was no longer any "uncivilized" spot on earth, because whether we like it or not we have really started to live in One World. Only with a completely organized humanity could the loss of home and political status become identical with expulsion from humanity altogether.
>
> Before this, what we must call a "human right" today would have been thought of as a general characteristic of the human condition which no tyrant could take away. Its loss entails the loss of the relevance of speech (and man, since Aristotle, has been defined as a being commanding the power of speech and thought), and the loss of all human relationship (and man, again since Aristotle, has been thought of as the "political animal," this is one who by definition lives in a community), the loss, in other words, of some of the most essential characteristics of human life. . . . *Not the loss of specific rights, then, but the loss of a community willing and able to guarantee any rights whatsoever, has been the calamity which has befallen ever-increasing numbers of people. Man, it turns out, can lose all so-called Rights of Man without losing his essential quality as man, his human dignity.*

> *Only the loss of a polity itself expels him from humanity*. (I, 296–97; my emphasis)

The contemporary global occasion Arendt describes here is indeed a calamitous one. But, as her inaugural rhetoric suggests, it, like the global condition Said's bears witness to at the end of *Culture and Imperialism,* is revelatory in its liminal extremity. That is to say, the extremely labored, if not systematic silencing of its nomadic others—the rendering them voiceless and thus superfluous entities—entities that don't count in a way that even slaves do—by the nation-state in its extreme form necessarily, though unwittingly, activates a *potential* in its outlawed victims—not least in the *conscious* pariah—capable, like Said's émigrés' refusal to be answerable to its call, of turning its instrumentalist/vocational logic and language of belonging against itself: rendering it inoperative, as it were. To put it positively, the fulfillment of the nation-state's logic of belonging paradoxically enables thinking the silence it imposes precisely as the radically secular language of speech/action—the "polity"—that the nation-state, according to Arendt, must annul at all costs in order to maintain its hegemony

To return to my beginning, this potential, then, as opposed to the deadly quiescent assimilationist language of the pariah as parvenu—this possible metamorphosis of the silence of the stateless into a new, paradoxical language of resistance enabled by the self-de-struction of the nation-state's logic of belonging and the "conscious pariah's" attunement to its global political implications—is what Arendt meant when, early in the period of her exile, she proffered the enigmatic—because ethnically inclusive—paradox that "Refugees driven from country to country represent the vanguard of their people." I repeat the quotation in its entirety to underscore the inaugural and proleptic significance of that early essay concerning the question of resistance as it pertains to the "outlawed" or "minoritized"—and its affiliative relationship with Edward Said's exilic diagnosis of the demographics of the post-imperial world:

> History has forced the status of outlaws upon both, upon [conscious] pariahs and parvenus alike. The latter have not yet accepted the great wisdom of Balzac's "*On ne parvient pas deux fois*"; thus they don't understand the wild dreams of the former and feel humiliated in sharing their fate. Those few refugees who insist upon telling the truth, even to the point of "indecency," get in exchange for their unpopularity one priceless advantage: history is no longer a closed book to them and politics is no longer the privilege of Gentiles. They know that the outlawing of the Jewish people in Europe has

> been followed closely by the outlawing of most European nations. Refugees driven from country to country, represent the vanguard of their people—if they keep their identity. For the first time Jewish history is not separate but tied up with that of all nations. The comity of European peoples went to pieces when, and because, it allowed its weakest members to be excluded and persecuted.

VI. Zionism

At the beginning of this chapter, I suggested that Hannah Arendt's and Edward Said's mutually singular understanding of their biographical exilic condition precipitated a double consciousness—the non-Jewish Jew and the non-Palestinian Palestinian—which is to say, a consciousness that, in being *at once* outside and inside, a part of and a part from, not-at-home and at-home, cosmopolitan and ethnic, renders the traditional (nation-state) binary inoperative. In what followed, I overdetermined the general or global historical implications of their biographical exilic condition, i.e., Arendt's status as conscious Jewish pariah and Said's as exilic Palestinian consciousness. In this section, I want to return to consider all too briefly some of the implications for the other immediate and particular "pole" of the traditional binary that their exilic conditions rendered inoperative: specifically their surprisingly similar representation of the modern Zionist initiative and the establishment of the nation-state of Israel in Palestine in the immediate aftermath of World War II.

It is well known, despite the patently false representation of him as a "professor of terror" by a vocal segment of the Zionist right, that Said's attitude toward the plight of the Jews in modernity, particularly their horrific fate under the Nazi regime, was, however complicated by the cruel conditions imposed by the Israeli government on the Palestinian natives, deeply sympathetic from beginning to end. Thus, at the end of his life he could write to a largely resistance Arab public:

> All in all . . . the sheer enormity of what took place between 1933 and 1945 beggars our power of description and understanding. The more one studies this period and its excesses, the more one must conclude that for any descent human being the slaughter of so many millions of innocents must, and indeed, should, weigh heavily in subsequent generations, Jewish and non-Jewish. However much we may concur, say, with Tom Segev in his book *The Seventh Million,* that Israel exploited the Holocaust for political

> purposes, there can be little doubt that the tragedy's collective memory and the burden of fear it places on all Jews today is not to be minimized. Yes, there were other collective massacres in human history (native Americans, Armenians, Bosnians, Kurds, etc. And yes, some were neither sufficiently acknowledged by their perpetrators nor adequately compensated. But there is no reason at all, in my opinion, not to submit oneself in horror and awe to the special tragedy besetting the Jewish people. As an Arab in particular I find it important to comprehend this collective experience in as much of its terrible concrete detail as one is capable: this act of comprehension guarantees one's humanity and resolve that such a catastrophe should never be forgotten and never recur.[49]

Despite her insistent references, Hannah Arendt's attitude toward the plight of the Jews and the question of Zionism, on the other hand, is, relatively speaking, less visible than Said's, probably because, as I have observed, the vast majority of the scholarship circulating around her work, with the exception of her report on the banality of evil, *Eichmann in Jerusalem,* has—disablingly—overdetermined her critique of the sociopolitical history of modern Europe and America at large. In what follows, therefore, I will summarize, rather all too rapidly, Said's representation of "the question of Palestine," which is to say, of Zionism and the state of Israel as well, in favor of a more extended analysis of Arendt's representation of the question of Israel, which is to say, of Palestine as well.

As we have seen, Said's fundamental critique of the Zionist settlers' "justificatory [discursive] regime"[50] *vis-à-vis* their claim to the territory of Palestine focused from the beginning on the systematic harnessing of the Old Testament Exodus story to the equally age-old European imperial model of "*terra nullius*." This was the binarist civilizational assumption that land that was not adequately "cultivated," "settled," and "improved" by those who happened to "roam" or "wander" through its space was a no-place open to—indeed, inviting *occupation*—by "higher," work-oriented settler peoples; and that the latter, since they were nomads (or, tellingly, "vagabonds"[51])—and not "occupants" with "occupations" (vocations)—were, therefore, "bestial," "savage," barbarian," i.e., nobodies or non-beings.[52] A couple of passages from *The Question of Palestine* should suffice to reminds us how crucial this imperial ideological agency of dispossession—this "settler nation" paradigm—was for Said:

> This doctrine [the "scientific "differentiation of races" by Europeans in the nineteenth century] was reintroduced in other ways, some of which had a

> direct bearing, I think, on Zionist practice and vision in Palestine. Among the supposed juridical distinctions between civilized and noncivilized peoples was an attitude toward land, almost a doxology about land, which noncivilized people supposedly lacked. A civilized man, it was believed, could cultivate the land because it meant something to him; on it, accordingly, he bred useful arts and crafts, he created, he accomplished, he built. For uncivilized peoples, land was either farmed badly (i.e., inefficiently by Western standards) or it was left to rot. From this string of ideas, by which whole native societies who lived in American, African, and Asian territories for centuries were suddenly denied their right to live on that land, came the great dispossessing movements of modern European colonization, and with them all the schemes for redeeming the land, resettling the natives, civilizing them, taming their savage customs, turning them into useful beings under European rule.[53]

> In short, all the constitutive energies of Zionism were premised on the excluded presence, that is, the functional absence of "native peoples" in Palestine; institutions were built deliberately shutting out natives. Laws were drafted when Israel came into being that made sure that natives would remain in their "nonplace," Jews in theirs, and so on. It is no wonder that today the one issue that electrifies Israel as a society is the problem of the Palestinians, whose negation is the most consistent thread running through Zionism. (QP, 82)[54]

Fully conscious of the irony of the Zionists' perversely systematic representation of Palestine as "*terra nullius*" and their reduction of the overwhelmingly larger population of Arab natives to tacit non-existence in the name of their identification with the civilized "settler" West, Said not only expressed deep sympathy with Jewish pariahdom: the momentum of alienation initiated by the European nation-states that, according to Hannah Arendt, eventually rendered the Jews victims of the Holocaust. And despite qualification concerning numbers, he repeatedly acknowledged the right of the displaced post-war Jews to settle in Palestine. On the basis of his awareness of this acutely ironic parallel of body- and soul-damaging apartheids, he also, and most important, undeviatingly insisted to the end of his life that a one state "democracy" consisting of Jews and Palestinians was, however difficult to achieve, the only viable solution of an enormously difficult modern geopolitical question whose origins resided in a volatile history extending back from the modern colonialist age to antiquity and beyond:

> Yet except for a few Jewish intellectuals here and there—for example, the American Jewish theologian Marc Ellis, or Professor Israel Shahak—reflections by Jewish thinkers today on the desolate history of anti-Semitism and the uniqueness of Jewish suffering have been inadequate. For there is a link to be made between what happened to the Jews in World War II and the catastrophe of the Palestinian people, but it cannot be made only rhetorically, or as an argument to demolish or diminish the true content both of the Holocaust and of 1948 [the ethnic cleansing of Palestine under the leadership of David Ben-Gurion that has come to be called the *Nakba* by the Palestinians]. Neither is equal to the other; similarly, neither one nor the other must be minimized. There is suffering and injustice enough for everyone. But unless the connection is made by which the Jewish tragedy is seen to have led directly to the Palestinian catastrophe by, let us call it "necessity" (rather than pure will), we cannot coexist as two communities of detached and uncommunicatingly separate suffering. It has been the failing of Oslo that it planned in terms of separation, a clinical partition of peoples into separate, but unequal, entities, rather than grasping that the only way of rising beyond the endless back-and-forth violence and dehumanization is to admit the universality and integrity of the other's experience and to begin to plan a common life together.[55]

Said's unrelenting criticism of Zionism and the Israeli state it formed was not, that is, grounded in an ontologically founded Palestinian nationalism. On the contrary, it was, as I have suggested above by way of pursuing the directives opened up by his "exilic consciousness," instigated by the spectacle of a Zionist justificatory discursive regime *vis-à-vis* the indigenous Palestinians—the "settler colony" paradigm—that took its point of departure, ironically, precisely from the very Western idea—the ontologic—of the "nation" and the "people" (*das Volk,* in its German formulation) that had rendered them outcasts—a pariah people not simply stripped of human rights but of humanity itself (rendered bare life)—thus preparing them for enclosure in the internment camps and eventually extermination in the gas chambers.[56]

Said's "nationalism," in other words, was what Gayatri Spivak would call a "strategic essentialism": the kind of non-belonging belonging—of non-identitarian identity—of the oppressed dispossessed, produced not by nature but by historical circumstance, that was the *sine qua non* of resistance, return (and, as we shall see, co-existence), but which had to be abandoned at the point of historical liberation, if the newly formed community of difference was to avoid reproducing the conditions *vis-à-vis* "the others" that had orig-

inally damaged their lives. Globalizing the Palestinian context in 1993 by way of Wole Soyinka's critique of *négritude,* Said, in a gesture that uncannily recalls Arendt's decisive reply to Scholem's bitter accusation that she had betrayed her filial heritage in *Eichmann in Jerusalem,* writes:

> We are left with the paradox that Soyinka himself articulates, that (he has Fanon in mind) adoring the Negro is as "sick" as abominating him. And while it is impossible to avoid the combative, assertive early stages in the nativist identity—they *always* occur: Yeats's early poetry is not only about Ireland, but about Irishness—there is a good deal of promise in getting beyond them, not remaining trapped in the emotional self-indulgence of celebrating one's own identity. There is first of all the possibility of discovering a world *not* constructed out of warring essences. Second, there is the possibility of a universalism that is not limited or coercive, which believing that all people have only one single identity is—that all Irish are only Irish, Indians Indian, Africans African, and so on *ad nauseam.* Third, and most important, moving beyond nativism [filiation] does not mean abandoning nationality, but it does mean thinking of local identity as not exhaustive, and therefore not being anxious to confine oneself to one's own sphere, with its ceremonies of belonging, its built-in chauvinism, and it limiting sense of security. (CI, 229)[57]

"Getting beyond" the collective self-adoring imperatives of the ontological interpretation of identity opens up this relay of possibilities: the discovery of a world not driven by the Friend and foe opposition inherent in the nation-state system ("Us and them," in Said's language); a universalism that is plural; and a "nationalism" that, in "thinking the local identity as not exhaustive," renders the relay of divisive and conflict-provoking binaries of an essentialist nationalism (nation-state) inoperative without annulling them. And this last is, of course, the prelude to Said's vision of the coming human *polis* encapsulated in the metaphor (quoted above) that brings his account of the post-nationalist/colonialist global demographics to its conclusion in *Culture and Imperialism:* "From this [exilic/secular] perspective also, one can see the 'complete consort dancing together' contrapuntally."

What Said means by this resonant enigmatic metaphor, which unites T. S. Eliot and Johann Sebastian Bach in an enormously provocative and heuristic paradox—a *discordia concors,* to invoke the term coined by the Enlightenment to criticize the yoking of radically incommensurate, i.e., "unfiliated"—figures by violence in the music and poetry of the premodern baroque period, will be the topic of the last section of this final chapter. Here,

by way of orientation, I want to amplify briefly on—and to emphasize—the radical distinction Said makes between an essentialist nationalism such as that of the Zionists (and Islamic Palestinians, for that matter) and the non-essentialist (or radically "secular") nationalism he envisages from his exilic perspective "between domains, between forms, between homes, and between languages." To begin, this distinction recalls his crucial and enabling differentiation between the Jew and the oxymoronic "non-Jewish Jew," which I extended to include the Palestinian and "non-Palestinian Palestinian"—the conscious outlaw or pariah figure whose exilic condition not only renders the disabling opposition between belonging and not belonging inoperative, but also, and in doing so, enables initiative, agency, beginnings: effective resistance against the life-damaging inclusive/exclusive (bio)logic of the nation-state system—and ultimately the thanatopolitics of the concentration camp. Secondly, and even more basic, in underscoring the non-essentialism (the historical provenance) of this new form of stateless nationalism, Said's distinction decisively reaffirms the radical secularity—the worldliness—of the world this de-centered entity—this non-Palestinian Palestinian or non-Jewish Jew—has come to out/in-habit. This "world" is not created by a transcendental higher cause, nor is it a naturalized supernatural world produced by an "invisible hand"—a base on which the super*structural* sites are dependent in the last instance. On the contrary, it is man-made—not by Man as *homo faber,* but as finite, utterly earth- and time-bound man and, therefore, by a humanity whose time is not bound in servitude by and to an obligatory vocation to a higher teleological cause (the Word, the "Big Other") but to the always immediate—and problematic—time of the now (words): the time of beginnings, of agency, of radical free will. To "begin" in the anti-Archic or secular Saidian sense of the word, it will be recalled, is to always initiate possibility or, more precisely, potentiality and thus, as the etymology suggests, to enable, against the disabling time-deferring imperative of duty and security, self-awareness to the superfluous, which is to say, empowerment to the perennially disempowered. To invoke an older, but appropriate idiom, the secular world Said envisages by way of the synecdoche of Palestine is created by the living entity who, having been thrown into the world, is "condemned to be free."

Insofar as the triumphant Zionism is an essentialism—whether a theology or secular theology—its people are inexorably destined, in the process of fulfilling the imperatives of their vocation—the building of their city in Palestine according to its filial logical economy of belonging—to inflict the horrors the Jews suffered at the hands of their nation-state and anti-Semitic persecutors upon their own Arab others. This sad irony was, from beginning

to end, at the heart of Said's relentless critique of the inexorable progressive logic of Zionism—both "gradualist" and "messianic"[58]—and the unerringly violent end-oriented practice—the systematic ethnic cleansing, including the "cleansing" of the landscape of Arab Palestine—of the Israeli nation-state[59]—and, by extension, of his insistent critique of Palestinian essentialism in favor of a "secular Palestinian" identity.

Hannah Arendt's writing on Zionism, the formation of the Israeli state, and the fate of the Arab natives in the wake of the Jewish colonization of Palestine before and after 1948 is substantial, especially during the World War II period of her exile. Despite a few exceptions, however—Aamir Mufti, Jacqueline Rose, and Gabriel Piterberg, to whom I have referred, among the most notable—mainstream critics and commentators, following all too obediently the lead of a generally hostile Jewish press that overdetermined her writing on the "Jewish question," have, in a disabling way, tended to minimize the radical importance of this body of her writing in favor of the more cosmopolitan and politically scientific work of her later "mature" years, as if the latter had little if any relationship to the former. One of the consequences of this tendency to obscure the inaugural "Jewish-European dialectic in her work" (HAJP, 20) has been, as I have noted, the obfuscation of the provocative affiliative relationship not only between her "non-Jewish Jewish" and Said's "non-Palestinian Palestinian" diagnoses of their immediate occasions—the question of Palestine/Israel—but also of their visions of their larger global occasions—the post–nation-state.

Arendt, it will be recalled, left Germany for France after Hitler came to power to become, as Ron Feldman notes, "an active Zionist in Paris until 1940, serving as chairperson of the French branch of Youth Aliyah and as a special delegate of the Jewish Agency. Youth Aliyah arranged for the emigration of German-Jewish youth to Palestine and reeducated them for their new life there. In 1935 Arendt personally brought a group of children from France to Palestine" (HAJP, 16). For Arendt, early and late, in fact, Zionism was "the only political answer Jews have ever found to anti-Semitism and the only ideology in which they have ever taken seriously a hostility that would place them in the center of world events" (AS, 120). Indeed, her insistant critique of diasporic Jewish history beginning with *Antisemitism,* the first volume of *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* was focused on its undeviating "worldlessness": the Jews' perennial inability, despite the high position its leaders ("the court Jews") came to hold in the governments of late nineteenth and early twentieth century European nation-states, to historicize their pariah status, that is, to transform their worldlessness into a worldly politics.[60] In a way recalling

Edward Said's insistent reminder of the Palestinians' tragic failure to articulate a political history, Arendt writes:

> Jewish history offers the extraordinary spectacle of a people, unique in this respect, which began its history with a well-defined concept of history and an almost conscious resolution to achieve a well-circumscribed plan on earth and then, without giving up this concept, avoided all political action for two thousand years. The result was that the political history of the Jewish people became even more dependent upon unforeseen, accidental factors than the history of other nations, so that the Jews stumbled from one role to the other and accepted responsibility for none. (AS, 8)

More specifically, what Zionism meant for Arendt above all was the conversion of the "worldless" Jews into a "'nation like all other nations.'" Echoing the radical secularism that Said pits positively against the natural supernaturalism of Orientalists such as a Sylvestre de Sacy and Ernest Renan, this strategy of politicization—of worlding, according to Arendt, "saved [this kind of conscious Zionist] from falling into the Jewish brand of chauvinism automatically produced by secularization, which somehow persuades the average de-Judaized Jew that, although he no longer believes in a God who chooses or rejects, he is still a superior being simply because he happened to be born a Jew—the salt of the earth—or the motor of history" (HAJP, 170).

Unlike that of the mainstream of Zionism epitomized by Theodore Herzl and Chaim Weizmann and brought to ruthless fulfillment by David Ben-Gurion in the 1930s–40s, Arendt's early Zionist vision, in other words, was radically historical and secular like that of the French Jewish socialist Bernard Lazare, her model of the conscious pariah. It was not based on Jewish exceptionalism—the idea of the (European) Jews as God's (or History's) chosen people, as in the case of many early leaders of the militant Zionist movement, nor on the related secularized supernatural notion of anti-Semitism as a (binarist) *law of history* (the "doctrine of eternal anti-Semitism"), as in the case of Theodor Herzl:

> Herzl's solution of the Jewish problem was, in the final analysis, escape or deliverance in a homeland. In the light of the Dreyfus case the whole of the gentile world seemed to him hostile; there were only Jews and antisemites. He considered that he would have to deal with this hostile world and even with avowed antisemites. To him it was a matter of indifference just how hostile a gentile might be; indeed, thought he, the more antisemitic a man

> was the more he would appreciate the advantages of a Jewish exodus from Europe.[61]

Perfectly aware of its ironies, Arendt puts Herzl's ahistorical and unworldly (i.e., ontological)—essentially "*escapist*"—as opposed to *political,* solution of the Jewish question elsewhere even more tellingly, suggesting her affiliative relationship with Edward Said:

> Jewish political action meant for Herzl finding a place within the unchanging structure of this reality, a place where Jews would be safe from hatred and eventual persecution. *A people without a country would have to escape to a country without a people;* there the Jews, unhampered by relations with other nations, would be able to develop their own isolated [biologically informed] organism.[62]

In reducing the complex plurality of actual political life to a simple essentialist binary that pitted the entire world against the Jews, this Herzlian notion of "'the common enemy'" (ZR, 148), according to Arendt, actually contributed to the perpetuation and hardening of the very earlier Jewish "worldlessness" it was intended to bring to an end. It not only bound Zionist nationalism inextricably to the idea of the nation-state (the Friend/foe opposition, not incidentally, that constituted the essence of the political philosophy of Carl Schmitt, one of the architects of the German national socialist state)[63] that was in the process of disintegrating. It also enabled a justificatory discursive regime that paradoxically rendered the collaboration of the Jewish leadership with anti-Semitism indispensable, first with the European powers [64] and later with Nazi Germany.[65]

Above all, though indissolubly related to the preceding consequences, the triumph of Herzlian Zionism—this collective escapism, oblivious to the reality that a majority of Palestinians lived in that "country without people"—that *terra nullius* in Said's language[66]—bore witness to the demise of the possibility of a bi-national or federated state, which, according to Arendt, as to Said, though the most difficult of tasks not impossible, was not simply the only viable solution to the question of Palestine, but one that, as the second paragraph of the following passage suggests, had the potential to rethink and reorganize the human *polis* at large:

> [A]nother precedent, or at least its possibility, would go down with the *yishuv* [the pre-state Jewish community in Palestine]—that of close cooperation between two peoples, one embodying the most advanced ways of

> European civilization, the other an erstwhile victim of colonial oppression and backwardness. The idea of Arab-Jewish cooperation, though never realized on any scale and today [1948] seemingly farther off than ever, is not an idealistic daydream but a sober statement of the fact that without it the whole Jewish venture in Palestine is doomed. Jews and Arabs could be forced by circumstances to show the world that there are no differences between two peoples that cannot be bridged. Indeed, the working out of such a modus vivendi might in the end serve as a model of how to counteract the dangerous tendencies of formerly oppressed peoples to shut themselves off from the rest of the world and develop nationalist superiority complexes of their own.
>
> Many opportunities of Jewish-Arab friendship have already been lost, but none of these failures can alter the basic fact that the existence of the Jews in Palestine depends on achieving it. Moreover, the Jews have one advantage in the fact that, excluded as they were from the official history for centuries, they have no imperial past to live down. They can still act as a vanguard in international relations on a small but valid scale—as in the kibbutzim they have already acted as a vanguard in social relations despite the relatively insignificant numbers of the people involved.[67]

Instead of contributing to the fulfillment of that promise, the victory of Herzlian Zionism ended on November 29, 1947, when, under the leadership of David Ben-Gurion, Palestine was partitioned. It produced an exclusively Jewish state in a largely Arab world that, both in theory and practice, was characterized by the principle of *apartheid,* a monolithic nationalist and racist state, not unlike South Africa, intended for inhabitation by Jews alone. Indeed, in categorically excluding the Palestinian natives from participation in its political life, it established a logic of belonging that was, ironically, virtually identical with that of European, indeed, "German-inspired nationalism," which "holds a nation to be an eternal organic body, the product of inevitable natural growth of inherent qualities; and . . . explains peoples, not in terms of political organizations, but in terms of biological superhuman personalities" (ZR, 156).[68]

Given this minoritizing bio-logic, it was inevitable, though Arendt refers to them only obliquely, that the new Zionist state would unleash on the native Palestinians the very dehumanizing biopolitical weapons that European, particularly German, anti-Semitism unleashed on the Jews: a systematic project of terror against the Palestinian villages and, in the name of ethnic purification, the ejection of the inhabitants from and expropriation of their land, i.e., an ethnic cleansing analogous to that which was intended to make Germany

judenrein. Commenting on the consequences of the Arab-Jewish war before and immediately after the establishment of the Israeli nation-state, Arendt, in full awareness of the ironic parallel with the European Jews, writes prophetically to her essentially Jewish audience:

> The most realistic way to measure the cost to the peoples of the Near East of the events of the past year is not by casualties, economic losses, war destruction, or military victories, but by the political changes, the most outstanding of which has been the creation of a new category of homeless people, the Arab refugees. These not only form a dangerous potential irredenta dispersed in all Arab countries where they could easily become the visible uniting link; much worse, no matter how their exodus came about (as a consequence of Arab atrocity propaganda or real atrocities or a mixture of both), their flight from Palestine, prepared by Zionist plans of large-scale population transfers during the war and followed by the Israeli refusal to readmit the refugees to their old home, made the old Arab claim against Zionism finally come true: the Jews simply aimed at expelling the Arabs from their homes. What had been the pride of the Jewish homeland, that it had not been based upon exploitation, turned into a curse when the final test came: the flight of the Arabs would not have been possible and not have been welcomed by Jews if they had lived in a common economy.[69]

This decisive establishment of the Israeli nation-state, in turn, Arendt prophesied with utter accuracy at the time of the fulfillment of the Zionist vocation, also produced the conditions that would render the triumph of Zionism a hollow one, since, in rendering war with the Arab peoples permanent—and the state of exception the norm—it would also render *political* life (in the de-centered sense she understood it) impossible:

> The land that would come into being [following a hypothetical victory of the Jews over the Arabs in a war] would be something quite other than the dream of world Jewry, Zionist and non-Zionist. *The victorious Jews would be surrounded by an entirely hostile Arab population, secluded inside ever-threatened borders, absorbed with physical self-defense to a degree that would submerge all other interests and activities.* The growth of Jewish culture would cease to be the concern of the whole people, social experiments would have to be discarded as impractical luxuries; political thought would center around military strategy; economic development would be determined exclusively by the needs of war. And all this would

> be the fate of a nation that—no matter how many immigrants it could still absorb and how far it extended its boundaries (the whole of Palestine and Transjordan is the insane Revisionist demand)—would still remain a very small people greatly outnumbered by hostile neighbors. (SJH, 187; my emphasis)

For the conscious pariah, Bernard Lazare, on the other hand, Herzl's Zionist universalization of anti-Semitism, according to Arendt, neutralized the will of the Jews to *politicize* their predicament, which is to say, not only to achieve worldliness as such, but also—and not least—to ally themselves with *all* those constituencies of the human community, in and beyond Europe, that were being victimized by the European nation-state system as it increasingly transformed itself into the global imperial project:

> The territorial question was secondary—a mere outcome of the primary demand that "the Jews should be emancipated as a people and in the form of a nation." What he sought was not an escape from antisemitism but a mobilization of the people against its foes. . . . The consequence of this attitude was that he did not look around for more or less antisemitic protectors [as did Herzl *vis-à-vis* Britain and the later Zionists, the United States] but for real comrades-in-arms, *whom he hoped to find among all the oppressed groups of contemporary Europe.* He knew that antisemitism was neither an isolated nor a universal phenomenon and that the shameful complicity of the Powers in the East-European pogroms had been symptomatic of something far deeper, namely, the threatened collapse of all moral values under the pressure of imperial politics.[70]

And this pluralistic worldly initiative espoused by the conscious pariah, Lazare, to seek allies among the uncounted oppressed applied as well, especially for Arendt, to the Arabs of the Middle East.

The "Revisionary Zionism" (founded by the ruthless militant Zionist Vladimir [Ze'ev] Jabotinsky, who was committed to the transfer of Arabs from all of Palestine and embraced by Benjamin Netanyahu)[71] that Arendt abhorred triumphed at the World Zionist Organization's convention held in Atlantic City in October 1944 against an earlier pre-state Palestinian Zionism (*Yishuv*) that was committed to the fostering of understanding between the Arab and the Jewish peoples. The essential thrust of her relentless critique of this militant "Revisionary Zionism," in keeping with her insistent assertion of the corrosion and decline, if not decisive demise, of the nation-state system, was directed against its momentous decision to build an Israeli state—at the

expense of the idea of a "homeland"[72]—on the European model in Palestine, where a vast majority of Arabs in fact lived. This fateful decision, aided and abetted by the socialist "Eastern" Jews' indifference to the question of the relationship between Jews and Arabs in Palestine, thus committed the Zionists to a militant and undeviating identitarian nationalism that depended for its survival in a hostile environment on the imperial European powers and put to a decisive end the possibility, advocated by the Jewish heirs of Lazare (Rabbi Judah Magnes, president of Hebrew University; Henrietta Szold, the organizer of Youth Aliyah and founder of Hadassah), and Martin Buber are singled out by Arendt),[73] of a binational solution of the question of Palestine.[74] Henceforth, Arendt observes, Zionist policy *vis-à-vis* the indigenous Arabs would necessarily take the form of their reduction by the inexorable Friend/foe logic of the nationalist Israeli state to nonbeing ("superfluity" in the language of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*) and expatriation or ghettoization—and thus the continuation of the Jews' collective status as a pariah people. Writing four years before the establishment of the Israeli state Arendt observes of this unerring nation-building,

> Nationalism is bad enough when it trusts in nothing but the rude force of the nation. A nationalism that necessarily and admittedly depends upon the force of a foreign nation is certainly worse. This is the threatened fate of Jewish nationalism and of the proposed Jewish State, surrounded inevitably by Arab states and Arab peoples. Even a Jewish majority in Palestine—nay, even a transfer of all Palestine Arabs, which is openly demanded by Revisionists—would not substantially change a situation in which Jews must either ask protection from an outside power against their neighbors or effect a working agreement with their neighbors. (ZR, 132–33)

Generalizing from the fate of the stateless Jews under the aegis of modern totalitarianism near the end of *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* Arendt spells out the banal bio-logic of belonging intrinsic to the nation-state that fulfills itself in the horrendous biopolitical space of the concentration camp—and proleptically the advent of the biopolitical state of Israel, in which the state of exception becomes the norm:

> *In comparison with the insane end-result*—the concentration camp society—the process by which men are prepared for this end, and the methods by which individuals are adapted to these conditions *are transparent and logical.* The insane mass manufacture of corpses is preceded by *the historically and politically intelligible preparation of living corpses.* The impetus and

> what is more important, the silent consent to such unprecedented conditions are the products of those events which in a period of disintegration suddenly and unexpectedly made hundreds of thousands of human beings homeless, stateless, outlawed and unwanted, while millions of human beings were made economically superfluous and socially burdensome by unemployment. This in turn could only happen because the Rights of Man, which had never been philosophically established but merely formulated, which had never been politically secured but merely proclaimed, have, in their traditional form, lost all validity.
>
> The first essential step on the road to total domination is to kill the juridical person. This was done, on the one hand, by putting certain categories of people outside protection of the law and forcing, at the same time, through the instrument of denationalisation, the nontotalitarian world into recognition of lawlessness; it was done, on the other, by placing the concentration camp outside the normal penal system, and by selecting its inmates outside the normal judicial procedure in which a definite crime entails a predictable penalty. . . . Under all circumstances totalitarian domination sees to it that the categories gathered in the camp—Jews, carriers of diseases, representatives of dying classes—have already lost the capacity for both normal and or criminal action. Propagandistically this means that the "protective custody" is handled as a "preventative measure," that is, a measure that deprives people of the ability to act.[75]

It may seem excessive to suggest that Arendt is thinking of such a chilling passage from a book addressing an apparently different historical context when, in criticizing the triumphant nationalist Zionism that established the Israeli nation-state—its natural supernaturalism, as it were—she draws the ironic parallel between the dreadful fate of the Jews in the period of World War II and the potential fate of the Palestinian Arabs under the aegis of the exceptionalist Zionist state of Israel. But, as I have suggested, it is precisely that banalalizing biopolitical logic that she, as a conscious pariah, discovers and overdetermines in her relentless criticism of the "insane" Zionism of the "Revisionists." This is borne witness to by the passage she quotes from a letter to the editors of *Commentary* (October 1948) written by Judah Magnes, who was also committed to the formation of a binational state in Palestine, that follows the passage quoted above: "It is unfortunate that the very men who could point to the tragedy of Jewish DP's [displaced persons] as the chief argument for mass immigration into Palestine should now be ready, as far as the world knows, to help create an additional category of DP's in the Holy Land."[76]

The post-war Jews, Arendt insistently and urgently observed, could have shown the rest of the deracinated world the way out of the humanity-destroying worldlessness they, above all other constituencies of the human community, had suffered under the aegis of the nation-state system. Instead, she laments, they adopted the very mechanisms—the ultra-nationalism, the biopolitical binarist logic of belonging, the racism, the ethnic cleansing, and so on—that rendered them stateless—worldless pariahs—and their humanity the bare life of the death camps. This bitterly ironic judgment against Zionism and the Israeli nation-state by the non-Jewish Jew, Hannah Arendt, is, as I have shown, uncannily similar to that of Edward Said, the non-Palestinian Palestinian.

VII. The *Polis*

> Counterpoint: The ability, unique to music, to say two things at once comprehensively.
>
> —*The Oxford Dictionary of Music*

In order to legitimize the relationship between Edward Said's exilic consciousness and Hannah Arendt's conscious pariah, I have thus far strategically emphasized the affiliative relay that thinking this relationship discloses at the expense of their substantial differences, that is to say, the "non-Palestinian" and the "non-Jewish" aspects of their "Palestinianness" and "Jewishness," respectively. Both, for example, clearly write about Zionism and the establishment of the state of Israel from their respective vestigial Palestinian and Jewish vantage points. Said's representation of that epochal history overdetermines the terrible negative consequences of Zionism and the nationalism of the Israeli state on the Palestinian people at the expense of the native Palestinian Jews. Arendt's discourse exacerbates the problem. The passages I have quoted from her discussion of Jewish-Arab cooperation could be read, not as a concern for the well-being of the Arabs, but simply as her liberal concern that the two parties—Jews and Arabs—be able to exist without destroying each other. Furthermore, they could suggest that she is only interested in the Arabs for their instrumental value in making the new Jewish state work. She insistently speaks of the Jewish "vanguard" in the world, suggesting that, even if Arab-Israeli friendship were to be achieved, this would serve the purpose of relaying the *Jewish* message to the world about the necessity of moving beyond closed nationalist categories. As her repeated references to the poten-

tially "hostile" Arab neighbors testify, she seems consistently more interested in the threat to Israel's security than with the actual well-being of the Arabs. Nowhere, for example, does she overtly express empathy for the Arab victims of Zionist policy; always she is concerned with what the processes of victimization entail for the Jews. When she speaks of Bernard Lazare, the virtue she attributes to him is his openness to all the oppressed peoples of Europe rather than to the possibilities of relations with non-Europeans.[77] More generally, the Eurocentrism that is evident in her analysis of Lazare's anti-parvenu polemics is also evident in her depiction of the dangers of Zionist nationalism: it would cut off Israeli Jews as a people from the rest of the Jews of the world, rather than from the Arabs. Certainly her desire is to open up the category of belongingness to make the polity she envisions less exclusive than the arrogant "revisionist" Zionist proposal for Israel, but she doesn't seem to express a concern for making this openness inclusive of Arabs.

The difference between Said's and Arendt's representation of the question of Palestine to which I am pointing should not be taken lightly. It is indeed a substantial one. This is especially true of Arendt's discourse on Jewish-Arab relations. But, as I have shown by way of symptomatically pursuing the decentering "logic" inhering in her understanding of the "conscious pariah" into its implications about Zionism and the Israeli nation-state, we are directed, indeed, compelled, by her radically negative critique of the undeviating essentialism of their filial logic of belonging to read her commentary on Jewish-Palestinian cooperation—and her commitment to the idea of a binational community—as a remarkably proleptic, if not an explicit vision, of a singular denationalized and non-identitarian binational community—or, more precisely, to bring to center stage a resonant pair of Saidian terms that I have invoked but held in abeyance throughout this chapter, a polity that, unlike those founded on "filiation" or "affiliation" is (un)founded on the (il)logic of a-filiation.

The "critical consciousness," Said tells us in "Secular Criticism" (1983), his influential introduction to *The World, the Text, and the Critic,* in which he calls the systematized textual analysis of American deconstruction back to it "secular" or "worldly" work, enables the critic to perceive that the authority (the "truth") of the "affiliative" order—the kind of relationality (hegemonic belongingness) that holds sway in modernity—developed out of the historically induced delegitimation of the arbitrary authority of the "filiative" order—the passage of sovereign authority ("truth") biologically or naturally from father to son (dynastically), which reigned in premodernity—as a *compensatory cultural construct:*

> [A]s it has developed through the art and critical theories produced in complex ways by modernism, filiation gives birth to affiliation. Affiliation becomes a form of representing the filiative processes to be found in nature, although affiliation takes validated nonbiological social and cultural forms.[78]

Two alternatives, according to Said, propose themselves in the context of this disclosure, enabled by the critical consciousness, of the affiliative order of modernity as a recuperative cultural construct (culture as such, or what, following Gramsci, he elsewhere calls hegemony) that re-enforces the sovereign authority of the nation-state:

> One [epitomized by Matthew Arnold's apotheosis of the nation-state as the repository of culture—the "best that has been thought and felt"—in *Culture and Anarchy*][79] is organic complicity with the pattern I have described. The critic enables, indeed, transacts, the transfer of legitimacy from filiation to affiliation; literally a midwife, the critic encourages reverence for the humanities and for the dominant culture served by those humanities. This keeps relationships within the narrow circle of what is natural, appropriate, and valid for "us," and thereafter excludes the nonliterary, the non-European, and above allthe political dimension in which all literature, all texts, can be found. . . .
>
> The second alternative is for the critic to recognize the difference between instinctual filiation and social affiliation, and to show how affiliation sometimes reproduces filiation, sometimes makes its own forms. Immediately, then, most of the political and social world becomes available *for critical and secular scrutiny,* as in *Mimesis* Auerbach does not simply admire the Europe he has lost through exile but sees it anew as a composite social and historical enterprise, *made and remade unceasingly by men and women in society.* (SC, 24–25; my emphasis)

Said puts this worldly agenda of the critical consciousness dis-closed—brought to material visibility from invisibility by the transfer of legitimacy from filiation to affiliation—later in even more precise and urgent terms:

> [T]o study affiliation is to study and to recreate the bonds between texts and the world, bonds that specialization and the institutions of literature have all but completely effaced. Every text is an act of will to some extent, but what has not been very much studied is the degree to which texts are made permissable. To recreate the affiliative network is therefore to make

> visible, to give materiality back to, the strands holding the text to society, author, and culture. . . . [A]ffiliation releases the text from its isolation and imposes upon the scholar or critic the presentational problem of historically recreating or reconstructing the possibilities from which the text arose. Here is the place for intentional analysis and for the effort to place a text in homological, dialogical, or antithetical relationships with other texts, classes, and institutions. (ALLC, 175)

This exposure of the historical constructedness of—the absence of a principle of presence informing—the truth discourse of the affiliative order, of what by way of cultural production has come to appear to be natural or filiative—the way things are—constitutes one of Said's major contributions to the postmodern interrogation of (Western) modernity and the "at-homeness" its hegemonic truth discourse inscribes, more particularly of the relay extending from ontology (the essentialist representation of being), through culture (the organic relationality of human fabrication), and nation (the filial or affiliative belongingness of its people).

If, however, we reconstellate this early version of Said's analysis of affiliation into the larger "postcolonial" context opened up by his extension of the potential inhering in his notion of "the critical [secular] consciousness" to include that inhering in the history-damaged "exilic consciousness," we are enabled to perceive that his disclosure of the constructedness—or unnaturalness—of the affiliative order not only enables critique or resistance by its victimized others, but also the envisioning of the positive possibilities *vis-à-vis* human relationality (the *polis*) that are implicit in his critical secular analysis of affiliation. The exile, as Said understands this emergent dislocated global figure is, as we have seen, one who is always already in-between, *simultaneously* outside and inside, apart from and a part of both an ontological and national homeland. As such a radically secular double consciousness—*both* filiated or affiliated *and* dis-filiated or dis-affiliated—the exile's understanding of both filiation and affiliation undergoes a metamorphosis. The old binary terms of their unerring logic of belonging remain but their former work of exclusion and domination—war to the end or, ultimately, genocide—is rendered inoperative. The sovereign One that in the previous affiliative dispensation existed to annihilate or to forcibly accommodate the others to Its "truth" becomes two (plural) in a radically dia-logic or agonic or contrapuntal play. Filiation or affiliation, under this new dispensation, becomes a-filiation—*a non-belonging belonging*—in the same way that, for Arendt and Said, under the tutelage of "conscious pariahdom" and "the exilic consciousness," respectively, the humanist becomes the "non-humanist humanist";

and the Jew, the "non-Jewish Jew"; and the Palestinian, "the non-Palestinian Palestinian."

The difference between Said's and Arendt's representation of the question of Palestine to which I have drawn attention above, in other words, should not be understood as an ultimate contradiction. On the contrary, it should be perceived as a manifestation of 1) the *singular* kind of affiliative belongingness between intellectuals deriving from different cultures enabled by their respective exilic consciousnesses; and, analogously, 2) as a directive for thinking the *singular* kind of *polis* that, each, in his/her own way, anticipates resonantly, however minimally. In other words, what I have tried to suggest in pointing to the affiliative relationship between Said's exilic consciousness and Arendt's conscious pariahdom is that their discourses on the question of Palestine, however distant in time, can be read not simply as a generational dialogue as such, but, more resonantly and exactly, as an *Auseinandersetzung*—an open-ended and constantly rejuvenating dialogue in loving strife[80]—one undertaken by a "non-Jewish Jew" and a "non-Palestinian Palestinian" in the dissonant polyphonic mode that Said, in opposition to the deadly marching logic of belonging of the nation-state, envisioned as the singular mode of belonging of the community to come.

In the process of pursuing the logic of exile as Hannah Arendt and Edward Said understood it, I have discovered a relay extending from 1) their exilic condition (their being apart from and a part of a homeland), 2) through the formation of their subjectivity (the non-Jewish Jew and the non-Palestinian Palestinian), 3) their comportment toward the world (a radical secularity that thinks and acts in the time of the now), and 4) their mode of resistance to sovereign power (refusing to be answerable to the vocational call of the *Arché* or *Telos*), 5) to their critique of Zionism (its rigid essentialist and vocational nationalism). The ultimate site on this relay is Arendt and Said's vision of the human *polis* their exilic—in-between—logic precipitates in opposition to the state in which the state of exceptions has become the rule. This is the most nebulous site of the affiliative relay binding Arendt and Said in intimate strife simply because, though each constantly referred to the coming polity—and in revolutionary terms—neither Arendt nor Said ventured an extended effort to articulate such a vision. Our only recourse, then, is to undertake a symptomatic reading of their work, guided by the "logic" of a-partness informing the exilic consciousness. In the case of Said, however, our symptomatic reading, as I have noted earlier, is further facilitated by his enigmatic, but provocatively suggestive observation at the end of *Culture and Imperialism,* where he invokes the "intellectual and artist in exile" as the "consciousness of" the stateless migrants who have been precipitated as the prevailing political spe-

cies in the global demographics in and by the post-imperial age: "From this perspective then all things are indeed counter, original, spare, strange. From this perspective also one can see "'the complete consort dancing together' contrapuntally."

What would be the character of a polity envisages as "'the complete consort dancing together' contrapuntally"? Taking one's directive from what has been disclosed by Said's account of the intellectual and artist in exile, as "the political figure between domains, between forms, between homes, and between languages," one is enabled to say at the outset that such a polity or world would be radically different from the world fabricated according to the logic of the modern Western nation-state system. The world of the latter, as the exilic consciousness bears witness, is a world whose inclusive/exclusive, biopolitical logic of belonging is intended to render nativity, territory, and citizenship an identical and harmonious unity (a complete consort, as it were) that derives its power from drawing borders; i.e., from putting the (one) "People" (*Volk*) into a hierarchical binary with its others—"Us and them," in Said's ubiquitous phrase, or "Friend and foe"—in which the powerless latter are necessarily dehumanized, rendered non-beings, and their space a no-place (*terra nullius*) begging occupation and "improvement." The polity implied by Said's musical metaphor, on the other hand, would emerge from the radically unhomed and de-familiarized—de-*structured*—world, from, more specifically, the rubble of the de-nationalized world of the Western nation-state—in which everything and everyone is therefore singular: "counter, original, spare, strange."

This is not to say that such a new and estranged space would annul the cultural identities of those who inhabit it. As opposed to their ontological Origin under the aegis of the nation-state, it would, rather, render them *conscious* of their historical origins: their constructedness as opposed to the "naturalness" attributed to them by the nation-state system. To return to the specific case of Palestine, the Palestinians would remain Palestinians and the Jews would remain Jews, but like the Jew who becomes a non-Jewish Jew and a Palestinian who becomes a non-Palestinian Palestinian in the in-between of pariahdom or exile, the murderous binary, stripped of its essentialist ontological (or sacred) ground, would, to use the resonantly appropriate term from Giorgio Agamben I invoked earlier, not only become inoperative (*inoperosita*),[81] but also unendingly creative: an *open-ended* dialectic, a means without end, i.e., a beginning—that always already mutually deepens both sides—or, more precisely for my purposes, the "voices"—of the binary.

This enablement of potentiality as such is what, in pursuing the dialectal directives of the exilic consciousness, I take Said to mean by his invoking the

musical metaphor "'the complete consort dancing together' contrapuntally" to suggest the essential character of the coming *polis* incumbent on the destruction of the monolithic logic of belonging of the nation-state and its (self-defeating) imperial project. It means, more specifically, what, appropriating Samuel Johnson's famous critique of the so-called metaphysical poets of the British baroque period, I earlier called a "*discordia concors*" by way of underscoring the *paradoxical belongingness*—epitomized by the loudly silent pause between the two allusions—of T. S. Eliot's appeal to the tonal sonata form in "*Four Quartets*" and the dissonant counterpoint[82] of Johann Sebastian Bach, especially of Glenn Gould's Bach.

Identifying Gould's "virtuosity" with the resolute irresolutions of the "late style" to which he, like Theodor Adorno, committed himself in the closing years of his life, Said writes, in his posthumously published *On Late Style,* especially with Gould's rendition of Bach's *Goldberg Variations* in mind, "Unlike the digital wizardly of most others of his class, Gould's virtuosity was not designed simply to impress and ultimately alienate the listener/spectator but rather to draw the audience in by *provocation, the dislocation of expectation, and the creation of new kinds of thinking based in large measure on his reading of Bach's music.*"[83] In his brilliantly suggestive amplification of this "new kind" of pro-vocative—dislocated and dislocating—thinking that follows, Said, not incidentally, invokes Vico's notion of invention (*inventio*), which de-structures its traditional metaphysically derived meaning—as an *Arché* informed by its *Telos*—or, perhaps more precisely, renders this received meaning inoperative:

> *Inventio* has the sense of *re*discovering and *re*turning to, not inventing as it is used now. . . . Invention in this older rhetorical meaning of the word is the finding and elaboration of arguments, *which in the musical realm means the finding of a theme and developing it contrapuntally so that all of its possibilities are articulated, expressed, and elaborated.* Much used by Vico, for example, *inventio* is a key term for his *New Science.* He uses it to describe the *ingenium,* the *ability to see human history as something made by the unfolding capacity of the working human mind.* . . . This idea of interpretation and poetry as invention [the reference is to Vico's Homer] can be given a musical extension by looking at the special quality of Bach's *polyphonic composition.* His remarkable gift for invention in his fugal writing was to be able *to draw out of a theme all the possible permutations and combinations implicit in it* that, through skillful practice, he could make it undergo as an object presented to the composing mind, like the material of Homer's

poems, for skillful performance and invention. Here is how [Laurence] Dreyfus [in *Bach and the Patterns of Invention,* 1996] put it:

> Rather than conceiving musical structure as unconscious growth—an aesthetic model that presumes a spontaneous invention beyond the grasp of intentional human actions—I prefer to highlight the predictable and historically determined ways in which the music was "worked on" by the composer. The intention to speculate on Bach's willfulness invites us to imagine a piece of his music not as *inevitably* the way it is, but rather as the result of a musicality that devises and revises thoughts against a resilient backdrop of conventions and constraints. . . . I find it more profitable to chip away at musical "miracles" . . . pursing instead Bach's inclination to regard certain laws as binding and others as breakable, to accept certain limits as inviolate and others as restrictive, to judge certain techniques productive and others as fruitless, and to admire some ideas as venerable while regarding others as outmoded. In brief . . . analyses that capture Bach as a *thinking composer.*

Thus Bach's gift translated itself into a capacity for inventing, creating a new aesthetic structure out of a preexisting set of notes and an *ars combinatoria* that no one else had the skill to use so outstandingly. (LS, 128–29; my emphasis)

As for Gould's renderings of Bach's polyphony, they are, one might say, following Bach's own compositional directives, improvisational or radically secular works that unwork conventional interpretations that are grounded in the notion of the Origin and the predictable vocational symphonic voice which the *Arché* privileges. Commenting on Dreyfus's characterization of Bach's *The Art of the Fugue,* the individual pieces of which "so often go out of their way to frustrate pedagogically oriented definitions of fugal procedures at the same time that they assert the preternatural status of fugal procedures as a source of the most inspired inventions," Said writes:

> To put it simply, this is exactly the kind of Bach that Gould chose to play: a composer whose thinking compositions provide an occasion for the thinking, intellectual virtuoso to try to interpret and invent, or revise and rethink, in his own way, each performance becoming an occasion for decisions in terms of tempo, timbre, rhythm, color, tone, phrasing, voice leading, and

> inflection that never mindlessly or automatically repeat earlier such decisions but instead go to great lengths to communicate a sense of reinventions and working of Bach's own contrapuntal compositions. . . . [A]s one can see in the early and late *Goldberg* performances [1955–1981] that eerily frame his career—one at the very beginning, the other at the very end—Gould excavated the highly refined contrapuntal as well as chaconne structure of the work to announce an ongoing exploration of Bach's inventiveness through and by way of his own virtuosic realizations. (LS, 130)

Seen in the light thrown by Said's Vichian/Bachian rendering of the traditional understanding of *inventio* inoperative, which is to say, his radically secular transformation of the *sym*-phonic into the *poly*-phonic composition, the enigma of "'the complete consort dancing together' contrapuntally"—the "*discordia concors*"—Said envisions as the political "end" of the invention enabled—indeed demanded—by the exilic consciousness, the condition of being "between domains, between forms, between homes, and between languages," becomes clearer. In rendering the Us and them/Friend and enemy logic of the nation-state inoperative, which is to say, in radically secularizing its sacred exclusive inclusive biopolitical logic of belonging, Said is enabled to envisage a polyphonic Palestine: a *polis* consisting of Palestinians and Jews—*two different "voices"*—that, however, contrary to the monolithic symphonic Voice of the nation-state, nevertheless belong together in loving—and always inventive, open-ended, and creative—strife. Vocation—servitude to the monovocal "call" of a *Telos*—drives the nation-state and, in pursuing its (bio)logic of belonging, its inhabitants into a "People" (*das Volk*) and their movement into a "sym-phony" (an organic collective Voice) or, more tellingly, an unerring and banalized forwarding "march."[84] On the contrary, it is the invention—the pro-vocative play—of counterpoint that characterizes the coming community and, in so doing, transforms its inhabitants into "people" and their movement into a poly-phonic dance: "'the complete consort dancing together' [. . .] contrapuntally."[85]

Unlike Edward Said, Hannah Arendt, as far as I know, offers no such heuristic directive for determining what she meant in espousing a "binational state" for the Jews and the Palestinians in the period immediately before and after World War II. But, not accidentally, such a directive has been provided a generation later by Giorgio Agamben, the contemporary thinker who, more than anyone else, has enabled the reconstellation of Arendt's work from the ahistorical social scientific site to which the Habermasian moment confined it for a generation into the onto-political global site of its "Nietzschean/Heideggerian" origins. I am referring, above all, to the enormous influence

her *The Origins of Totalitarianism* had on his political thinking, particularly the second volume, *Imperialism,* in which she proleptically announces the disintegration and waning of the nation-state system; the disabling illogicality of the doctrine of the "rights of man"; the reduction of human life to bare life and human politics to biopolitics in modernity; the replacement of the city by the concentration camp as "the fundamental biopolitical paradigm of the West"[86]; and, not least, the emergence of the figure of the refugee or stateless person as the vanguard of the coming community.

Agamben's directive, as appropriately provocative and laconic as Said's, is announced in the section of his *Means without End* (whose title itself echoes Arendt's critique of *homo faber*), entitled "Beyond Human Rights," in which, following Arendt's lead in the chapter of *Imperialism* on "The Decline if the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man," he points accusingly to the utterly disabling contradiction inhering in the analogous terms "man" and "citizen" and calls for the abandonment of the ethical concept of the rights of man as it was articulated in 1789 in *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen.* But before invoking it, it will be useful to provide the context in which Agamben's directive *vis-à-vis* the nature of the coming community in Palestine that Arendt foresees is embedded. That context is inaugurated by Agamben's strikingly novel invocation of Arendt's 1943 essay "We Refugees" (referred to above in relation to the parallel I drew with Edward Said's diagnosis of the post-imperial occasion), in which, he claims, "she [against the assimilated Jew] turns the condition of countryless refugee [the pariah]—a condition she herself was living—upside down in order to present it as the paradigm of a new historical consciousness" (i.e., the double consciousness of the conscious pariah), and, in doing so, envisioned "'refugees driven from country to country [as] the vanguard of their peoples.'"[87] I quote Agamben at length for two significant reasons: 1) I not only want to show that the figure of the refugee, as I have argued, is at the heart of his representation of Arendt's revolutionary political thought and, as such, anticipates a fundamental and urgent concern of contemporary global theory; and, in so doing, 2) I also want to underscore the remarkable similarity between his reading of Arendt's proleptic overdetermination of the figure of the refugee (and the exile or conscious pariah—its spokesperson) and Said's singling out of the émigré as the figure that defines the post-imperial global occasion—even though Agamben, surprisingly, does not refer to him:

> One ought to reflect on the meaning of this analysis [Arendt's proclamation that with the advent of the conscious pariah "History is no longer a closed book to them (refugees) and politics is no longer the privilege of Gentiles"],

> which after fifty years has lost none of its relevance. It is not only the case that the problem presents itself inside and outside of Europe with just as much urgency as then. It is also the case that, given the by now unstoppable decline of the nation-state and the general corrosion of traditional political-juridical categories [by way of the establishment of the state of exception as the norm], the refugee is perhaps the only thinkable figure for the people of our time and the only category in which one may see today—at least until the process of dissolution of the nation-state and of its sovereignty has achieved full completion—the forms and limits of a coming political community. It is even possible that, if we want to be equal to the absolutely new tasks ahead, we will have to abandon decidedly, without reservation, the fundamental concepts through which we have so far represented the subjects of the political (Man, the Citizen and its rights, but also the sovereign people, the worker, and so forth) and build our political philosophy anew starting from the one and only figure of the refugee. (BHR, 15)

Following this generalization of Arendt's inaugural insight into the dislocating centrality of the figure of the refugee in the globalized age and thus into its paradoxical potential *vis-à-vis* the coming community, Agamben, drawing on her corrosive analysis of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century European nationalism in *Imperialism,* goes on to underscore the fundamental contradiction inhering in the idea of the modern nation-state. I am not only referring to his decisive focus on the incompatibility between—the fracture of—the nation-state's understanding of the "human" and the "Citizen," a "people" and the "People," the biopolitical logic of belonging of which inevitably *produces* the countless—and unaccountable—stateless refugee (and expendable bare life). I am also referring to his simultaneous underscoring of the *spectrality* of this dispossessed, "superfluous" figure: the representative of those, who, as in the case of Said's Adornian meditation on the eccentric émigré, because they are "not reified," "cannot be counted and measured" and, therefore, who "cease to exist." In thus following the directives offered by Arendt's singling out of the refugee as the defining figure of the present interregnum, Agamben not only underscores the obsolescence of the ethics of natural human rights and of the concept of the sovereign nation-state; in emphasizing the refugee's spectrality, he also, however tentatively, points to the "renewal [the rendering 'inoperative'] of [the nation-state's] categories" (BHR, 22.3), that is, to the positive political potential of the figure of the refugee. Echoing Said's diagnosis of the demographics of the contemporary global occasion precipitated by the coming to its end (fulfillment and demise) of imperialism, Agamben writes:

> If the refugee represents such a disquieting element in the order of the nation-state, this is so primarily because, by breaking the identity between human and the citizen and that between nativity and nationality, it brings the originary fiction of sovereignty to crisis. Single exceptions to such a principle, of course, have always existed. What is new in our time is that growing sections of human kind are no longer representable inside the nation-state—and this novelty threatens the very foundations of the latter. Inasmuch as the refugee, an apparently marginal figure, unhinges the old trinity of state-nation-territory [this telling locution derives from Arendt, OTI, 232], it deserves instead to be regarded as the central figure of our political history. (BHR, 20–21)[88]

It is at this suggestive point in Agamben's analysis of Arendt's affirmation of the marginalized—the unhomed—refugees' centrality, precipitated by the disintegration of the nation-state system and the emergence of the paradigm of the camp, as "the vanguard of their peoples" that he addresses the question as to what Arendt, as a conscious pariah, might have meant by calling, in opposition to the "Revisionist Zionists'" demand for the establishment of an exclusively Israeli state, for a denationalized bi-national "homeland." And it takes the form of an enigmatic but suggestive "spatial" metaphor whose implications for the coming *polis* are remarkably similar to those I have attributed to Said's metaphor for the coming Palestine from the domain of music: "'the complete consort dancing together' contrapuntally." It is "the Klein bottle or Mobius strip," where, in radical opposition to the paradigm of the concentration camp, "exterior and interior *in-determine* each other" (BHR, 24.5; my emphasis).[89] Agamben's explanation of his identification of the coming Palestine with the metaphor of the Klein bottle or its allotrope, the Mobius strip, is laconic and somewhat opaque, but if it is read, as he intends, in terms of the denationalized nationalist logic of the conscious pariah—Arendt's "non-Jewish Jewish" perspective, which precipitates the disintegration of the nation-state and the spectral figure of the nomadic refugee as the vanguard of the coming *polis*—its gist becomes sufficiently clear and the affiliation with Said's contrapuntal version manifest.

Echoing Arendt's anti-essentialist secularism, Agamben precedes his brief but provocative characterization of this de-centered coming community as Klein bottle or Mobius strip by underscoring the indissoluble logical relation between the nation-state and the concentration camp and the urgency of rethinking the human *polis* founded on a fixed and harmonizing principle of tonal presence (or Homeland). "Before extermination camps are reopened in Europe (something that is already starting to happened)," he writes, "it is

necessary that the nation-states find the courage to question the very principle of the inscription of nativity as well as the trinity of state-nation-territory that is founded on that principle." Then, focusing on "Jerusalem" as a decisive symptom of the urgent problem of the modern *polis,* he implicitly invokes—and, I suggest, amplifies appropriately in the conditional mode—Arendt's paradoxical binational alternative to the Israeli state, based categorically on the naturalized "trinity of state-nation-territory," established by the Zionists in Palestine: "that it become—simultaneously and without any territorial partition—the capital of two different states."

Pursuing the de-centering or unhoming and nomadologizing implications of the metaphor of the Klein bottle/Mobius strip, while attuned to the double consciousness—the global localism—of Arendt's non-Jewish Jewish perspective (which, it will be recall, I have attributed to Said's non-Palestinian Palestinian perspective as well), Agamben goes on to universalize the denationalized nationalism incumbent on this deterritorialization of the territory called Palestine or Israel. In the process he transforms the hierarchical nation-state's binary biopolitical logic of belonging—Friend and enemy or, at its extreme, Citizen and bare life—into a mobile reciprocal extra-relationality modeled on the "reciprocal extraterritoriality" precipitated by the decentering or deterritorializing of the territory: *two voices in counterpoint,* as it were: a *discordia concors*. "The paradoxical condition of reciprocal extraterritoriality (or, better, aterritoriality) that would be thus implied" by the decentering of "Jerusalem"—making it "the capital of two states"—Agamben writes,

> could be generalized as a model of new international relations. Instead of two national states separated by uncertain and threatening boundaries, *it might be possible to imagine two political communities insisting on the same region and in a condition of exodus from each other—communities that would articulate each other via a series of reciprocal extraterritorialities in which the guiding concept would no longer be the* ius (*right) of the citizen but rather the* refugium (*refuge) of the singular.*
>
> In an analogous way, we could conceive of Europe not as an impossible "Europe of the nations," whose catastrophe one can already foresee in the short run, *but rather as an aterritorial or extraterritorial space in which all the (citizen and noncitizen) residents of the European states would be in a position of exodus or refuge; the status of European would then mean the being-in exodus of the citizen (a condition that obviously could also be one of immobility*). European space would thus mark an irreducible difference between birth [*nascita*] and nation in which the old concept of people [as

> oppose to "the People" (*das Volk*)] (which, as is well known, is always a minority) could again find a political meaning, thus decidedly opposing itself to the concept of nation (which has so far unduly usurped it). (BHR, 24.5; my emphasis)

In sum, according to Agamben's amplification of Arendt's call for a binational—an unhomed homeland—the new "non-orientable" space precipitated by the denaturalization, deterritorialization, and denationalization of the nation "would coincide neither with any of the homogeneous national territories nor with their *topographical* sum, but would rather act on them by articulating and perforating them *topologically* as in the Klein bottle or in the Mobius strip, where exterior and interior in-determine each other. In this new space, European cities would rediscover their ancient vocation of cities of the world by entering into a relation of reciprocal extraterritoriality" (BHR, 24.5; emphasis in the original).[90] In this estranged perforated topological space, to put it in a different but analogous way, the binarist terms endemic to the nation-state and the divide or border it produces would remain the same—Jews would remain Jewish and Palestinians would remain Palestinian as would the tensions between them—but, as in the case of the Klein bottle or the Mobius strip, where, as Agamben emphasizes, "exterior and interior *in-determine* each other," the disabling operations of their hitherto hierarchical original status—Filial and non-filial, Friend and enemy, citizen and refugee, Belonging and not belonging, Rest and mobility—and the deadly exceptionalist vocational imperatives of those operations would be rendered inoperative. In the case of Palestine, what hitherto was a war between Jews and Palestinians to, and behalf of, the End in the vocational teleologic of the nation-state—the rigorous filial logic, that is, of the "People," which eventually banalizes its thinking—would metamorphose into a radically secular, open-ended, intimate and creative—playful—strife between "peoples": which is to say, into *means without end;* i.e., potentiality *as such.*

When Agamben's description of the Mobius strip or Klein bottle is seen in the light of this banalizing at-oning logic of the nation-state, it is impossible not to recall the lesson—which returns us, not incidentally, to the first chapter of this book—Arendt, the *conscious* pariah, drew from listening to the deadly monotone voice of Adolph Eichmann during his trial in Jerusalem and conveyed in her last posthumously published book, *The Life of the Mind*, by way of her explanation of Socrates' resonantly paradoxically metaphorical assertion about the thinking self in the *Giorgias* that "it would be better for me that my lyre or a chorus I directed should be out of tune and loud with discord, and that the multitudes of men should disagree with

me rather than that I, *being one,* should be out of harmony with myself and contradict me" (LMT, 181). In this translation of the Greek, Arendt unfortunately allows the musical metaphor "harmony" to stand, when, in fact, the explanation that follows—it is her famous summary of the double ("two-in-one") conscious Socrates' response to Hippias in Plato's (alleged) *Hippias Major*—makes it patently clear that that she means something different and more complex than its conventional meaning. There, in the section pointedly and resonantly entitled "The two-in-the-one," it will be recalled, Arendt writes:

> It is the end of the dialogue, the moment of going home. [Socrates] tells Hippias, who has shown himself to be an especially thickheaded partner, how "blissfully fortunate" he is in comparison with poor Socrates, who at home is awaited by a very obnoxious fellow who always cross-examines him. "He is a close relative and lives in the same house." When he now will hear Socrates give utterance to Hippias' opinions, he will ask "whether he is not ashamed of talking about a beautiful way of life, when questioning makes it evident that he does not even know the meaning of the word 'beauty.'" When Hippias goes home, he remains one, for, though he lives alone, he does nor seek to keep himself company. He certainly does not lose consciousness; he is simply not in the habit of actualizing it. When Socrates goes home, he is not alone, he is *by* himself. Clearly, with this fellow who awaits him, Socrates has to come to *some kind* of agreement, because they live under the same roof. Better to be at odds with the whole world than to be at odds with the only one you are forced to live together with when you had left company behind.
>
> What Socrates discovered was that we can have intercourse with ourselves, as well as with others, and that the two kinds of intercourse *are somehow interrelated.* Aristotle, speaking about friendship, remarked: "The friend is another self—meaning: you can carry on the dialogue of thought with him just as well as with yourself. This is still in the Socratic tradition, except that Socrates would have said: *The self, too, is a kind of friend. The guiding experience in these matters is, of course, friendship and not selfhood; I first talk with others before I talk with myself, examining whatever the joint talk may have been about, and then discover that I can conduct a dialogue not only with others but with myself as well.* The common point, however, is that the dialogue of thought can be carried out only among friends, and its basic criterion, its supreme law, as it were, says: Do not contradict yourself. (LMT, 188–189; my emphasis, except for "by")

In short, it is not literally harmony that distinguished Socrates from Hippias (and the Eichmanns of the nation-state system) who "remains one" (filiative or affiliative) when he goes home. "Harmony," in fact, is precisely what characterizes Hippias's (and Eichmann's) oneness with himself (insideness). As Arendt's insistent emphasis on the *priority of the doubleness* of the one makes amply clear, what radically distinguishes Socrates—who is "*by* himself" when he goes home—from Hippias is his double consciousness (outside insideness). It is not "friendship" as such (*filiation* or affiliation), but an *agonic friendship* (a-filiation). It is, in short, the loving strife *of* the two voices: their *always and unending* two-in-the-oneness—the consciousness that is also a conscience—that is enabled as a possibility by the exilic occasion. To invoke the musical metaphorics that Arendt's play on the two-in-the-one inevitably suggests, it is the dis-sonant poly-phony (as opposed to tonal sym-phony) of Socrates's thinking. Even more accurately, what distinguished Socrates from Hippias's banal linearity is his ability to think *contrapuntally*: "counterpoint: the ability, unique to music, to say two things at once comprehensively."

To return to Agamben's suggestive Arendtian characterization of the post–nation-state Palestine (and beyond), let me put the estrangement the *polis* undergoes when the "trinity of state-nation-territory" is seen in terms of the metaphor of the Mobius strip or Klein bottle in a different way, now foregrounding its relationship with the musical metaphor I have insinuated into this context following the directive Arendt offers by way of the example of Socrates' double consciousness in *The Life of the Mind.* The traditional logic of composition/orchestration—*the logic of the tonal musical tradition that is endemic to the rise of the modern Western nation-state and its logic of belonging*—willfully accommodates multiple voices into its resolved harmonious univocal structure.[91] Indeed, I have suggested, it renders the banal linear march (as in "the westward march of civilization" or "the Jews' march to the Promised Land") the necessary consequence of the linear monologic of symphonic form. In the new dispensation, which would render the work of the binarist terms of the former inoperative, the linear univocal symphony or march would metamorphose into a pluri-vocal structureless structure remarkably similar to the unresolved nonvocational—playful—pluralism at the heart of the Greek *polis* that Arendt admired, not as an end but as a directive: non-Jewish Jews and non-Palestinian Palestinians, saying and doing in the profane time of the now in loving strife. Which is to say, with Edward Said, "'the complete consort dancing together' contrapuntally."[92]

In the end, it can now be seen by way of my reconstellation of Hannah Arendt and Edward Said into an a-filiative relationship that their work is not

only informed by two voices in counterpoint—non-Jewish Jew in the case of Arendt and non-Palestinian Palestinian in the case of Said—that, in rendering the binary (Friend/foe) logic of belonging of nationality inoperative, transforms them into *discordia concors* of contrapuntal play. As such, they become, seen/heard collectively, a proleptic vibrant microcosm of the very contrapuntal *polis* their exilic, secular, and inside/outside—two-in-one—perspectives enabled them to envisions in their life's labor: a neighborhood of zero, as it were.

I am, of course, aware that the possibility of achieving this anti-utopian utopia in Palestine—or elsewhere in the world—is extremely remote, at least for the foreseeable future. Despite the bankruptcy of the theoretical foundation of the nation-state system incumbent on the fulfillment of its exceptionalist binarist logic of belonging, the actual Western nations have remained desperately faithful to that life-mutilating, banalized vocational logic. Increasingly since the end of World War II, the United States, for example, has not only reasserted its commitment to the nation-state system; it has also, as its exceptionalist global policy of "regime change" testifies, committed itself to imposing Americana-style democracy on "rogue states" by military force. Rather than taking their directives from the figure of the refugee that the fulfillment of the logic of the nation-state has rendered ubiquitous and Arendt and Said proleptically recommended, the policies of the Western nation-states have increased the count of the countless and, in turn, exacerbated their self-defensive demonization of the refugee. As a result, as Agamben observes—and as the present state of Israel testifies[93]—they have normalized and globalized the state of exception and the thanatopolitical paradigm of the concentration camp. Nevertheless, I not only believe with Hannah Arendt and Edward Said that there is no other solution to the question of Palestine—which they have shown is a fraught global question as well—than that which they proleptically proffered, but also that the very exacerbation of this demonization—this spectralization—of the refugee in the form of the normalization and globalization of the containing camp bears witness, in this interregnum, to the power of their vision of the coming contrapuntal *polis* and its potentiality.[94] It has been because of my sense of the urgent need to focalize this power and potentiality of their proleptic vision that I have undertaken to establish this hitherto unremarked contrapuntal affiliation between Hannah Arendt and Edward Said, non-Jewish Jew and non-Palestinian Palestinian.

VIII. Coda

By traveling freely across cultures
those in search of the human essence
may find a space for all to sit. . . .
Here a margin advances. Or a centre
retreats. Where East is not strictly east,
and West is not strictly west,
where identity is open onto plurality,
not a fort or a trench.

—Mahmoud Darwish, "Edward Said: A Contrapuntal Reading," trans. from the Arabic by Mona Anis

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NOTES

Chapter 1

1. For a powerful psychoanalytic analysis of the George W. Bush administration's use of the myth of American exceptionalism to establish the state of exception as the global norm in the wake of 9/11, see Donald E. Pease, *The New American Exceptionalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), particularly Chapter 5, "From Virgin Land to Ground Zero: Mythological Foundations of the Homeland Security State," 153–79. See also William V. Spanos, "American Exceptionalism and the State of Exception after 9/11: Melville's Proleptic Witness," in *The Exceptionalist State and the State of Exception: Herman Melville's Billy Budd, Sailor* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 141–63.

2. See Richard Haass, *The Reluctant Sheriff: The United States after the Cold War* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1997).

3. See William V. Spanos, "Edward W. Said and the Poststructuralists," in *The Legacy of Edward W. Said* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 1–25.

4. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1958), 136–74. For an extended analysis of Arendt's critique of the figure of *homo faber,* see Chapter 5 of this book.

5. Louis Althusser, "From *Capital* to Marx's Philosophy," in Althusser and Étienne Balibar, *Reading Capital* (London: Verso, 1979. See also William V. Spanos, "Althusser's 'Problematic': Vision and the Vietnam War," in *American Exceptionalism in the Age of Globalization: The Specter of Vietnam* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2008), 35–56.

6. Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in David Farrell Krell, ed., *Basic Writings,* revised and expanded ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1993), 322; my emphasis. Further citations will be abbreviated QCT and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

7. Appearing originally as a five-part series entitled "A Reporter at Large: Eichmann in Jerusalem" and published in *The New Yorker* between February and March 1963. *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* was published in its final form by

Penguin in 1963. Further references will be abbreviated EJ and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

8. Arendt analyzes this logic of belonging and its deadly consequences in *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* new ed. (New York: Harcourt, 1968), particularly in the chapter of Part II (*Imperialism*) entitled "The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man," 267–302. For an amplification of Arendt's proleptic insight into the banalizing—and self-destructive—logic of the nation-state, see Chapter 5.

9. Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in *Basic Writings,* 222–23.

10. For an amplification of this "vocational" logic, see Chapter 5.

11. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life,* trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).

12. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition,* 44–45*:* "A complete victory of society," she writes, "will always produce some sort of 'communist fiction,' whose outstanding political characteristic is that it is indeed ruled by an 'invisible hand,' namely by nobody. What we traditionally call state and government gives place here to pure administration."

13. Hannah Arendt, "A Daughter of Our People: A Response to Gershom Scholem," in *The Portable Hannah Arendt,* ed. Peter Baehr (New York: Penguin, 2000), 396.

14. In my formulation of this limitation, I am referring immediately to Heidegger's commentary on Kant's ontological project in *Being and Time:*

> In line with the positive tendencies of this destruction, we must in the first instance raise the question whether and to what extent the Interpretation of Being and the phenomenon of time have been brought together thematically in the course of the history of ontology, and whether the problematic of Temporality required for this has ever been worked out in principle or ever could have been. The first and only person who has gone any stretch of the way towards investigating the dimension of Temporality or even let himself be drawn hither by the coercion of the phenomena themselves is Kant. Only when we have established the problematic of Temporality, can we succeed in casting light on the obscurity of his doctrine of the schematism. But this will also show us *why* this area is one which had to remain closed off to him in its real dimensions and its central ontological function. . . . [In his doctrine of the schematism], Kant shrinks back, as it were, in the face of something which must be brought to light as theme and a principle if the expression "Being" is to have any demonstrable meaning. In the end, those very phenomena which will be exhibited under the heading of "Temporality" in our analysis, are precisely those most covert judgments of the "common reason" for which Kant says it is the "business of philosophers" to provide an analytic. (Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time,* trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson [San Francisco, CA: HarperSan Francisco, 1962], 45)

For dramatic literary examples of this shrinking back from the "reality" that this kind of oppositional discourse discloses, see my readings of Philip Caputo's anti-Vietnam War memoir *A Rumor of War* and Tim O'Brien's anti-Vietnam War novel *Going After Cacciato* in *American Exceptionalism in the Age of Globalization: The Specter of Vietnam* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2008). These are two synecdochical "threshold" texts about the Vietnam War the denouements of which, like the *deus ex machina* in traditional Western literature, reveal the contradictions it was their intention to conceal, from which, that is, the authors

shrink back. More generally, I am referring to a certain bad faith on the part of all too many contemporary critics of essentialism who, though committed theoretically to the radically secular world, nevertheless shrink back from its existential imperatives to think and act in the time of the now. I undertake an amplification of the question of the secular in Chapter 2.

15. David Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest* (New York: Random House, 1972).

16. New York Times, *The Pentagon Papers* (New York: Bantam Books, 1971), # 92, 423.

17. New York Times, *The Pentagon Papers,* #96, 432–33.

18. The recuperation and reinstallation in the wake of the "kicking of the Vietnam syndrome" of one version or other of "Composition 101"—the model that the student movement in the 1960s called radically into question—by U.S. colleges and universities (now under the aegis of the global market) bears witness to this amnesia. See, for example, the composition program inaugurated by fiat by the administration of Binghamton University, SUNY, in 2009.

19. Richard Ohmann, *English in America: A Radical View of the Profession* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 199–202. Ohmann's definition of the "problem solving" model is worth recalling for obvious reasons: "To put the obvious label on the paradigm [that characterizes all the memoranda] it is a model for *problem solving.* . . . Any model reduces complexity—exchanges faithfulness to reality for finiteness. If you have to decide something tomorrow or next week, it is helpful, maybe necessary, to sort reality out on a familiar grid. A problem-solving model supplies a grid that connects reality to a desired future by one or more acts. To do that, it must pick out those elements from reality that have the most salient ties to the desired future. This is, of course, an abstraction of elements from the present in a way that reflects one's own needs and interests" (p. 196). This definition epitomizes the thought process of what Hannah Arendt refers to as *homo faber* in *The Human Condition.* For my amplification of Arendt's representation of modern man as maker, see Chapter 5.

20.

> AVNER W. LESS: Then your reports had previously contained more [than simply statistics].
>
> EICHMANN: Yes, they covered the whole situation, all the difficulties encountered in the various countries. An overall, how should I put it?—comprehensive work report, naturally in appropriate, hmmm . . . appropriate telegraphic style. But about how many we killed I had no figures. When the statistician was with me, a week or maybe two, in my office, day after day, making his inquiries he sent telegrams et cetera all over the place. . . . So I believe . . . the following may be possible. . . . Yes, now, now it's plain to me, why the letter [from Himmler to the head of the Security Police and SD in Berlin] says "for purpose of camouflage." Most likely I supplied the statistician with the figures shipped, but not the figures killed. (*Eichmann Interrogated: Transcripts from the Archives of the Israeli Police,* ed. Jochen von Lang in collaboration with Claus Sibyll, trans. Ralph Manheim [New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 1983], 115)

Further citations will be abbreviated EI and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

21. See the chapter aptly entitled "Duties of a Law-abiding Citizen," in Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem,* 135–50.

22. Because of the light it sheds on the deeply backgrounded hold that this "American calling" has had on the American national identity ever since the Puritans announced their election by God to fulfill His "errand in [the New World] wilderness," it is worth noting that Herman Melville was one of few American writers in the history of the United States to perceive the myth of American exceptionalism as a national calling that reduced even the brightest to subjected subjects—and produced the routinization of violence against America's others. See Melville's great novella "*Benito Cereno,*" his acute diagnosis of the blindness and devastating banality of the highly intelligent Captain Amasa Delano's vision of blacks and slavery. I discuss this crucial national characteristic (in opposition to Bartleby's refusal to be answerable to the call) in the chapter entitled "'Benito Cereno' and 'Bartleby, the Scrivener': Reflections on the American Calling," in Spanos, *Herman Melville and the American Calling: The Fiction after* Moby-Dick*, 1851–1857* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2008), 105–166.

23. See especially Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage 1979), 284–328.

24. See also, Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem,* 65–72 and 76–78.

25. See Peter Linebaugh, *The Magna Carta Manifesto* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008). Linebaugh does not make the connection between the enclosure movement, that produced the capitalist nation-state at the expense of the commons and the commoners, and the pacification strategy of the strategic hamlets initiative in Vietnam, but it is not difficult to perceive that the latter constitutes the fulfillment of the biopolitical logical economy of the former.

26. The "pacification" program, according to Marilyn B. Young in *The Vietnam Wars, 1945–1990* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), was begun under the regime of Ngo Dihn Diem in the form of the "Strategic Hamlet" initiative under the tutelage of Robert Thompson, a member of the British Advisory Mission, "who had develop this tactic in Malaya" (p. 82). But it was quickly seized upon and developed fully by the Americans, most notably Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, in the form of the "New Life Hamlet" and, then, when that failed, the "really New Life Hamlet" under the management of Robert Komer (1967). See Young, *The Vietnam Wars,* 144–45.

27. See Marilyn Young, *The Vietnam Wars:* "[K. Barton] Osborne. A military intelligence officer in South Vietnam from September 1967 through December 1968, testified before Congress as to what happened when interrogation was undertaken, as for example, by Marine counterintelligence: "The use of the insertion of the 6-inch dowel into the canal of one of my detainee's ears and the tapping through the brain until he died. The starving to death [in a cage] of a Vietnamese woman who was suspected of being a part of the local political education cadre in one of the local villages. . . . [T]he use of electronic gear such as sealed telephones attached to . . . both the women's vagina and the men's testicles [to] shock them into submission" (p. 213). On Robert Komer's version of the pacification program, see Loren Baritz, *Backfire: Vietnam—the Myth That Made Us Fight, the Illusions That Helped Us Lose, the Legacy That Haunts Us Today* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1985), 161–62, 264–65.

28. For a fuller analysis of the depredations suffered by the Vietnamese peasantry in the name of "the pacification program," see Spanos, *Heidegger and Criticism: Retrieving the Cultural Politics of Destruction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 199–218.

29. Baritz, *Backfire,* 266.

30. Philip Caputo, *Rumor of War* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1977), 69.

31. Quoted in Frances Fitzgerald's introduction to Dan Thuy Tram's diary, *Last Night I Dreamed of Peace,* trans. Andrew X. Pham (New York: Random House, 2007), xiii. This diary of a young female National Liberation Front medical doctor speaks back passionately and eloquently to Komer's reductive—banal—representation of the Vietnamese insurgents.

32. See, for example, the direct references to the dehumanized arithmetic of the body count in Ron Kovic, *Born on the Fourth of July* (1976)*;* Philip Caputo *A Rumor of War* (1977); Tim O'Brien, *Going After Cacciato* (1978); and other American soldiers who turned against the war, as well the indirect references in the reminiscences of others who had not, for example, soldiers represented in Al Santoli, ed., *Everything We Had: An Oral History of the Vietnam War by Thirty-Three American Soldiers Who Fought It* (1981); Mark Baker, ed., *Nam: The Vietnam War in the Words of the Soldiers Who Fought There* (1981); and Wallace Terry, ed., *Bloods: An Oral History of the Vietnam War by Black Veterans* (1984). The most telling witness is that of Caputo in the section of his memoir where he recounts his experience as "the keeper of Colonel Wheeler's Scoreboard": "The colonel, an easy-going man in most instances, was adamant about maintaining an accurate scoreboard: high-ranking visitors from Danang and Saigon often dropped in unannounced to see how the regiment was performing. And the measures of a unit's performance in Vietnam were not the distances it had advanced or the number of victories it had won, but the number of enemy soldiers it had killed (the body count) and the proportion between that number and the number of its own dead (the kill ratio). The scoreboard thus allowed the colonel to keep track of the battalions and companies under his command and, quickly and crisply, to rattle off impressive figures to visiting dignitaries. My unsung task in that statistical war was to do the arithmetic. If I had been an agent of death as platoon leader, as staff officer I was death's bookkeeper" (Caputo, *A Rumor of War* [New York: Ballantine Books, 1977], 160).

33. Marilyn Young, *The Vietnam Wars,* 213. K. Barton Osborne's deposition, "Military Intelligence and the Phoenix Program," was given before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Government Operations, House of Representatives, 92nd Congress, 1st sess., July 25–August 2, 1971.

34. See Spanos, *America's Shadow: An Anatomy of Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 129–44; and *American Exceptionalism in the Age of Globalization: The Specter of Vietnam* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2008), 145–48.

35. http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/08/20070822–3.html

36. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 92–93.

37. Graham Greene, *The Quiet American* (New York: Penguin, 1977; first published by Heinemann in 1955), 161–63. For an extended reading of Greene's novel that focuses on Alden Pyle and his language/thinking as representative of the American national identity, see the chapter entitled "Who Killed Alden Pyle?: The Oversight of Oversight in Graham Greene's *The Quiet American,*" in William V. Spanos, *American Exceptionalism in the Age of Globalization: The Specter of Vietnam* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2008), 57–98.

38. See, above all, Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism; or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991); Bill Readings, *The University in Ruins* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996); Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996); Jameson and Masao Miyoshi, *The Cultures of Globalization* (Durham, NC: Duke Univer-

sity Press, 1998); Ronald Judy, "Some Notes on the Status of Global English in Tunisia," *boundary 2,* vol. 26, 2 (Summer 1999): 3–29; and Hardt and Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin, 2004).

39. Hardt and Negri, *Empire,* 258, and 293–94.

40. See Readings, *The University in Ruins,* 21–43. See also, Spanos "Rethinking *Rethinking SUNY*: The Costly Ideology Informing 'Cost Efficiency,'" *Crossings: A Counter-Disciplinary Journal of Philosophical, Cultural, and Literary Studies* 1 (Spring 1997): 164–77; and Ronald Judy, "Some Notes on the Status of Global English in Tunisia," 5–15.

41. Todd V. Helmus, Christopher Paul, and Russel W. Glenn, *Enlisting Madison Avenue: The Marketing Approach to Earning Popular Support in Theaters of Operations* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2007). Further citations will be abbreviated EMA and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

42. See Chapter 5.

43. Voltaire, *Candide or Optimism,* trans. John Butt (London: Penguin Books, 1947), 334.

44. Ron Suskind, "Without a Doubt," *New York Times,* October 17, 2004.

45. Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment,* ed. Gunselin Schmid Noerr and trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), "Preface" to the 1969 edition, xi. See also Hannah Arendt, "The Rise the Social," in *The Human Condition,* 38–49, particularly 44–45.

46. This chapter was written before the release by the Barack Obama administration of the secret "opinions" written by members of the George W. Bush administration's Office of Legal Council, including John Yoo, Jay Bybee, and Robert J. Delahunty, in the aftermath of 9/11. In these astonishing documents, this group of "legal experts" systematically attempted to rewrite constitutional law to provide the executive branch with "plenary power," which is to say, to make the state of exception the rule in the name of "Homeland Security." It was a "legal" initiative that, among other assaults against democracy, gave us the obscene practice of "extraordinary rendition," Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo, and all that these detention camps, which are immune to the law, imply about human rights. As such, these "opinions" by the intellectual deputies of the Bush/Cheney administration chillingly demonstrate the same "thoughtless thought" that pervades *The Pentagon Papers* and the Rand Corporation's *Enlisting Madison Avenue,* which I have invoked in this chapter. In doing so, they also bear further frightening witness to the proximity of the United States to that benighted world in which, according to Hannah Arendt, the banality of evil reigned.

47. The difference and the disturbing similarity to which I am referring is, in my mind, epitomized by the juxtaposition of the American colonial "settler" image—Indian removal (ethnic cleansing) and genocide—of the "westward march of American civilization" that pervades the public documents, official histories (Francis Parkman), canonical fiction (James Fenimore Cooper) and art (George Caleb Bingham and John Gast), and the image of the jackboot march of the German *SS* that pervades the propaganda of the Nazi regime (the Nuremburg rallies, for example). I will return frequently to the musical metaphor of the march in this book. But see especially Chapter 5.

48. Edward W. Said*, Human and Democratic Criticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 61. Further citations will be abbreviated HDC and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

49. Hannah Arendt, "One/Thinking," in *The Life of the Mind* (New York: Harcourt

Brace, 1977), 167. Further citations will be abbreviated LMT and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

50. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), 318.

51. Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage, 1994), 335.

52. See Chapter 3.

53. Foucault, *The Order of Things,* 340–43.

Chapter 2

1. These writings have been collected and published in English as *The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After* (New York: Pantheon, 2000; revised ed., Vintage 2001); and *From Oslo to Iraq and the Road Map* (New York: Vintage, 2004).

2. Statement of Stanley Kurtz before the Subcommittee on Select Education, Committee on Education and the Workforce, U.S. House of Representatives, www.campus-watch.org/artice/id730. See also Kurtz, "Edward Said, Imperialist," *The Weekly Standard,* 10/08/2001, vol. 007, Issue 4.

3. Ferial J. Ghazoul, ed., *Edward Said and Critical Decolonization* (Cairo, Egypt: The American University Press of Cairo, 2005).

4. Edward W. Said, *Out of Place: A Memoir* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999).

5. Hannah Arendt could also be included in this list, since in 1953, when Said was an undergraduate at Princeton University, she gave the Gauss Seminars on "Karl Marx and the Great Tradition," which, though never published, catapulted her into visibility as a German Jewish émigré scholar in the United States.

6. Tariq Ali, *Conversations with Edward Said* (London: Seagull, 2006), 71–73.

7. Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), 335. Further citations will be abbreviated CI and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

8. Edward W. Said, *Beginnings: Intention and Method* (New York: Basic Books, 1975), 372–73.

9. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979): "It may appear strange to speak about something or someone as holding a *textual* attitude, but a student of literature will understand the phrase more easily if he will recall the kind of view attacked by Voltaire in *Candide,* or even the attitude to reality satirized by Cervantes in *Don Quixote.* What seems unexceptionable good sense to these writers is that it is a fallacy to assume that the swarming, unpredictable, and problematic mess in which human beings live can be understood on the basis of what books—texts—say; to apply what one learns out of a book literally to reality is to risk folly or ruin. One would no more think of using *Amadis of Gaul* to understand sixteenth-century (or present-day) Spain than one would use the Bible to understand, say, the House of Commons" (pp. 92–93).

10. See, especially the chapter entitled "The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man" of Book 2 of Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* new ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1976), 266–302. On the "conscious pariah," see pp. 64–66; and "The Jew as Pariah: A Hidden Tradition," in *Hannah Arendt: The Jew as Pariah: Jewish Identity and Politics in the Modern Age,* ed. Ron H. Feldman (New York: Grove Press, 1978), 67–90. For my amplification of Arendt's concept of "the conscious pariah" in the context of Said's "exilic consciousness," see Chapter 5.

11. One of the few critics who have noted the global import of Arendt's affirmation of the indissoluble relationship between "the Jewish question," the self-destruction of the nation-state system, and the rise of totalitarianism at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth, is Aamir Mufti, who, in *Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Postcolonial Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), demonstrates the continuity between the dynamics of minoritization (of the Jews) incumbent on the logic of belonging of the European nation-state and the tragic history that led to the partition of India in the postcolonial period.

12. The quotation from Theodor Adorno appears in *Minima Moralia: Reflections from a Damaged Life,* trans. E. F. N. Jephcott (London: New Left Books, 1974), 68.

13. This book was completed shortly before the spring of 2011, which bore witness to the Arab Revolution in North Africa and the Middle East, most notably in Tunisia and Egypt. It thus points to the possibilities of resistance enabled by thinking the self-destruction of imperialism in Said's terms as they pertain to contemporary Western nation-states. As the patent amorphousness of the Arab Revolution—its refusal to be named by the Western powers—suggests, however, what I have said about the post-imperial Western nation-state is also applicable to the ventriloquized nation-states that the Revolution is overthrowing. See William V. Spanos, "Arab Spring, 2011: A Symptomatic Reading of the Revolution," *Symplokē* (forthcoming).

14. Commenting on the obsolescence of monovocal orientations toward literary reading, Said writes:

> Instead of the partial analysis offered by the various national or systematically theoretical schools, I have been proposing the contrapuntal lines of a global analysis, in which texts and worldly institutions are seen working together, in which Dickens or Thackeray as London authors are read also as writers whose historical experience is informed by the colonial enterprises in India and Australia of which they were so aware, and in which the literature of one commonwealth is involved in the literatures of others. Separatist or nativist enterprises strike me as exhausted; the ecology of literature's new and expanded meaning cannot be attached to only one essence or to the discrete idea of one thing. But this global, contrapuntal analysis should be modeled not (as the 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. (CI, 318; my emphasis)

15. See Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political,* ed. and trans. George Schwab (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 34–37.

16. Edward W. Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004). Further citations will be abbreviated HDC and incorporated in the text in parentheses. The importance of this paradoxical coinage to Said is borne witness to by his repeating it in his reading of Freud's intellectual identity in *Freud and the Non-European* (London: Verso, 2003), 52–55. Further citations of the latter will be abbreviated FNE and incorporated in the text in parentheses. See also Jacqueline Rose, "Mass Psychology," in *The Last Resistance* (London: Verso, 2007), in which, following Said, Rose undertakes

a psychoanalytic genealogy of Freud's Jewish "identity" by way of an analysis of the figure of Moses (pp. 77 ff.). Commenting on the 1930 autobiographical preface to the Hebrew edition of *Totem and Taboo,* in which Freud both acknowledges his "estrange[ment] from the religion of his fathers" and yet insists that "in his essential nature" he is "a Jew," Rose writes: "No faith, no language, no nationhood—as Said stresses. Freud defines himself here as Isaac Deutscher's non-Jew; but for all that, or even because of that, he is Jewish in essence" (p. 85). As I will show at length in Chapter 5, the same enabling paradox is at the heart of Hannah Arendt's self-identification as a "conscious pariah."

17. Said's reference to Richard Rorty is to *Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), in which the latter berates the Left of the Vietnam War era for betraying its responsibility to fulfilling the American national promise. Rorty's title epitomizes the imperatives of the logic of vocation (the American calling) that is the object of Said's (and Arendt's) radical secular (or worldly) critique.

18. Michel Foucault, "What Is an Author?" in *The Foucault Reader,* ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon, 1984), 113–14.

19. In the last chapter of this book, I will suggest that Hannah Arendt's legacy, not unlike Said's, has been, until recently, disablingly divided *in tendency* into two more or less independent compartments. One, mostly the result of Jewish intellectuals, assumes her legacy to be primarily that of a Jew writing, for good or ill, on the "Jewish Question," while the other, mostly the result of gentile intellectuals, holds her to be one who, sometime along the line, if not from the beginning of her career, chose, against her origins, to be a cosmopolitan European. In amplifying the affiliation between Said's "exilic consciousness" and Arendt's notion of the "conscious pariah" I have briefly introduced in this chapter, I will also suggest why I consider them to be exemplary—indeed enabling—models of the intellectuals in our deracinated age, an age in which "liberation as an intellectual mission . . . has now shifted from the settled, established, and domesticated dynamics of culture to its unhoused, decentered, an exilic energies."

Chapter 3

1. See Bernard Lewis, "The Roots of Muslim Rage," *The Atlantic Monthly* (September 1990); and Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

2. In his speech on September 11, 2006, commemorating the fifth anniversary of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, President George W. Bush, echoing the long history of the American jeremiad, said "the war against this enemy is more than a military conflict. It is the ideological struggle of the 21st century and the calling of our generation" ("President's Address to the Nation," http://merln.ndu.edu/archivepdf/hls/WH/20060911-3.pdf).

3. Alain Badiou, *The Meaning of Sarkozy,* trans. David Fernbach (London: Verso, 2008). Identifying the alliance between war and fear in collaborationist France during World War II as "Pétainism," Badiou writes: "[T]he analogous 'Pétainism' of today [the government of Sarkozy] consists in maintaining that the French simply had to accept the laws of the world—the Yankee model, servility toward the powerful, the domination of the rich, hard work by the poor, the surveillance of everyone, systematic suspicion of foreign-

ers living here, contempt for people who do not live like we do—and then all will be well. Sarkozy's programme, like that of Pétain himself, is work, family and country" (14).

4. See especially Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," trans. Harry Zorn, in *Illuminations* (London: Fontana, 1973).

5. Giorgio Agamben, *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans,* trans. Patricia Bailey (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005). Further references will be italicized TR and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

6. Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism,* trans. Ray Brassier (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003). Further references will be abbreviated SP and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

7. The Arendt I am invoking here is not the Arendt appropriated by the Habermasians or "communitarian" political scientists, in part, to dissociate her work from that of Heidegger, but the Arendt who was profoundly influenced by Nietzsche and Heidegger, and who, in this capacity, in turn, influenced post-poststructuralist secular thinkers like Giorgio Agamben and Alain Badiou. I mean particularly Heidegger's and Nietzsche's interrogation of the "onto-theo-logical," i.e., Western metaphysical, tradition, which, in thinking being *meta-ta-physica* (from "after or beyond or above" temporality), subjected humanity to the call of a transcendental *Telos,* which is to say, rendered him/her a subjected subject whose vocation was to slavishly fulfill its Word. My focus in this chapter will be on Said's version of the secular, but, as I will show in later chapters, what I say about Said's understanding of the secular is also, *mutatis mutandis,* applicable to Arendt's.

8. See Vassilis Lambropoulos, *The Rise of Eurocentrism: Anatomy of Interpretation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).

9. This forgetting of the *Seinsfrage* was, as Vassilis Lambropoulos has persuasively shown, ironically inaugurated by Emmanuel Levinas' and Jacques Derrida's early efforts to privilege the Hebraic aspect of the formula that has characterized the history of the West as Hellenic/Judeo-Christian. And it is epitomized in Gil Anidjar's recent Derridian genealogy of Western modernity. See especially *The Jew, the Arab: A History of the Enemy* (Stanford, CA: Sanford University Press, 2003); and "Secularism," *Critical Inquiry* 33, 1 (Autumn 2006): 52–77. Anidjar's genealogy constitutes a valuable contribution to our revisionary understanding of the modern West, particularly his identification of Western secularism as a *political theology* in a way that Said does not clearly. But in overdetermining the religious dimension (Christianity vs. Islam) of the "clash of civilizations" that has come increasingly to characterize the West's interpretation of the present global occasion, he virtually erases the Greco-Roman (the humanist) dimension of this genealogy (not least the *Romanization of Greek antiquity*—the reduction of *a-letheia* to *veritas,* unconcealment to the adequation of mind and thing—in the Renaissance–Enlightenment era in favor of the Judeo-Christian, which is to say, the ontological (metaphysics) or, more specifically, the Anthropological, in favor of the theological (Christianity). In so doing he repeats in reverse the reductive oversimplification of the classical tradition. For an extended critique of this "Hebreistic" initiative, see Spanos, "The Ontological Origins of Occidental Imperialism: Thinking the *Meta* of Metaphysics," in *America's Shadow: An Anatomy of Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), particularly footnote 17, pp. 212–214.

10. "Philosophy," that is to say, the metaphysical philosophy of the Western tradition, "comes to its end," understood as goal and termination, in modernity, when, according to Heidegger, the binary logic (Being versus time) that spatializes or structuralizes the

differences that temporality always already disseminates becomes the "world picture," at which point the nothingness (*das Nichts*), i.e., radical finitude, that is ontologically prior to Being manifests itself spectrally. See Heidegger, "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," in *Basic Writings,* ed. David Farrell Krell, rev. and exp. ed. (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), 431–48; and "The Age of the World Picture," in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays,* trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), 115–54.

11. Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," in *Writing and Difference,* trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 279–80. Further references will be abbreviated SSP and included in the text in parentheses corrected.

12. Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 109–10; my emphasis.

13. Eric Auerbach, "Figura," in *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature,* trans. Ralph Mannheim (New York: Meridian, 1959), 53–54.

14. By "poststructuralism," I do not intend its technical meaning: the theory that supersedes the structuralism of Ferdinand de Saussure, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Roland Barthes, etc., but rather that general anti-philosophical initiative that had as its fundamental purpose to retrieve—and to think positively—the radical temporality of finite being from the *spatializing* or *structuring* imperatives of thinking *meta-ta-physica.*

15. Louis Althusser, "From *Capital* to Marx's Philosophy," in Althusser and Étienne Balibar, *Reading* Capital (London: Verso, 1979). Citing Marx's symptomatic reading of the "problematic" of capitalist political economy, Althusser writes:

> What made the mistake of political economy possible does indeed affect *the transformation of the object of its oversight.* What political economy [its "problematic"] does not see is not a pre-existing object which it could have seen but did not see—but an object which it produced itself in it operation of knowledge and which did not pre-exist it; precisely the production itself, which is identical with the object. What political economy does not see is what it *does:* its production of a new answer without a question, and simultaneously the production of a new latent question contained by default in the new answer. Through the lacunary terms of its new answer political economy produced a new question, but "*unwittingly.*" It made "*a complete change in the terms of the* original *problem,*" and thereby produced a new problem, but without knowing it. Far from knowing it, it remained convinced that it was still on the terrain of the old problem, whereas it has "*unwittingly changed terrain.*" Its blindness and its "oversight" lie in this misunderstanding, between what it produces and what it sees. (p. 24)

Edward Said's concept of "contrapuntal reading," as it is exemplified in his interpretation of Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* (*Culture and Imperialism* [New York: Alfred Knopf, 1993], 84–97) is, I suggest, remarkably similar to Althusser's concept of "the problematic."

16. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage 1979): "[I]f these interconnected elements ['expansion, historical confrontation, sympathy, classification,' which 'released the Orient generally, and Islam in particular, from the narrowly religious scrutiny by which it had hitherto been examined (and judged) by the Christian West,'] represent a secularizing tendency, this is not to say that the old religious patterns of human history

and destiny and 'the existential paradigms' were simply removed. Far from it: they were reconstituted, redeployed, redistributed in the secular framework just enumerated. For anyone who studied the Orient a secular vocabulary in keeping with the frameworks was required. Yet if Orientalism provided the vocabulary, the conceptual repertoire, the techniques . . . [i]t also retained, as an undislodged current in its discourse, a reconstructed religious impulse, a naturalized supernaturalism" (pp. 120–21). M. H. Abrams appropriates the phrase from Thomas Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* as a convenient means of indicating that his "recurrent . . . concern will be with the secularization of inherited theological ideas and ways of thinking" (*Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* [New York: W. W. Norton, 1971], 12).

17. This unfortunate binarism is epitomized by Timothy Brennan in the chapter on Edward Said's legacy entitled, "Humanism, Philology, and Imperialism," in *Wars of Position: The Cultural Politics of Left and Right* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 93–125.

18. As I observed in Chapter 1, especially by way of the allusion to it in my title, Heidegger's essay, "Letter on Humanism" constitutes the intellectual source of Hannah Arendt's meditation on the distinction she makes between the traditional concept of evil and the modern, dehumanized evil she bore witness to at the trial of Adolph Eichmann, which she called "the banality of evil." See Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil,* rev. and enl. ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1994).

19. Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in *Basic Writings,* 225. Further references will be abbreviated LH and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

20. For extended readings of this pivotal passage in Heidegger's *work,* see Spanos, *Heidegger and Criticism: Retrieving the Cultural Politics of Destruction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 140–49; *America's Shadow: An Anatomy of Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 66–61; *The Legacy of Edward W. Said* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 153–59. See also Martin Bernal, *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1987), which persuasively demonstrates that the early Greeks were far more multicultural than they have been represented to be by the "official" histories of the origins of the West. These histories, according to Bernal, were the result of a fiction inaugurated by German racist scholarship in the eighteenth century.

21. If we recall that Heidegger singles out Immanuel Kant in *Being and Time,* trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (San Francisco, CA: Harper, 1962), as the one modern Western philosopher who intuited the imperatives of temporality in rethinking the question of being but "shrank back" from confronting what he intuited about its dynamics (p. 45), it could be argued that Heidegger is implicitly referring to Kant's secular humanism in this passage. Be that as it may, William Connolly, in his important poststructuralist meditation on the question of the secular, has shown that Kant's humanistic secularism is indeed a natural supernaturalism. Commenting on Kant's *The Conflict of Faculties* from an essentially Deleuzian perspective, he writes:

> It is a significant move to give morality priority over ecclesiology, but Kant's rational religion still shares much structurally with the "dogmatic" ecclesiology it seeks to displace. First, it places singular conceptions of reason and command morality above question. Second, it sets up (Kantian) philosophy as the highest potential authority in adjudicating questions in these two domains and in

> guiding the people toward eventual enlightenment. Third, it defines the greatest danger to public morality as sectarianism within Christianity. Fourth, in the process of defrocking ecclesiastical theology and crowning philosophy as judge in the last instance, it also delegitimates a place for several non-Kantian, nontheistic perspectives in public life. Thus, as Kantian philosophy is elevated to public preeminence, the pre-Kantian philosophies of Epicurianism, Spinozism, and Humeanism are devalued because of the priority they give to sensible life and an ethics of cultivation, respectively, over the supersensible and a morality of command. Moreover, a series of post-Kantian philosophies such as Nietzscheanism, Bergsonism, Foucauldianism, and Deleuzianism are depreciated in advance on similar grounds. For denigration of these latter perspectives sets a crucial condition of possibility for the authoritative regulation of religious sects in public life by universal philosophy. (32)

To Connolly's list of nontheistic perspectives devalued by Kant's political theology, one could add those of such postcolonial theorists as Talal Asad, Partha Chatterjee, Ashis Nandy, Dipesh Chakrabarty, and R. Radhakrishnan. Of this group, I single out Chakrabarty because of his explicit acknowledgment of his indebtedness to Heidegger's retrieval (decolonization) of temporality from Being. See *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), particularly the epilogue: "Reason and the Critique of Historicism," 237–55.

22. See Hannah Arendt's account of the Greek *polis* in *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), which, I claim, has its origin in the relay of distinction, still unheeded, that Heidegger makes between the Greeks and the Romans.

23. Martin Heidegger, *Parmenides,* trans. André Schuwer and Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 40–41; translation modified.

24. Jacques Derrida, "The Ends of Man," in *Margins of Philosophy,* trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 115–116.

25. Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays,* trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 170–83. For an extended analysis of the connection between Althusser's interpellation and the secularization of the American Puritan understanding and practice of the "calling," see William V. Spanos, "'Benito Cereno' and 'Bartleby, the Scrivener': Reflections on the American Calling," in *Herman Melville and the American Calling: The Fiction after* Moby-Dick, *1851–1857* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2008), 105–66.

26. See Spanos, "Edward Said and the Poststructuralists: An Introduction," in *The Legacy of Edward W. Said* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 1–25.

27. Michel Foucault, "Revolutionary Action 'Until Now,'" in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews,* ed. Donald E. Bouchard, trans. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), 221–22.

28. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,* trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon, 1977), 205–6; my emphases.

29. See Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty,* trans. George Schwab (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

30. Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays,* trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper, 1977), 322.

31. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,* 135–69.

32. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* Part III, *Totalitarianism:* "The concentration camp inmate has no price, because he can always be replaced; nobody knows to whom he belongs, because he is never seen. From the point of view of normal society he is absolutely superfluous" (444). As both Margaret Canovan and Mary Dietz have noted, the "superfluous," in the sense of "irrelevant" or "not counting," is a key term in Arendt's analysis of the rise of totalitarianism. See Canovan, "Arendt's Theory of Totalitarianism: A Reassessment," 31–33; and Dietz, "Arendt and the Holocaust," 97–99, in *The Cambridge Companion to Hannah Arendt,* ed. Dana Villa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2000).

33. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life,* trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998). As I will show more fully in Chapter 5, Agamben derives this central term of his critique of Western modernity from Hannah Arendt, *The Origin of Totalitarianism,* Part II, *Imperialism,* new ed. (New York: Harcourt, 1976), 297.

34. Spanos, *The Legacy of Edward W. Said,* 164–65.

35. See, for example, Paul A. Bové, "Misprisions of Utopia: Messianism and Allegory," preface to Henry Adams (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011); and Stathis Gourgouris, "The Present of a Delusion," in *Paul and the Philosophers,* ed. Ward Blanton and Hent de Vries (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011). Further references to the second essay will be abbreviated PD and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

36. Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal,* trans. Kevin Attell (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002). See especially the chapter entitled "Anthropological Machine," 33–39.

37. Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community,* trans. Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993): "[B]oth necessity and contingency, those two crosses of Western thought, have disappeared from the *post iudicium* world. The world is now and forever necessarily contingent or contingently necessary" (39); further references will be abbreviated CC and incorporated in the text in parentheses. See also "Appendix: The Irreparable," 88–104.

38. Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Univeralism,* trans. Ray Brassier (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 42; see also pp. 58–60; further citations will be abbreviated SP and incorporated in the text in parentheses. In identifying Greek philosophy with metaphysics in the Platonic sense, Badiou apparently forgets not only Heidegger's decisive distinction between the thinking of the pre-Socratics Greeks (Heraclitus, Anaximander, Parmenides) and that of the (humanistic) Romans, but also his persuasive demonstration that the late Greeks—specifically the Greeks (or Gentiles) of the Hellenistic age to whom Paul addressed his epistles—had been ventriloquized by imperial Roman thinking. Under this Roman hegemony, the finite pagan or profane (i.e., radically secular) world of the pre-Socratic Greeks became a metaphysically ordained world, and their originative, time-bound (i.e., interested) thinking (*a-lêtheia*) was reduced to a derivative or second-order thinking (*veritas*), a *vocational* discourse, as it were, that, in uprooting and alienated human beings from finite time—the time of being *inter esse* (in the midst), of "the now"—turned their mind's eyes, if not their bodies, away from *this* world to one beyond, to a future *Telos.* In focusing on the role the Christian tradition played in the formation of the modern West's cultural identity in his genealogy, Badiou fills the gap left by Heidegger and his poststructuralist heirs in their overdetermination of the Roman origins of the onto-theo-logical tradition. But in collapsing the distinction

between the Greeks and Romans in identifying "Greek philosophy" and the Judaic Law as discourses of mastery, he also unwittingly deflects attention from a pre-Western comportment toward being that provides directives concerning the secular that are more adequate to the contemporary occasion than those offered by Badiou's "anti-philosopher," Paul. The Greek philosophers on Areopagus who, as reported in "Acts of the Apostles," laughed at Paul were not "Greeks," as Badiou implies (SP, 58); they were late or Hellenistic Greeks ventriloquized by the Roman regime of truth. Furthermore, in collapsing this crucial distinction between Greek and Roman thought, Badiou inadvertently enables Gourgouris to affirm, against Badiou's assertion that "Greek philosophy" and the Judaic Law are "discourses of mastery," that Greek philosophy, in fact, is radically incommensurate with the Law of the Old Testament. Gourgouris, however, does not invoke the distinction between Greek and Roman ontology that I am underscoring. Unlike Badiou, but equally questionably, Gourgouris represents the Greeks of Paul's time as if they were Pre-Socratics rather than ventriloquized Romans.

39. Martin Heidegger, "What Is Metaphysics?" in *Basic Writings,* 96.

40. In invoking the word "occasion," I am referring to its etymological meaning: immediately from the Latin, *occasus,* "the setting or falling of the sun" (from a form of which [*occidens*] the English word "Occident" derives) and ultimately from *cadere:* "to die, to perish." Understood in this radically finite sense, the word "occasion" bears a striking resemblance to Agamben's appropriation of Walter Benjamin's messianic "now time" (*Jetztzeit*) by way of his relating it to Paul's *kairos.* As Leland de la Durantaye puts this central philological nexus of Agamben's Pauline notion of time in a discussion of the theorist's *Infancy and History: On the Destruction of Experience,* trans. Liz Heron (London: Verso, 1993):

> The model [of the figure of Kairos at Olympia (referred to by Pausanias), the young "winged youth bearing scales that were about to tip," signifying "the moment of favorable opportunity or *kairos*—was at hand"] is clearly one of a moment of truth: a moment of decisive intervention that interrupts a continuum and changes the course of history. It is here that we can see how this "now-time" corresponds to what Agamben calls a *kairology* and to Benjamin's "*Jetztzeit* [now-time]." In a work written more than twenty years later [*The Time That Remains*] he says of the latter that Benjamin "endows the term with the same qualities as those pertaining to the *ho nyn kairos* [time of the now] in Paul's paradigm of messianic time." (*Giorgio Agamben: A Critical Introduction* [Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009], 116)

Agamben refers to the word "occasion " as a typical English translation of *kairos* in *The Time That Remains* (p. 69), but, failing to attend to its etymological origins, dismisses it as a "banal" rendition of the *New Testament* Greek word. This is curious, given his usual acute philological consciousness of etymology.

41. Alain Badiou, *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil,* trans. Peter Hallward (London: Verso, 2001), 69; my emphasis.

42. Louis Althusser. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Note towards an Investigation)," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays,* trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 177–83.

43. As Agamben notes, *katargeo* is "a true key word in the Pauline messianic vocabulary (twenty-six of twenty-seven occurrences in the New Testament are in the Letters!).

Katargeo is a compound of *argeo,* which in turn comes from the adjective *argos,* meaning, 'inoperative, not-at-work (*a-ergos*), inactive.' The compound therefore comes to mean 'I make inoperative, I deactivate, I suspend the efficacy . . . '" (95); Agamben also uses the French word *désoeuvrement* occasionally, suggesting his affiliative relation with George Bataille and, not least, Jean Luc Nancy (*La communauté désoeuvrée* [*The Inoperative Community* [1982]). For Alain Badiou, too, the procedure of rendering the divisions of the Law inoperative is central to his analysis of Paul's response to the Christ event. The adherents of the old dispensation (the Judeo-Christian faction represented by Peter in Jerusalem), according to Badiou, assert that the Christ-event "does not abolish the old order" but rather fulfills it: "Thus the marks [of belonging] inherited from tradition (circumcision, for example) are still necessary." In Paul's eyes, on the other hand, "the event renders prior markings obsolete, and the new universality bears no privileged relation to the Jewish community. Certainly the components of the event, its location, everything it mobilizes, have this community as their site. Paul himself is entirely of Jewish culture and cites the Old Testament far more frequently than the putative words of the living Christ. But although the event depends on its site *in its being,* it must be independent of it *in its truth effects.* Thus, it is not that communitarian marking (circumcision, rites, the meticulous observance of the Law) is indefensible or erroneous. It is that the postevental imperative of truth renders the latter *indifferent* (which is worse). It has no signification, whether positive or negative. Paul is not opposed to circumcision. His rigorous assertion is "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing (Cor. 1.7.19). This assertion is obviously sacrilegious for Judeo-Christians. But note that it is not, for all that, a Gentile-Christian assertion, since uncircumcision acquires no particular value through it, so that it is in no way to be insisted upon" (p. 23). This rendering of the truth terms of the old dispensation inoperative will, as I will show in Chapter 5, become crucial in Hannah Arendt's and Edward Said's post-nation-state effort to rethink the human *polis.*

44. Leland de la Durantaye puts Agamben's understanding of this crucial idea of vocation succinctly: "In a chapter entitled 'Ethics,' Agamben writes, 'the fact that must constitute the point of departure for any discourse on ethics is that there is no essence, no historical or spiritual vocation, not biological destiny that humans must enact or realize' (CC, 43/39). He continues, 'This is the only reason why something like an ethics can exist, because it is clear that if humans were or had to be this or that substance, this or that destiny, no ethical experience would be possible—there would be only tasks to be done' (CC, 43/39). The '*post iudicium* world' of a coming community is not one *waiting* for some state of affairs to come or some judgment to be handed down from a sacred or transcendental realm, nor is it waiting to reach an endpoint of dialectical progress. In the postface to *The Coming Community* Agamben wrote eleven years after completing the book, he underlines that 'coming does not mean *future.*' As in the conceptions of messianic time offered by Benjamin and Paul, the 'time of the now' is one no longer waiting for its final form. In light of such a conception, mankind has no set and specific 'destiny.' This has nothing in common with quietism, and the idea that there is no specific 'task' to fulfill or 'vocation' to exercise does not mean that there is nothing to be done. On the contrary, Agamben's rejection of such conceptions of 'essence' and 'destiny' is done in the name of a time that is now and an action that is ours. What truly leads to apathy and quietism, in Agamben's view, is a naïve belief in historical progress, like the one he castigates in *Infancy and History.*" "*Homo Profanus:* Giorgio Agamben's Profane Philosophy," *boundary 2,* vol. 35, 3 (Fall 2008): 59–60. See also Durantaye, *Giorgio Agamben: A Critical Introduction,* 1–9.

45. Giorgio Agamben, *Means without End: Notes on Politics,* trans. Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000). Further references will be abbreviated MWE and incorporated in the text in parentheses. Though Hannah Arendt does not, as far as I know, use the term "calling" in the sense I am using it in this book, it is important to emphasize that her entire discourse on totalitarianism, not least, on what it demands from or, rather, attempts to inscribe in those who belong to it by way of vocation, is saturated by terms that are its equivalent. Commenting on her assertion that totalitarian ideologies give their believers' "the total explanation of the past, the total knowledge of the present, and the reliable prediction of the future" (*The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 469–70), Margaret Conover writes, for example: "making reality as experienced seem insignificant compared with what *must* happen, they free ideological thought from the constraints of common sense and reality. But in Arendt's view the most dangerous opportunity they offer (seized by both Hitler and Stalin) is their stress on logical consistency. Both leaders prided themselves on the merciless ressoning with which they pursued the implications of race- or class-struggle to the murder of the last 'objective enemy.' In their hands . . . ideological logicality replaced free thought, inducing people to strip themselves of individuality until they were part of a single impersonal *movement* of total domination" (p. 28).

46. Though it has become obligatory in some intellectual circles to represent Alain Badiou as antithetical to Edward Said, I suggest that juxtaposing this fundamental tenet of Badiou's thought with Said's repeated quotation of the following lines from Aimé Césaire's great *Cahier d'un retour* should give us pause: "and no race possesses the monopoly of beauty, / of intelligence, of force, and there / is a place for all at the rendezvous / of victory." For a brilliant analysis of this aspect of Said's thought, see R. Radhakrishan, "Edward Said's Literary Humanism," in *History, Humanism, and the World Between* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009), 139–57.

47. For a powerful critique, remarkably similar to that of Agamben and Badiou, of the logic of belonging of the modern nation-state that minoritizes human constituencies, see Aamir Mufti. *The Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Postcolonial Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007). Though Mufti does not invoke either Badiou or Agamben in addressing the problem of minoritization that emerged in India in the wake of independence from colonial rule, he does invoke Hannah Arendt, whose analysis and critique of the nation-state system as it pertained to the making of the "Jewish minority" was clearly influential in shaping both Agamben's critique of the nation-state system and his vision of "the coming community." See Chapter 5.

48. For Agamben, Tiananmen Square was a significant harbinger of this coming "whatever" community. In refusing to be answerable to the calling of the state, i.e., the idea of identity on which repressive power depends, the amorphous body of protestors focalized the political "potentiality" of this refusal. Leland de la Durantaye puts Agamben's point succinctly: "For Agamben . . . a state will tolerate organized and articulate protest far more readily then undefined opposition. A society whose central strategy of control is observation and localized containment sees its greatest threat in that which it cannot identify. Such seeming disorganized and unmotivated resistance is, from this point of view, the very last thing but anodyne. What is more threatening for state powers that be is what deprives them of their most effective means of response, and it is in this light that Agamben speaks of a 'lucidity' displayed by the Chinese leaders" (*Giorgio Agamben,* 171). As Durantaye also notes, it is Herman Melville's "Bartleby, the Scriv-

ener"—his "I would prefer not to"—that constitutes Agamben's primary "example" of the ontopolitical potentiality inhering in the refusal to be answerable to the call of "the Law." (See the section of CC entitled "Bartleby," 34.5–3-36.7; and "Bartleby and Contingency," in *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy,* trans. Daniel Heller-Roazin [Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999], 253–56.) I have explored this nexus between Bartleby's refusal and a new politics in the chapter entitled "'Benito Cereno' and 'Bartleby, the Scrivener': Reflections on the American Calling," in *Herman Melville and the American Calling: The Fiction after* Moby-Dick*, 1851–1857* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2008), 105–66. More important for my purpose in this chapter on the secular is the conjuncture of that exploration that demonstrates Melville's uncanny anticipation not simply of Agamben's (and Gilles Deleuze's) invocation of Bartleby's refusal as revolutionary model of resistance and the coming community of "whatever being," but also of Edward W. Said's remarkably similar vision at the end of *Culture and Imperialism,* where he appropriates Theodor Adorno's "reflections from a damaged life" in behalf of liberation from the "administered society." I will amplify on this crucial nexus of Said's thinking about resistance—and the coming community—in Chapter 5, where I attempt to articulate the affiliative relationship between his and Hannah Arendt's thought. Here, it will suffice to quote the passage from *Culture and Imperialism:*

> "The past life of émigrés is . . . annulled," says Adorno. . . . Why? "Because anything that is not reified, cannot be counted and measured, ceases to exit" or, as he says later, is consigned to mere "background." [The affiliative relationship between Said, Arendt, Agamben, and Badiou (and Jacques Rancière), particularly concerning "the count," is unmistakable.] . . . Thus the émigré consciousness . . . discovers that "a gaze averted from the beaten track, a hatred of brutality, a search for fresh concepts not yet encompassed by the general pattern, is the last hope for thought." . . . There is then not just the negative advantage of refuge in the émigré's eccentricity, there is also the positive benefit of challenging the system, describing it in language unavailable to those it has already subdued: "In an intellectual hierarchy which constantly makes everyone answerable, unanswerability alone calls the hierarchy directly by its name." (Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993], 333. Further references will be abbreviated CI and incorporated in the text in parentheses. The quotations from Adorno appear in *Minima Moralia: Reflections from a Damaged Life,* trans, E. F. N. Jephcott [London: Verso, 1974], 46–47, 67–69)

49. The much-remarked symptomatic unnamability—the refusal of its multitudinous actors to be identified by the traditional categories that define revolution—suggests that the Arab Revolution in North Africa and the Middle East ignited in Tunis in the spring of 2011 also—and perhaps more tellingly than Tiananmen Square—demonstrates symptoms of this singular "whatever" characteristic of the coming community.

50. It is, no doubt, in response to the criticism of what I have been calling the "worldly critics"—their critique of the alleged apocalypticism of the post-poststructuralism—that Alain Badiou and Slavoj Žižek have written such manifesto-like texts as *The Communist Hypothesis* (London: Verso, 2010) and *In Defense of Lost Causes* (London: Verso, 2009), respectively, that accuse their accusers as tacitly enabling the dominant liberal capitalist culture to determine the rules of the political game.

51. This tendency is rendered implicit in Aamir Mufti's rightly felt need to underscore the radicality of Said's humanist secularism by reversing the latter's usual phrasing—"secular criticism" to "critical secularism." See Mufti, "Critical Secularism: A Reintroduction for Perilous Times," in *Critical Secularism,* a special issue of *boundary 2,* vol. 31, 2 (Summer 2004): 3.

52. Giorgio Agamben, "In Praise of Profanation," in *Profanations,* trans. Jeff Port (New York: Zone Books, 2007), 77. Further references will be abbreviated P and incorporated in the text in parentheses. Agamben's critique of the sacredness of modern secularism in the name of the profane is surely indebted to Michel Foucault's critique of post-monarchical modernity: "Sovereign, law, and prohibition [in the age of the divine right of kings] formed a system of representation of power which was extended during the subsequent era by the theories of right: political theory has never ceased to be obsessed with the person of the sovereign. Such theories still continue today to busy themselves with the problem of sovereignty. What we need, however, is a political philosophy that isn't erected around the problem of sovereignty, nor therefore around the problems of law and prohibition. We need to cut off the king's head: in political theory: that has still to be done" ("Truth and Power," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977,* ed. Colin Gordon [New York: Pantheon, 1980], 121). See also Agamben, "*Der Papst ist ein weltlicher Priester*," interview with Abu Bakr Rieger, *Literaturen* (Berlin) (June 2005), 22; quoted in Leland de la Durantaye, "*Homo profanes:* Giorgio Agamben's Profane Philosophy": "Profanation is something completely different from secularization. Secularism takes something from the sacred sphere and *seems* to return it to the worldly sphere. But in this case power's mechanisms are not neutralized. When theological power is transformed into secular power, this provides a foundation for secular power. But secularization never truly does away with the sacred. And it is for this reason not a good solution to our problem—on the contrary. We must neutralize the relation to the sacred and that is what profanation first makes possible" (p. 37). See also Agamben's *The Kingdom and the Glory: For a Theological Genealogy of Economy and Government* (Homo Sacer II, 2), trans. Lorenzo Chiesa (with Matteo Mandarini) (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011). This book, which was published after I completed *Exiles in the City*, develops at length—and brilliantly—the difference between the secular and the profane that Agamben posits in *Profanations*.

53. Judith Butler, "Sexual Politics, Torture, and Secular Time," in *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (London: Verso, 2009), 120. Further citations will be abbreviated FW and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

54. Pope Benedict XVI, "Faith, Reason and the University: Memories and Reflections," http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/re_con_cfaith_doc_20040731_collaboration_en.html The quote in full reads: "'Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached.'" The Pope is quoting the speech of the Byzantine Emperor Manuel II Paleologus in a dialogue with an educated Persian during the siege of Constantinople between 1394 and 1401. But the Emperor's sentiment, as his emphasis on the relationality of reason and faith in his speech testifies, are clearly also those of the Pope.

55. For a similar critique of the concept of secular history the West has imposed on the rest of the world—its privileging of "progress" and "modernization"—in this instance articulated from an Indian perspective, see Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe:*

Postcolonial Thought an Historical Difference (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000).

56. By "common usage" I am referring to that pre-capitalist historical conjuncture, prior to the enclosure movement, when the peasantry utilized the things of the earth in common, which, for Agamben, constitutes the model of his radical version of communism.

57. See Edward W. Said, *Beginnings: Intention and Method* (New York: Basic Books, 1975), 372–73. For Hannah Arendt's version of this radically secular concept of time, see her discussion of the relationship between "natality," "saying," and "doing" in *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 176–81.

58. A more forceful and, perhaps, appropriate version of this critique can be found in Heidegger's "What Metaphysics?" in *Basic Writings,* exp. and rev. ed., ed. David Farrell Krell (New York: HarperCollins, 1993): "The nothing—what else can it be for science [by which he means modern humanistic knowledge production] but an outrage and a phantasm? If science is right, then only one thing is sure: science wishes to know nothing of the nothing. Ultimately this is the scientifically rigorous conception of the nothing. We know it, the nothing, in that we wish to know nothing about it" (96).

59. Hannah Arendt, "Walter Benjamin," in *Men in Dark Times* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1968). Referring to Benjamin's "poetic" thinking, Arendt writes:

> Like a pearl diver who descends to the bottom of the sea, not to excavate the bottom and bring to light but to pry loose the rich and the strange, the pearls and the corals in the depths and to carry them to the surface, this thinking delves into the depths of the past—but not to resuscitate it the way it was and to contribute to the renewal of extinct ages. What guides this thinking is the conviction that although the living is subject to the ruin of time, the process of decay is at the same time a process of crystallization, that in the depth of the sea, into which sinks and is dissolved what was once alive, some things "suffer a sea-change" and survive in new crystallized forms and shapes that remain immune to the elements, as though they waited only for the pearl diver who one day will come down to them and bring them up into the world of the living—as "thought fragments," as something "rich and strange," and perhaps as everlasting *phanomene*. (205–6)

60. This group is represented, above all, by Timothy Brennan. See his chapter on Edward Said, "Humanism, Philology, and Imperialism," in *Wars of Position: The Cultural Politics of Left and Right* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 93–125.

61. Edward W. Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 76–77; my emphasis. See also *Said, Freud and the Non-European* (London: Verso, 2003), 52–53, where Said also invokes Isaac Deutscher's concept of the non-Jewish Jew to characterize the Freud of *Moses and Monotheism*. Though Said, strangely, does not include Hannah Arendt in this community, her insistent representation of herself as "a conscious pariah" (in opposition to the assimilationist Jewish "parvenu"), which is the equivalent of Said's "exilic consciousness," renders her a precise example of the "non-Jewish Jew" with whom he, as a "non-humanist humanist" and, as I will suggest later in this book, a "non-Palestinian Palestinian," identifies. See Arendt, "The Jew as Pariah: A Hidden Tradition," in *Hannah Arendt, The Jew as Pariah: Jewish Identity and Politics in*

the Modern Age, ed. Ron H. Feldman (New York: Grove Press, 1978). I will develop this affiliation at length in Chapter 5.

62. I am referring to Hannah Arendt's ground-breaking introduction of the question of human rights in the context of the plight of the refugees precipitated by the disintegration of imperial Europe in World War II in *The Origins of Totalitariamism,* Part II, *Imperialism* (New York: Harcourt, 1976).

63. What Said says about the practice of contrapuntal reading in *Culture and Imperialism* applies as well to his vision of the contrapuntal *polis:* "[T]his global, contrapuntal analysis should be modeled not (as earlier notions of comparative literature were) on 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" (318).

64. Hannah Arendt, "We Refugees," *Menorah Journal* 1 (1942): 77.

65. Timothy Brennan, "Humanism, Philology, and Imperialism," x, 101.

66. I appropriate this term from Hannah Arendt, who, in the face of the dehumanizing dynamics of a modernity that increasingly renders peoples stateless, identifies the humanity of humans with participation in the sphere of the political: "Yet in the light of recent events [Arendt is referring to the Nazi concentration camps] it is possible to say that even slaves still belong to some sort of human community; their labor was needed, used, and exploited, and this kept them within the pale of humanity. To be a slave was after all to have a distinctive character, a place in society—more than the abstract nakedness of being human and nothing but human. Not the loss of specific rights, then, but the loss of a community willing and able to guarantee any rights whatsoever, has been the calamity which has befallen ever-increasing numbers of people. Man, it turns out, can lose all so-called Rights of Man without losing his essential quality as man, his human dignity. Only the loss of a polity itself expels him from humanity" (*The Origins of Totalitarianism,* Part II, *Imperialism,* 297).

Chapter 4

1. Edward W. Said, *The Question of Palestine* (New York: Times Books, 1979), 18–19. Further references will be abbreviated QP and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

2. One hears in Said's reference to Weizmann's appeal to "the idea" in his Orientalist justification of the Jewish colonization of Palestine the first formulation of the distinction Said derives from Joseph Conrad (*Heart of Darkness*) and fully articulates in *Culture and Imperialism,* between conquest by brute force and conquest by the establishment of "a justificatory regime of self-aggrandizing, self-originating authority interposed between the victim of imperialism and its perpetrator" (*Culture and Imperialism* [New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993], 68–69).

3. See Richard Waswo, *The Founding Legend of Western Civilization: From Virgil to Vietnam* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1997): "Opposed to cultivation, which is civilized, is savagery, which isn't. And what is savage (*silvestris, silva*) is literally 'of the woods.' It is land and people that remain uncultivated. To be *uncultus* is to be savage, rude, and dumb. Our languages thus encode the forms of fear and contempt felt by a settled agricultural community for other modes of material and social organization" (p. 6).

4. In his persuasive and enabling counter-history of modern Zionism, *The Returns of Zionism: Myths, Politics and Scholarship in Israel* (London: Verso, 2008), Gabriel Piterberg takes as point of departure for his characterization and critique of the Israeli state the distinction he makes between "metropolitan colonialism" and "settler colonialism," claiming that the Zionist colonization of Palestine was an instance of the latter and, therefore, whose justificatory regime can only be understood when that is acknowledged. What Piterberg is only marginally aware of, however, is that the Zionist representation of its initiative in Palestine became increasingly modeled on American settler colonialism. Piterberg does point to the Zionists' appeal to Protestant Christian biblical interpretation in general:

> So, what [Anita] Shapira [a contemporary "official" Jewish historian] relegates to a seemingly incidental footnote is actually pivotal for understanding the context within which Zionist "return" to the Bible and, particularly, Ben-Gurion's reading of the Bible were Protestant. I should first clarify what I do *not* mean by Protestant: nothing that has anything to do with identity politics and the theme of identity in general. In other words, I am not arguing that Ben-Gurion, or for that matter the Zionist Israeli settlers, were Protestants or were fond of Protestantism in a simple, straightforward way. The point is, rather, that the modern Zionist way of referring to the Old Testament and using it is Protestant, in the sense I have explored as a history of the prefix *Re-*. This way of referring to the Old Testament has three related characteristics: the direct approach to the text, and the concomitant disregard for (and stripping away of) the layers of theological commentary that mediate between the reading individual and the foundational text; the assumption that it is the right of the individual subject to engage with the scriptures precisely because he is an individual subject; the emphasis laid upon the narrative parts of the Old Testament, under the assumption that the narrative is veracious, and that its occurrence is an authoritative legitimizing source for all sorts of returns, re-enactments, re-establishments and restorations. (pp. 273–74)

But, surprisingly, Piterberg says nothing directly about the American Puritans, who represented their "errand in [the New World] wilderness" as the historical fulfillment of the Israelites' Exodus from Egypt into the Promised Land of Canaan prefigured in the *Old Testament*.

5. Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean* (New York: Routledge, 1986), 157–58. See also Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985); and Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire-Building* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980).

6. Samuel Danforth, "Brief Recognition of New England's Errand into the Wilderness (1670)," in *The Wall and the Garden: Selected Massachusetts Election Sermons,* ed. A. William Plumstead (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1968).

7. John Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity," in Perry Miller, ed., *The American Puritans: Their Prose and Poetry* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1956), 83.

8. See William V. Spanos, "American Exceptionalism, the Jeremiad, and the Frontier,

Before and After 9/11," in *American Exceptionalism in the Age of Globalization: The Specter of Vietnam* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2008), 187–241.

9. A telling example of this oversight can be found in the "non-Jewish Jewish" psychoanalytic critic Jacqueline Rose's *The Question of Zionism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), which, following Said's critical directives, undertakes an otherwise compelling Lacanian genealogy of Zionist discourse and practice that brilliantly reveals them to be neurotic. Further citations will be abbreviated QZ and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

10. Michael Walzer, *Exodus and Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), ix. Further references will be abbreviated ER and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

11. Walzer refers occasionally to the examples of Savanarola's sermons, "the pamphlets of the German peasants' revolt," John Calvin and John Knox's political tracts, "the radical contractualism" of the French Huguenots and Scottish Presbyterians, the Boer nationalists and the black South African nationalists, but the overwhelming references are to the English Puritans of the English Revolution of 1640 and to a lesser degree the American Puritans and the "revolutionary" tradition they inaugurated.

12. Edward W. Said, "Michael Walzer's *Exodus and Revolution: A Canaanite Reading,*" in *Blaming the Victim: Spurious Scholarship and the Palestinian Question,* ed. Said and Christopher Hitchens (London: Verso, 1988), 161. First published in *Grand Street* (Winter 1986). Further references will be abbreviated MW and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

13. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), 114 ff.

14. Recently, however, Gabriel Piterberg, has shown how fundamental this particular model—the reliance on the Old Testament story of Exodus that culminates in The Book of Joshua—was in the justificatory discourse and practice of the Zionists, particularly David Ben-Gurion, at the time immediately before and after the establishment of Israel as a nation-state in 1948. See especially the chapter entitled "The Bible of an Autochthonous Settler: Ben-Gurion Reads the Book of Joshua," in *The Returns of Zionism,* 244–87.

15. Louis Althusser, "From *Capital* to Marx's Philosophy," in Althusser and Etienne Balibar, *Reading* Capital (London: Verso, 1970), 24–28. For an analysis of Althusser's notion of the problematic as it pertains to the American democratic capitalist tradition, see Spanos, "Althusser's 'Problematic': Vision and the Vietnam War," in *American Exceptionalism in the Age of Globalization,* 35–56.

16. Like Said, though from a psychoanalytic perspective on the discourse of the militant Zionists, Jacqueline Rose in *The Question of Zionism* stresses that the Old Testament's God "categorically enjoins the victorious Jews to deal unforgivingly with their enemies, the prior native inhabitants of the Promised Land," thus implicitly countering the "liberal" Zionist representation of the Exodus story epitomized by Walzer.

17. "Once you begin a catalog of the exceptions to Walzer's claims for Exodus, much less remains of his argument about the book's paramount importance for future movements of liberation. Vico, Marx, Michelet, Gramsci, Fanon either mention the book not at all or only in passing. Many Black and Central American theorists do mention it; but a great many more do not. Certainly Exodus is a trope that comes easily to hand in accounts of deliverance, but there isn't anything especially 'Western' about it, nor—to judge from the various 'non-Western' tropes of liberation from oppression—is there anything especially progressive that can be derived from its supposedly Western essence" (MW, 168).

18. For an extended analysis of the origins and development of the myth of American exceptionalism, see the chapter entitled "American Exceptionalism, the Jeremiad, and the Frontier, Before and After 9/11: From the Puritans to the Neo-Con Men," in Spanos, *American Exceptionalism in the Age of Globalization,* 187–241.

19. Sacvan Bercovitch, *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975; and *The American Jeremiad* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978). Further references will be abbreviated PO and AJ, respectively, and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

20. Erich Auerbach, "Figura," in *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature: Six Essays,* trans. Ralph Mannheim (New York: Meridian Books, 1959), 53–54; my emphasis. See also *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature,* trans. Willard Trask (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press,1953).

21. For my critique of Auerbach's positive evaluation of the figural tradition of biblical interpretation—and Said's tacit acceptance of it—see the chapter entitled "Edward Said's Humanism and American Exceptionalism after 9/11: An Interrogation," in Spanos, *The Legacy of Edward W. Said* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), particularly pp. 169–78.

22. Cervantes, *Don Quixote,* trans. John Rutherford (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 549–50.

23. Sacvan Bercovitch, *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975), 161.

24. "Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor" (Exodus 32:26–28).

25. Said, *Culture and Imperialism,* 95.

26. It is worth noting that Auerbach, too, makes this "epochal" distinction in *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in the Western World,* trans Willard R. Trask, 73. Unlike Walzer, Auerbach emphasizes the "verticality" of this linear concept of history: "This [figural] type of interpretation obviously introduced an entirely new and alien element into the antique conception of history. . . . The connection between the two events in time can be established only if both occurrences are vertically linked to Divine Providence, which alone is able to devise such a plan of history and supply the key to its understanding. The horizontal, that is, the temporal and causal, connection of occurrences is dissolved, the here and now is no longer a mere link in an earthy chain of events, it is simultaneously something which has always been, and which will be fulfilled in the future; and strictly, in the eyes of God, it is something eternal, something omni-temporal, something already consummated in the realm of fragmentary earthly events. This conception of history is magnificent in its homogeneity, but it was completely alien to the mentality of classical antiquity." See also Mircea Eliade, *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return,* trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harper and Row, 1959).

27. For an extended critique of this Hebraic interpretation of history from a Hellenistic perspective, see Vassilis Lambropoulos, *The Rise of Eurocentrism: Anatomy of Interpretation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).

28. Mary Rowlandson, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God,* ed. Neal Salisbury (Boston: Bedford Books, 1997). See especially "The Preface to the Reader," probably written by Increase Mather, pp. 63–68.

29. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,* trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977), 31. For an extended account of Foucault's understanding of genealogical history, see "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews,* ed. Donald F. Bouchard, trans. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), 139–64.

30. For extended accounts of the influence of Virgil's *Aeneid* on the Western cultural identity, see Spanos, *America's Shadow: An Anatomy of Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000); and Richard Waswo, *The Founding Legend of Western Civilization.*

31. For a radically different interpretation of Homer's *Odyssey* from that of Walzer, see Spanos, *America's Shadow,* 108–15.

32. Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, 27 April 1809, quoted in Wai-chee Dimock, *Empire for Liberty: Melville and the Poetics of Individualism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 38.

33. Quoted in Jacqueline Rose, QZ, 153.

34. As I have shown (in the chapter entitled "American Exceptionalism, the Jeremiad, the Frontier, Before and After 9/11: From the Puritans to the Neo-Con Men," in *American Exceptionalism in the Age of Globalization,* 187–241), this relay pervades the fiction of James Fenimore Cooper, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner; the poetry of Walt Whitman, William Cullen Bryant, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow; the prose essays of Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Daniel Webster; and the histories of George Bancroft, Francis Parkman, Frederick Jackson Turner, and Henry Nash Smith.

35. What Jacqueline Rose contributes positively to the genealogy of Zionism that is missing in Walzer's version is a third kind of Zionism: the one embodied in the thinking and practice of such marginalized but powerful Jewish voices as Martin Buber, Hans Kohn, Hannah Arendt, and Ahad Ha'am, who "all believed [against the neurotic imperative of survival at all cost] that survival, however urgent, indeed desperate for those Jews who lived to 1945, should become not the rationale of statehood but the means to something else." As she writes: "In his book *Israel and Palestine Out of the Ashes: The Search for Jewish Identity in the Twenty-First Century,* Marc Ellis suggests that Jews often did not know that there was this history of dissent which had been 'forgotten or deliberately buried.' Most simply, I have wanted to revive it, to show that Zionism was not one thing, that it knew itself better than it thinks. To read these writers, along side the dominant voice of Israel statehood . . . is to be confronted with something like as spilt between lethal identification and grievous disenchantment; as if the State of Israel were offering its citizens and the rest of the world only the options of idealization or radical dissent. It is also to be struck with an overwhelming sense of a moment missed, of voices silenced, of an argument, at terrible cost, re-repressed. Today we are all still suffering the loss of their critical, insightful, vision" (QZ, 106–7). I will amplify on this third kind of Zionism, as it was exemplified in Hannah Arendt, in Chapter 5.

36. Where Walzer, in contrast to the "messianic Zionists," stresses Scholem's "gradualism" independently of its end, Piterberg shows decisively in his chapter on "Gerhard-Gershom Scholem's Return to History," that his liberal Zionism was, in fact, a "political theology" (in the manner of Carl Schmitt), that is, a dialectical and accommodational

messianism, the end (the "return" to Palestine) of which was pre-established from the beginning (*The Returns of Zionism,* 155–91).

37. See Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We?: The Challenge to America's National Identity* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004). Emphasizing, in a jeremiadic way, the anxiety felt by the American policy makers in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union, Huntington writes: "The cultural gap between Islam and America's Christianity and Anglo-Protestantism reinforced Islam's enemy qualifications. And on September 11, 2001, Osama bin Laden *ended America's search.* The attacks on New York and Washington followed by the wars with Afghanistan and Iraq and the more diffuse 'war on terrorism' make militant Islam America's first enemy of the twenty-first century" (pp. 264–65).

38. Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Alfred K. Knopf, 1993), 332. The quotation within the quotation is from T. S. Eliot, "Little Gidding," in "Four Quartets," *The Complete Poems and Plays, 1909–1950* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1952), 144.

Chapter 5

1. Edward W. Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), pp. 76–77; and *Freud and the Non-European* (London: Verso, 2003), 52–53. Further references will be abbreviated HSC and FNE, respectively, and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

2. Said makes a few passing references to Arendt, but these are to highly general issues pertaining to totalitarianism. None, as far as I know, identify her as a "Jewish" intellectual or an intellectual addressing the "Jewish question."

3. Two recent major exceptions to this rule are Jacqueline Rose's *The Question of Zion* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005) and Aamir Mufti's *Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Postcolonial Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007). Dedicated to the memory of Edward Said, *The Question of Zionism* invokes Arendt (along with Martin Buber, Hans Kohn, and Ahad Ha'am, as a non-Zionist Zionist, a Zionist, that is, who strongly opposed those militant Jewish leaders such as Theodor Herzl, Chain Weizman, Vladimir Jabotinsky, and David Ben-Gurion whose triumphant messianic Zionism was the object of Said's criticism. *Enlightenment in the Colony* attempts to think the question of the Muslims in postcolonial India in the comparative light of the experience of the modern Jews in Europe. Bringing to bear Said's later directives on the Jewish question, Mufti writes:

> I wish to expand our understanding of this mid-century situation by relating it to the fin de siècle perspectives embodied in the work of Edward Said, which—and not just his history of the exploration of the Palestinian question but also the entire critical project as it developed at least since *Beginnings*—may be read at one level as a complex engagement with this critical, cultural, and political legacy. The recurring turn in his work to such figures as Auerbach, Adorno, Lukacs, and, to a lesser extent, Arendt represents a detailed engagement with this tradition from perspectives made possible by the devastation of Palestinian life in the realization of the Zionist "solution" to the Jewish Question. It also marks his own perception of the continued imbrications of the figure of the modern intellectual, and of the vocation of critique, with the history of the

> Jewish Question. *All profoundly affected themselves by the history of the Jews in the modern era,* these intellectuals and their reflections on the historical past provide the context out of which I myself turn to those earlier moments and trajectories. (pp. 9–10)

Following Arendt's directives in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* about the absolute relationality between the fate of the Jews in Europe and all the other victims of the nation-state system, Mufti concludes, "In sum, my aim here is to understand the manner in which the Jews of Europe became a *question,* both for themselves and for others, and the implications this being put in question has for elaborating responses—literary, philosophical, popular-cultural, and political—to the crises and conflicts of the projects of modernity in European and non-European, specifically colonial and postcolonial settings" (p. 10). Further references will be abbreviated EC and incorporated in the text in parentheses. Nowhere in his book, however, does Mufti undertake an extended discussion of the relationship between Said and Arendt.

4. That this unremarked relationship between Arendt and Said has continued even after scholars began to perceive the continuity between her status as an exilic Jew and her cosmopolitan political scientific writing is symptomatically shown by the fact that there are no references to Said in such recent prestigious critical anthologies as *Hannah Arendt: Twenty Years Later,* ed. Larry May and Jerome Kohn (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997); *The Cambridge Companion to Hannah Arendt,* ed. Dana Villa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); and *Thinking in Dark Times: Hannah Arendt on Ethics and Politics,* ed. Roger Berkowitz, Thomas Keenan, and Jeffrey Katz (Bronx, NY: Fordham University Press, 2010). Even *Hannah Arendt and the Uses of History: Imperialism, Nation, Race, and Genocide,* ed. Richard H. King and Dan Stone (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), a volume of essays purporting to reconstellate Arendt studies from the ahistorical scientific political site to which they were consigned in the 1970s and 1980s into the historical imperial context by way of singling out *The Origins of Totalitarianism* as Arendt's major work, contains only one passing reference to Edward Said. For a significant exception to the earlier "communitarian" focus, which eschewed the Nietzsche/Heidegger and Arendt connection, see Dana Villa, *Heidegger and Arendt: The Fate of the Political* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

5. I am referring generally to the Zionist historiography emanating from the "Jerusalem School"—above all, Yitzhak-Fritz Baer, Ben-Zion Dinur, and Gershom Scholem. As Gabriel Piterberg notes in his persuasive critique of this ideologically motivated scholarship, these Zionist historians of the Jewish people and their relationship to Palestine were committed to the absolute uniqueness of the Jewish question and thus systematically refused comparative studies. See Piterberg, *The Returns of Zionism: Myth, Politics and Scholarship in Israel* (London: Verso, 2008), especially the chapters entitled "Myth and History on Mount Scopus," 127–54, and "Gerhard-Gershom Scholem's Return to History," 155–91. Further references will be abbreviated RZ and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

6. See Ron H. Feldman, "Introduction: The Jew as Pariah: The Case of Hannah Arendt," in *Hannah Arendt, The Jew as Pariah: Jewish Identity and Politics in the Modern Age,* ed. Feldman (New York: Grove Press, 1978): "When Hannah Arendt died, she was out of favor with the Jewish community as a consequence of *Eichmann in Jerusalem:* few of the eulogies which traditionally follow upon the death of such a prominent figure appeared

in the Jewish press. Partly because she was subjected to a modern form of excommunication from the Jewish community and partly due to the power of her other writings, [her Jewish writings were] for the most part neglected and forgotten." (p. 17). Further citations will be abbreviated HAJP and incorporated in the text in parentheses. There are, of course, significant—mostly recent—exceptions to this Zionist historiographical rule. See, for example, Jonathan Boyarin, *Storm from Paradise: The Politics of Jewish Memory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992); and *Palestine and Jewish History: Criticism at the Borders of Ethnography* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); Daniel and Jonathan Boyarin, "Diaspora: Generation and Ground of Jewish Identity," *Critical Inquiry,* vol. 19, 4 (Summer 1993): 693–725; Bryan Cheyette, *Constructions of "the Jew" in English Literature and Society: Racial Representations, 1875–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); and, most recently, Gabriel Piterberg, *The Returns of Zionism*, and Jacqueline Rose, *The Question of Zionism*. Despite gestures in that direction, however, none of these scholars treat the relationship between Said and Arendt at any length.

7. See, however, Feldman, HAJP.

8. For a brilliant articulation of this "double consciousness," see R. Radhakrishnan, *Diasporic Mediations: Between Home and Location* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 174.

9. This is not to say that Said's politics has no room for "nationalism." It is to say, rather, that, when he espoused "nationalism," it was always, in Gayatri Spivak's phrase, a "strategic nationalism." Following his comments on Isaac Deutscher, Said writes: "In the post-Cold War world, the politics of identity and partition [surely, he is referring no less to Israeli nationalism] (I speak only of aggressive identity politics, not the defense of identity when threatened by extinction, as in the Palestinian case) have brought more trouble and suffering than they are worth, nowhere more than when they are associated with precisely those things, such as the humanist tradition, art, and values, that identity allegedly defends and safeguards, constituting in the process territories and selves that seem to require killing rather than living" (HDC, 77).

10. Hannah Arendt, "The Two-in-One," in *The Life of the Mind,* Vol. 1, *Thinking* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1977), 179–93. Further citations will be abbreviated LFM and incorporated in the text in parentheses. For an extended analysis of this resonant Arendtian concept as it pertains to Adolf Eichmann, see Chapter 1, "The Devastation of Language under the Dictatorship of the Public Realm."

11. Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), 95. Further citations will be abbreviated CI and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

12. See Edward W. Said. "Reflections on Exile," in *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 181–86.

13. A significant exception to this rule is the brilliant essay, previously cited, by Mary G. Dietz, "Arendt and the Holocaust," in *The Cambridge Companion to Hannah Arendt,* in which, against the dominant tendency that has read *The Human Condition* "outside, or at least, beyond the context of totalitarianism," offers a reading "that not only places it within the context of totalitarianism and the Holocaust but also understands it as a profound response to the trauma inflicted upon humanity by the Nazi regime" (p. 90).

14. For a genealogy of the term "pariah people," see Gabriel Piterberg, RZ:

> The modern European use of what had originally been the term for the largest lower caste in southern India—pariah—came about in the nineteenth century,

> even though early knowledge of the term by English travelers dates from the early part of the seventeenth century. In Germany especially it gained currency as an analytical category in the discourse on the Jewish Question. An allegorical use of this category was made as early as 1823. Michael Beer, a young German Jewish playwright and poet, wrote a play called *Der Pariah,* which was staged for the first time at the Royal Theatre in Berlin in December of that year. The play's protagonist was a Hindu named Gadhi, whom his upper-caste oppressors made a pariah. Among the many privileges denied to pariahs was the right to fight and die for the fatherland (we shall later see the importance for [Theodor] Herzl of the right to die heroically). At the very end of the nineteenth century the use of the pariah concept was enhanced in reference to Jews in France and Germany in the wake of the Dreyfus Affair, no less by such figures a Herzl and [Bernard] Lazare. Two significant scholarly contributions, by Max Weber and Hannah Arendt, were added in the first half of the twentieth century. Arnaldo Momigliano . . . notes that Weber was the first to introduce the term "pariah" to the scientific study of Judaism, that Herzl and Lazare had already applied the term to modern Jews, and that "more recently, Hannah Arendt has given wider circulation to this word in America." (p. 19).

See also, Aamir Mufti, *EC,* 8.

15. The major exception, after Ron Feldman (see note 6), is Giorgio Agamben, *Means without End: Notes on Politics,* trans. Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), to whom I will return later. Further, citations will be abbreviated MWE and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

16. The insistent failure or refusal of Arendt's critics to attend to her notion of the conscious pariah, particularly to its paradoxical concept of identity—and the consequent misleading representation of her own understanding of her "Jewishness"—is epitomized by Richard Wolin in his willful effort to represent Arendt as an entirely assimilated German in *Heidegger's Children: Hannah Arendt, Karl Löwith, Hans Jonas, and Herbert Marcuse* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001): "Arendt characterized problems of Jewish identity as 'perplexing, troubling, and evasive.' She described her Jewishness as an indubitable fact. As she put it: 'I belong to [the Jewish people] as a matter of course, beyond dispute or argument.' But whether Jewishness had much significance for her beyond this ontological 'being-so-and-not-otherwise' is doubtful. . . . Indeed, beyond perfunctory declarations of a shared existential fate . . . her reflections on matters of Jewish identity are notably lacking in substance. As a rule, Arendt adhered to a problematic separation between 'Jewishness' qua brute ontological datum and 'Judaism' qua religion—an idea that, she admits frankly, never held much of an attraction for her. What it is that remains of 'Jewishness' when one has jettisoned 'Judaism' was a matter she never addressed" (p. 39).

17. Hannah Arendt, "We Refugees," in *The Jew as Pariah,* 65–66. The cardinal importance of this term in Arendt's political thought is suggested by the ubiquity of its appearance throughout her early work. See for example, "Herzl and Lazare" (1942), "The Jew as Pariah: A Hidden Tradition" (1944); and *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* Part I, *Antisemitism*, 64–68; originally published in 1951. Further references to these texts will be abbreviated WR, HL, JP, and AS, respectively, and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

18. For a parallel instance in Said's work of this acute insight into the uses of ventriloquism for the purposes of domination (and its justification), see Said's commentary on

Rudyard Kipling's use of an Indian to represent the "truth" of the Great Mutiny of 1857 in *Kim:* "In a situation of nationalist and self-justifying inflammation, to be an Indian would have meant to feel natural solidarity with the victims of British reprisal. To be British meant to feel repugnance and injury—to say nothing of righteous vindication—given the terrible displays of cruelty by 'natives,' who fulfilled the roles of savages cast upon them. For an Indian, *not* to have had those feelings would have been to belong to a very small minority. It is therefore highly significant that Kipling's choice of an Indian to speak about the Mutiny is a loyalist soldier who views his countrymen's revolt as an act of madness" (CI, 147).

19. Hannah Arendt, "On Humanity in Dark Times," in *Men in Dark Times* (New York: Harvest Books, 1968): "This kind of humanity [the attachment of those who, like the European Jews of the eighteenth century, are treated 'inhumanly'] is the great privilege of pariah peoples; it is the advantage the pariahs of this world always and in all circumstances can have over others. The privilege is dearly bought; it is often accompanied by so radical a loss of the world, so fearful an atrophy of all the organs with which we respond to it—starting with the common sense with which we orient ourselves in a world common to ourselves and others and going on to the sense of beauty, or taste, with which we love the world—that in extreme cases, in which pariahdom has persisted for centuries, we can speak of real worldlessness. And worldlessness, alas, is always a form of barbarism" (p. 13).

20. The same claim could mistakenly be made about her model conscious pariah, Bernard Lazare. See her edition of his *Job's Dungheap: Essays on Jewish Nationalism and Social Revolution* (New York: Schocken Books, 1948).

21. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time,* trans John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (San Francisco, CA: Harper, 1962), 317–25. This fundamental existential structure of *Dasein,* it should be noted, derives from its "thrownness" (*Geworfenheit*): its ek-sistent insistent (ontic/ontological), i.e., its outside/inside (exilic) relationship to being.

22. Søren Kierkegaard, *Johannes Climacus, or De Omnibus Dubitandum Est and a Sermon,* trans. T. H. Croxall (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1958), 151–52.

23. See especially Chapter IX, "The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man," in Arendt, *The Origins of Totaliarianism,* Part II, *Imperialism*, 267–300; further references will be abbreviated I and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

24. This proleptic insight into the global potential inhering in the concept of the Jewish pariah, no doubt, constitutes the point of departure of Aamir Mufti's provocative meditation on the question of "postcolonial India" in *EC.*

25. "In the Jewish tradition there is a concept, hard to define and yet concrete enough, which we know as Ahabath Israel: 'Love of the Jewish people. . . . ' In you, dear Hannah, as in so many intellectuals who came from the German Left, I find little trace of this. A discussion such as is attempted in your book would seem to me to require—you will forgive my mode of expression—the most old-fashioned, the most circumspect, the most exacting treatment possible—precisely because of the feelings aroused by this matter, this matter of the destruction of one-third of our people—and I regard you wholly as a daughter of our people, and in no other way. Thus I have little sympathy with that tone—well expressed by the English word 'flippancy'—which you employ so often in the course of your book" (Gersholm Scholem, Letter to Hannah Arendt, from Jerusalem, June 23, 1963, in HAJP, 241–42).

26. Hannah Arendt, Letter to Gersholm Scholem, July 24, 1963, in Felman, HAJP, 246. For a powerful critique of the essentialist Zionism that informs Scholem's letter as well as

his histories of the Jewish people, see the chapter entitled "Gerhard-Gershom Scholem's Return to History," in Gabriel Piterberg, ZR, 154–87.

27. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 122. Said appropriates the key phrase "natural supernaturalism" from M. H. Abrams's *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (New York: Norton, 1971). More recently, Said's understanding of the secular as the naturalization of the supernatural has been augmented and deepened by post-poststructuralists such as Giorgio Agamben by way of invoking the political scientific theories of the controversial German National Socialist jurist Carl Schmitt, who identified the emergence of liberal democratic political philosophy as a "political theology." See Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty,* trans. George Schawb (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2005), particularly Chapter 3, "Political Theology," 36–53.

28. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 184–88. Further citations will be abbreviated HC and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

29. Edward W. Said, *Beginnings: Intention and Method* (New York: Basic Books, 1975), 349–50; my emphasis. Further citations will be abbreviated B and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

30. See Aamir Mufti, "Critical Secularism: A Reintroduction for Perilous Times," in *Critical Secularism,* ed. Mufti, a special issue of *boundary 2,* vol. 31, 2 (Summer 2004):

> Said's use of the term *secular* involves a displacement of its usual significations. Secular criticism in Said's reckoning is, first of all, a practice of unbelief; *it is directed, however, not simply at the objects of religious piety but at secular "beliefs" as well,* and, at its most ambitious, at all those moments at which thought and culture becomes frozen, congealed, thing-like, and self-enclosed. . . . At no point is *secular* used in his work in simple opposition to the religious per se. Above all, his concern has been with domination through the classification and management of cultures, and of human collectivities, into mutually distinct and immutable entities, be they nations, properly speaking, or civilizations or ethnicities. To the great modern system for the classification of cultures Said gave the name Orientalism and viewed the hierarchies of this system as marking the presence of a "reconstructed religious impulse, a natural supernaturalism." The emergence of this modern classification of cultures does not represent for Said "a sudden access of objective knowledge" but rather "a set of structures inherited from the past, secularized, redisposed, and re-formed by such disciplines as philology, which in turn were naturalized, modernized, and laicized substitutes for (or versions of) Christian supernaturalism." Secular criticism thus struggles above all with the imposition of national (or civilizational) molds over social and cultural life, against all unmediated and absolute claims of membership in a national (or civilizational) community. This catachrestic use of the term *secular* carries the implication that the energies of nationalism in its very broadest sense are thoroughly religious in nature, in a sense that has nothing whatever to do with whether or not an organized religion or a certain canonical popular religious life plays any role, symbolic or organized, in the history of nationalism. In this sense, the secularism implied in secular criticism is a *critical secularism* . . . a constant unsettling and an ongoing and never-ending effort at critique,

> rather than once-and-for-all declaration of the overcoming of the religious, theological, or transcendental impulse. (pp. 2–3)

For further amplification of his Saidian understanding of the secular, see Mufti, EC, 21–34.

31. A noteworthy exception to this is Abdirahman A. Hussein, *Edward Said: Criticism and Society* (London: Verso, 2002).

32. See also Michel Foucault, "Nietszche, Genealogy, History," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews,* ed. Donald F. Bouchard and trans. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977): "History also teaches us how to laugh at the solemnities of the origin. The lofty origin is no more than 'a metaphysical extension which arises from the belief that things are most precious and essential at the moment of birth.' We tend to think that this is the moment of their greatest perfection, when they emerged dazzling from the hands of a creator or in the shadowless light of a first morning. The origin always precedes the Fall. It comes before the body, before the world and time; it is associated with the gods, and its story is always sung as a theogony. But historical beginnings are lowly, not in the sense of modesty or discreet like the steps of a dove, but derisive and ironic, capable of undoing every infatuation" (p. 143).

33. This is a point that Giorgio Agamben makes, certainly with Heidegger and possibly with Hannah Arendt in mind, in "In Praise of Profanation," in *Profanations,* trans. Jeff Fort (New York: Zone Books, 2007). Lamenting the decline of play in a modern world committed to the forwarding or marching imperatives of vocation (the means/end orientation of making), Agamben writes: "[W]e must distinguish between secularization and profanation. Secularization is a form of repression. It leaves intact the forces it deals with by simply moving them from one place to another. Thus the political secularization of theological concepts (the transcendence of God as a paradigm of sovereign power [the reference is to Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*] does nothing but displace the heavenly monarchy onto an earthly monarchy, leaving its power intact. Profanation, however, neutralizes what it profanes. Once profaned, that which was unavailable and separate loses its aura and is returned to [common] use. Both are political operations: the first guarantees the exercise of power by carrying it back to a sacred model; the second deactivates the apparatuses of power and returns to common use the spaces that power had seized" (p. 77).

34. Hannah Arendt, "Labor, Work, Action," in *The Portable Hannah Arendt,* ed. Peter Baehr (New York: 2000), 173; originally published in *Amor Mundi: Explorations in Faith and Thought,* ed. J. W. Bernauer, S.J. (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987). Further citations will be abbreviated LWA and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

35. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,* trans. Talcott Parsons (New York: Scribners, 1930): "Now it is unmistakable that even in the German word *Beruf* [call], and perhaps still more early in the English *calling,* a religious conception, that of a task set by God, is at least suggested. The more emphasis is put upon the word in a concrete case, the more evident is the connotation. And if we trace the history of the word through civilized languages, it appears that neither the predominant Catholic peoples nor those of classical antiquity possess any expression of similar connotation for what we know as a calling (in the sense of a life-task, a definite field in which to work), while one has existed for all predominantly Protestant peoples" (p. 79). The meaning I attribute to the term "vocation" in this book has its origins in a comparative analysis of Althusser's concept of interpellation articulated in "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses: Notes

towards an Investigation," in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays,* trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 170–83, and Herman Melville's critique of the American "calling"—a critique that encompasses the American Puritan tradition and American capitalism—in such texts as "Bartleby, the Scrivener" and "Benito Cereno." See Spanos, *Herman Melville and the American Calling: The Fiction after* Moby-Dick, *1851–1857* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2008).

36. Arendt's view is remarkably similar to Althusser's notion of interpellation, especially if it is seen in terms of Giorgio Agamben's Benjaminian analysis of her discussion of *homo faber* and his (and her) means/end logic. See Agamben, *Means without End: Notes on Politics,* trans. Vincenso Binetti and Cesare Casarino (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000). The essay entitled "Notes on Gesture," 48–59, is especially illuminating.

37. As in the case of Said, the word "worldless," which refers to the loss or abandonment of the radically secular, always already time of beginnings, and its opposite ("worldly"), are key words in Arendt's discourse.

38. Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community,* trans. Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p. 42.3; my emphasis). See also Agamben, *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans,* trans. Patricia Dilsey (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 59–87. Commenting on the passage from *The Coming Community* quoted above, Leland de la Durantaye writes—in a way that could also apply to Arendt's critique of *homo faber:*

> the "*post iudicium* world" of a coming community is not one *waiting* for some state of affairs to come or some judgment to be handed down from a sacred or transcendental realm, nor is it waiting to reach an endpoint of dialectical progress. In the postface to *The Coming Community* Agamben . . . underlines that "*coming* does not mean *future.*" As in the conceptions of messianic time offered by Benjamin and Paul, the "time of the now" is one no longer waiting for its final form. In light of such a conception, mankind has no set and special "destiny." This has nothing in common with quietism, and the idea that there is no specific "task" to fulfill or "vocation" to exercise does not mean there is nothing to be done. On the contrary, Agamben's rejection of such conceptions of "essence" and "destiny" is done in the name of a time that is now and an action that is ours. What truly leads to apathy and quietism, in Agamben's view, is a naïve belief in historical progress. . . . In this light we can understand Agamben's repeated claims that mankind has no historical *task*, *calling*, or *vocation*—whether individual or collective. The sense behind Agamben's interest in the paradigm offered by *messianism,* and that allows him to speak of a "*post iudicium* world," is the governing idea of no longer waiting for the fulfillment of a millennial vocation or the announcement of a new one. To speak of the "*post iudicium*" world is, for this reason, neither apocalyptic nor nihilistic in the customary sense of the term. For Agamben, it is our essential absence of determinate vocation that defines our human state and which is the most fundamental characteristic of our being in the world." ("*Homo Profanus:* Giorgio Agamben's Profane Philosophy," *boundary 2,* vol. 35, 3 [Fall 2008]: 59–60)

39. In analyzing the concept of action (which occurs in the "space of appearance") Arendt articulates in *The Human Condition* primarily in the Cold War context, i.e., as

"participatory citizen-politics (whether in the form of agonal contestation or deliberative communication, classical republicanism or radical democracy)," her "contemporary commentators," according to Mary G. Dietz, neglected the dehumanized and superfluous figure of the concentration camp inmate. This focus, she goes on to say, tended "to occlude something that I believe is profoundly articulated in Arendt's concept of action, and also vital to a reading of *The Human Condition* in the context of dark times. This is the phenomenon of self-revelation, or what Arendt also called 'the disclosure of the agent in the act.' We might say that self-revelation is precisely what crystallizes in the space of appearance where human beings gather, and that spontaneous acting and speaking are the capacities through which the unique human person discloses his or her individuality, him or her as 'self,' as *sui generis*" (p. 100).

40. Elsewhere, Arendt puts this relation of radical beginnings with worldliness in terms of the play of Nietzsche's agonic perspectivalism: "[T]he reality of the public realm relies on the simultaneous presence of innumerable perspectives and aspects in which the common world presents itself and for which no common measurement or denominator can ever be devised. For though the common world is the common meeting ground of all, those who are present have different locations in it, and the location of one can no more coincide with the location of another than the location of two objects. Being seen and being heard by others derive their significance from the fact that everybody sees and hears from a different position. This is the meaning of public life, compared to which even the richest and most satisfying family life can offer only the prolongation or multiplication of one's own position with its attending aspects and perspectives" (HC, 57). Arendt's Nietzschean perspectivalism should be kept in mind by the reader, since, as I will suggest later, its agonic play is echoed in Said's invocation of the metaphorics of counterpoint not only to articulate his concept of reading/interpretation, but also of the coming *polis*.

41. As Arendt puts this transformation of Aristotle's definition of man as *zoon politikon* to man as "*animal socialis*": "Aristotle's definition of man as *zoon politikon* was not only unrelated and even opposed to the natural association experienced in household life [the *oikos*]; it can be fully understood only if one adds his second definition of man as *zoon logon echon* ('a living being capable of speech'). The Latin translation of this term into *animal rationale* rests on no less fundamental a misunderstanding than the term 'social animal'" (HC, 26).

42. The horrific negative consequences of the unerring vocational logic that, according to Arendt, follows from the occupation of the public sphere by "the household" is epitomized in a dramatically ironic way by the systematic history of ethnic cleansing of Palestine undertaken by the Zionists under the leadership of David Ben-Gurion following the United Nations' announcement of the partition of Israel in November 1947 (Resolution 181). I quote an instance of this shameful history recorded by Gabriel Piterberg for the chilling light it throws on the vocational logic endemic to nation-state building: "As early as July 1949 [after much of Palestine had been cleansed of it Palestinian inhabitants], Ben-Gurion assembled a small group of scholarly experts—cartographers, archeologists and historians—and appointed them the Negev Names Committee, an initiative that drew on similar bodies in existence during the Mandatory period. The Negev and Arava (the strip of desert plateau from the Dead Sea down to the Red Sea) constituted more than half of the new state's area. The committee's mission was, to quote the official formulation, 'to assign Hebrew names to all the places—mountains, valleys, springs, roads, and so on—in the Negev region.' To remove any lingering doubts over such a process, the same notion

was conveyed in a typically ruthless fashion in Ben-Gurion's letter to the chair of the Negev Names Committee: 'We are obliged to remove the Arabic names for reasons of state. Just as we do not recognize the Arab's political proprietorship of the land, so also do we not recognize their spiritual proprietorship and their name'" (RZ, 209–10).

43. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life,* trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 183–84; further citations will be abbreviated HS and incorporated in the text in parentheses. For a reading of the indissoluble logical relationship between *animal laborans* and *homo faber* that is somewhat similar to the one I am inferring from Arendt's analysis in *The Human Condition* by way of invoking the figure of the inmate of the Nazi concentration camp, see Mary G. Dietz, AH. In this essay, she points to the similarity in *The Human Condition* of "labor and work *in extremis*"—"labor manifests itself *in extremis* in the form of dehumanizing automatic processes and compulsive repetitions that displace human death; work manifests itself *in extremis* in the form of dehumanizing fabricating processes and instrumentalized objectifications that violate human life." But, in so doing, she, unlike other commentators, does not restrict the "nullity" of this situation to the context of "advanced capitalism in late modernity." "[I]f we stop here," she goes on, "we will miss the monumental theme that Arendt is holding at bay, but conspicuously so, in *The Human Condition,* and perhaps overlook the palpable significance of Arendt's concrete discussion of action as well. For the two forms of extremity that she warned of—labor as routinized deathlessness, and work as the objectified violation of life—have hitherto coupled in human experience, although only once and with terrible and traumatic consequences that defy comprehension. This coupling occurred in the 'hellish experiment' of the SS extermination camps where . . . the obliteration of human life was effected before it was actually accomplished" (p. 97). This is an acute observation. But insofar as it implies an absolutely exceptionalist Holocaust, it runs counter to Arendt's understanding of the history of modern totalitarianism.

44. That my suggestion that the fulfillment of the means/end logic of *homo faber* can be read as reproducing *animal laborans* in an extreme form (bare life) is a viable one is suggested by the following comment by Leland de la Durantaye, one of Agamben's most astute readers: "In the essay 'Form-of-Life' (1993), in which Agamben first takes up the questions treated in *Homo Sacer,* . . . Agamben stresses that 'what is left unquestioned in contemporary debates on bioethics and biopolitics . . . is precisely what before all else should be questioned—the 'biological concept of life' [MWE, 7 (16)]). . . . Agamben finds a rare treatment of this 'biological concept of life' in Arendt's work and notes that some twenty years before the publication of Foucault's *The History of Sexuality* [where Agamben first came across Foucault's references to biopolitics] she 'had already analyzed the process that brings *homo laborans* [tellingly, Arendt's term is, in fact, *animal laborans*]—and with it, biological life as such—gradually to occupy the very center of the political scene of modernity' [HS, 3 (6)]. Agamben expresses surprise, however, that Arendt makes no connection between her research on 'biological life as such' in *The Human Condition* and the analyses of totalitarian power she had conducted elsewhere and in which Agamben finds that 'a biopolitical perspective is altogether lacking [HS, 3–4 (6)].'" (*Giorgio Agamben: A Critical Introduction* [Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009], 208)

45. Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), 332–33. Further citations will be abbreviated CI and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

46. Agamben's term "inoperativeness" (*inoperosita*) (or "*désoeuvrement*") is too complex to do it justice here. Following Agamben, Leland de la Durantaye traces the term back through Jean Luc Nancy to Georges Bataille (*Giorgio Agamben,* 18–20), though its genealogy should include Jacques Derrida's *sous rature* (putting a received concept under erasure) and Heidegger's *Destruktion* (de-structuration). Suffice it to say here that, as its etymology suggests ("the rendering of work unworkable"), it is intended to undermine the authority of *vocation* understood as the task assigned to man by the calling of a sacred End or *Telos* in order to release *potentiality as such.* As Agamben puts it in *Homo Sacer,* "the only coherent way to understand inoperativeness is to think of it as a generic mode of potentiality that is not exhausted (like individual action or collective action understood as the sum of individual actions) in a *transitus de potentia ad actum* [transition from the possible to the actual]" (p. 62). In short, it is to be understood as something remarkably like Said's and Arendt's notion of beginnings.

47. I write "not incidentally," because Melville's Bartleby—his "refusal to be answerable to" the call of the Wall Street lawyer—is Agamben's synecdochical figure of the "nobody" whose "I would prefer not to" renders the power of the dominant culture of the nation-state inoperative. See Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community,* 34–36.7, and "Bartleby, or On Contingency," in *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy,* trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), 243–71. For an illuminating reading of Agamben's appropriation of Melville's Bartleby in behalf of articulating a mode of resistance commensurable to the condition of the present interregnum, see Durantaye, *Giorgio Agamben,* 164–72. See also Spanos, "'Benito Cereno' and 'Bartleby, the Scrivener': Reflections on the American Calling," in *Herman Melville and the American Calling: The Fiction after* Moby-Dick*, 1851–1857* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2008), 105–60; Maurice Blanchot, *The Writing of Disaster,* trans. Ann Smock (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 17 ff., 145; Gilles Deleuze, "Bartleby; or, the Formula," in *Essays Critical and Clinical,* trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997); and Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 203–4. In a provocative essay, "The Violence of Subtraction," it is also worth noting, Slavoj Žižek refers to Alain Badiou's notion of "substraction," which, in its refusal to be answerable to the dominant parliamentarty/capitalist system, renders its laws inoperative, as his "Bartleby politics" (*In Defense of Lost Causes,* 409).

48. I am appropriating Jacques Derrida's meditation on the "*revenant*" in *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International,* trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1994), 4–14.

49. Edward W. Said, "Bases for Coexistence," in *The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After* (New York, 2001), 206–7; originally published in *Al-Hayat,* Nov. 5, 1977.

50. Bringing to conclusion the enabling distinction between the overt and indirect use of power (that of the Belgium and the British, respectively) that lies at the heart of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness,* Said writes: "Thus Conrad encapsulates two quite different but intimately related aspects of imperialism: the idea that is based on the power to take over territory, an idea utterly clear in its force and unmistakable consequences; and the practice that essentially disguises or obscures this by developing a justificatory regime of self-aggrandizing, self-originating authority interposed between the victim of imperialism and its perpetrators" (CI, 69).

51. See, for example, James Fenimore Cooper, *The Deerslayer* (New York: Penguin,

1987), in which the author and his white settler characters repeatedly use this pejorative term to underscore the lack of civilizational morality inhering in the Native American's alleged "roaming over" rather than cultivating and settling the land. For an extended discussion of this particular ideological facet of the nation-state's vocational logic of belonging, see Spanos, "American Exceptionalism, the Jeremiad, and the Frontier, Before and After 9/11: From the Puritans to the Neo-Con Men," in *American Exceptionalism in the Age of Globalization: The Specter of Vietnam* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2008), 187–241.

52. The rhetoric peculiar to this aspect of the imperial justificatory regime is epitomized by the following exemplary passages (previously quoted in Chapter 4), themselves traceable back to the Romans' representation of the non-Roman as *sylvestris* (forest dweller/savage): "In 1612 the Jesuit missionary Pierre Biard, describing Canadian Amerindians, wrote: 'Thus four thousand Indians at most roam through, rather than occupy, these vast stretches of inland territory and sea-shore. For they are a nomadic people, living in the forests and scattered over wide spaces as is natural for those who live by hunting and fishing only'; 'roam rather than occupy' being a translation of Biard's 'non tenentur, sed percurruntur.' In 1625 Samual Purchas wrote of the Virginia Algonquians: 'So bad people, having little of Humanitie but shape, ignorant of Civilitie, of Arts, of Religion; more brutish then the beasts they hunt, more wild and unmanly then that unmanned wild Countrey which they range rather than inhabite.' And in 1629 in New England John Winthrop assimilated Purchas's point to the legal argument of *vacuum domicilium* by which the Indians had 'natural' but not 'civil right over the land because they had not subdued it'" (Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean* [New York: Routledge, 1986], 157–58).

It is worth noting that this rhetoric is replete with what Jacques Derrida called "white metaphors," which erase the inaugural spatialization or, more precisely, territorialization of the being of the earth to privilege a comportment of mastery: occupation in the double sense of conquest and vocation (to a higher calling). In this respect, see also the interview between the editors of *Hérodote*, a French journal of geography and geopolitics, and Michel Foucault entitled "Questions on Geography," in *Power /Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon, 1980), in which they mutually arrive at the following proposition about land under the aegis of the panoptic Western eye: "The point that needs to be emphasized here is that certain spatial metaphors are equally geographical and strategic, which is only natural since geography grew up in the shadow of the military. A circulation of notions can be observed between geographical and strategic discourses. The region of the geographers is the military *region* (from *regere,* to command), a *province* is a conquered territory (from *vincere*). *Field* evokes the battlefield" (p. 69). Similarly, note that the two references to the word "occupy" in Hulme's text ("occupy" itself and the Latin *tenentur*), both refer to the act of spatialization, taking hold of, and working the being of the land. For an amplification of this general colonial history of the concept of *terra nullius,* see, Spanos, *America's Shadow: An Anatomy of Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 39–51; *The Legacy of Edward W. Said* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 144–50.

53. Edward W. Said, *The Question Concerning Palestine* (New York: Times Books, 1979), 75–76. Further references will be abbreviated QP and incorporated in the text in parentheses. For a recent argument fundamentally similar to Said's written by a contemporary Jewish scholar, see the chapter tellingly entitled "The Colonization of Palestine in the Comparative Context of Settler Colonialism," in Gabriel Piterberg, *ZR,* 51–92.

54. For a sustained critique of a prominent example of this Zionist justificatory regime, see Chapter 4, which analyzes Said's response to Michael Walzer's *Exodus and Revolution* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), "Michael Walzer's *Exodus and Revolution:* A Canaanite Reading," in *Blaming the Victim: Spurious Scholarship and the Palestinian Question,* ed. Edward W. Said and Christopher Hitchens (London: Verso, 1988), first published in *Grand Street* (Winter 1986).

55. Edward W. Said, "Bases for Coexistence," *The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After* (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), 207–8.

56. My appropriation of the term "enclosure" is deliberate. It is intended to recall the history of the English "enclosure movement," the epochal initiative that, in enclosing "the commons" under the authority of the Enclosure Acts also contributed to the inauguration of the modern nation-state system and imperialism and thus, though unremarked by those, like Hannah Arendt and Giorgio Agamben, who have identified the camp as the defining paradigm of our contemporary occasion, could be said to constitute the (modern) genealogical origins of this ominous phenomenon. For extended inaugural analyses of the ontological, cultural, and political implications of the "enclosure movement" in England that implies, without actually making this connection, see Robert P. Marzec, *An Ecological and Postcolonial Study of Literature: From Daniel Defoe to Salman Rushdie* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) and *Human/Subhuman: Nature, Empire, and the Rise of the Human-Land Nexus* (forthcoming).

57. See footnote 25.

58. I am referring to the spurious distinction Michael Walzer makes in *Exodus and Revolution* between what he represents as the authentic—"gradualist" (democratic)—politics of the Exodus story and the inauthentic politics inferred from it by the "messianic Leninists." For Said's critique of Walzer's distinction, see his "Michael Walzer's *Exodus and Revolution:* A Canaanite Reading," 166–67. See also Chapter 4 of this book.

59. Of the several histories that counter the justificatory discourse of official Zionism *vis-à-vis* the question of ethnic cleansing, the three most fully documented—and damaging—are those of Walid Kalidhi, *Palestine Reborn* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1992); the Jewish-British psychoanalytic critic Jacqueline Rose, *The Question of Zion* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005; and the Jewish historian Ilan Pappe, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). For a definitive study of that aspect of the Israeli ethnic cleansing of Palestine that has had as it goal the literal obliteration of the history—the physical geographical existence—of the Palestinian past, see Nadia Abu El-Haj, *Facts on the Ground: Archaeological Practice and Territorial Self-Fashioning in Israel Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), a book that triggered the wrath of American Zionists, which took the form of an (unsuccessful) initiative to deny the author tenure at Barnard College.

60. As Ronald Feldman forcefully observes, Arendt's distinction between "worldliness" and "worldlessness" pervades her discourse, testifying to its centrality: "Unlike both the 'scapegoat' theory, which claims that the Jews were accidental victims, and the 'eternal antisemitism' theory, which claims that the Jews are inevitable victims, Arendt tries to show that the catastrophic end to the history of the Jews in Europe was neither accidental nor inevitable. Rather, it was the result of the specific history of Jewish-Gentile relationships. If the Jews were so politically blind that they did not understand the implications of their own actions and those of their opponents, it was the result of what Arendt considers the key feature of Jewish history in the modern period: the Jews' *worldlessness*" (HAJP,

22; emphasis in the original). Though hitherto unremarked, the parallel between Arendt's use of the terms "worldliness" and "worldlessness," both in their pervasiveness and their meaning, with Said's is remarkable, as Feldman's observation suggests.

61. Hannah Arendt, "Herzl and Lazare" (July 1942), in Feldman, HAJP, 127.

62. Hannah Arendt, "The Jewish State Fifty Years After: Where Have Herzl's Politics Led?" (May 1946), in Feldman, HAJP, 171–72; my emphasis.

63. See Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political,* ed. and trans. George Schwab (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007; originally published in 1932), 33–37.

64. Hannah Arendt, "Zionism Reconsidered" (October 1944), in Feldman, HAJP, 151–57. Further references will be abbreviated ZR and incorporated in the text in parentheses. See also *Eichmann in Jerusalem.*

65. The significant attention Arendt, as non-Jewish Jew, pays to this collaboration of the Jewish leadership and the Nazis is, above all, the basis of her condemnation by the Zionist and her expulsion from the Jewish community. For a telling example of her courageous forthrightness on the issue of Jewish collaboration, see Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil,* rev. and enl. ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1994), 116–19.

66. That this parallel with Said's insistent disclosure of the Zionists' representation of Palestine as *terra nullius* to be a patent fiction modeled on the European imperial project is not accidental is verified by Arendt's repeated references to this locution. See, for example, Arendt, "Peace or Armistice in the Near East" (January, 1950), in Feldman, HAJP, 203–4, 208.

67. Hannah Arendt, "To Save the Jewish Homeland: There is Still Time," HAJP, 186–87. Further references will be abbreviated SJH and incorporated in the text in parentheses. See also Arendt's essay "Peace or Armistice in the Near East," in Feldman HAJP, 193–224.

68. Arendt's witness to this acute irony—the relationship between German Jewish intellectual exponents of Jewish nationalism and the German romantic nationalist tradition (epitomized by Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation*) is underscored by Gabriel Piterberg in ZR, 130–51; and, especially, by Aamir Mufti in EC, 68–110. See, above all, the conclusion of this nuanced and illuminating intellectual history, where Mufti, having shown that Europe's "solution" of the "Jewish Question" by way of the imperatives of the German romantic notion of the nation-state, which was adopted by Jewish intellectuals, invokes Arendt's proleptic critical response to this decisive minoritizing solution:

> Because of its [the nation-states' solution of "the minority crisis" "through a *partition of society*"] . . . universal nature, that is, because by its very nature it takes *every* society (with a Jewish population) under its purview, Jewish nationalism provides a sort of privileged instance for a critical understanding of the trajectory of romantic and political nationalism in the modern era. This was grasped by those early—that is, pre-1948—critics of Zionism, like Arendt, who had a complex, insider-outsider relationship to it. In her essay "Zionism Reconsidered" (1944), for instance, Arendt pointed out that the complete nationalization of the Jewish Question—represented for her in the wholesale takeover by mainstream Zionism of the ideas that had until then been seen as belonging properly to Revisionist extremism—had left "practically no choice for the Arabs but minority status in Palestine or voluntary emigration." The

> so-called partition of the Indian subcontinent, an event contemporaneous with the partitioning of historical Palestine, offered this same choice to "the Muslims" as a group. At the same time, however, it was organized Muslim separatism that abrogated to itself the "imperial" right to massive social reconstitution of the regions—Punjab, Sind, and Bengal—that it claimed for itself as parts of its Muslim homeland. (p. 110)

69. Hannah Arendt, "Peace or Armistice in the Near East," in Feldman, HAJP, 215–16. As her reference to "Arabic atrocity propaganda" (i.e., the Jewish "Consulate's" representation of Jewish ethnic cleansing as "self-defense" or "retaliation" against Arab violence), suggests, Arendt, at the time of writing, was not fully aware of the ruthless systematicity of the Zionist project of ethnic cleansing. The rest of the passage, however, indicates she was not able to discount the truth of the reports. The brutally systematic character of this ideological project of ethnic cleansing—and its origins in the mainstream leadership of David Ben-Gurion, not, as the official Israeli discourse claimed, in the "terrorist" Stern gang or Irgun—is chillingly and decisively documented by the Israeli historian Ilan Pappe in *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

70. Arendt, "Herzl and Lazare" in HAJP, 127–28; my emphasis.

71. On the character of the "Revisionist Zionism" Jabotinsky founded, see Jacqueline Rose, QZ. "Jabotinsky," she writes, "is most famous for his concept of the 'iron wall': in order to thwart Arab resistance to the Jewish colonization of Palestine, the Jews must make themselves unassailable. But long before the Arab riots of the early 1920s crystallized this concept in his mind, Jabotinsky believed that combat was the only path of survival for the Jews. When I asked Benjamin Netanyahu about Jabotinsky's iron wall in 2002, he commented: 'The iron wall was not merely the fence. The iron wall was the idea of deterrence, to have them smash against your defenses or against your offenses' (at the word 'smash,' he punched his fist). Netanyahu is right—Jabotinsky's wall was never meant to take on the brute concretization of the fence being built in Israel today. 'For Jabotinsky the iron wall was a metaphor,' Avi Shlaim, whose study of Israel is called *The Iron Wall,* commented recently; 'in the crude hand of Ariel Sharon and his colleagues, this metaphor is being metamorphosed into a monstrous reality'" (p. 123). Elsewhere, Rose depicts a more conflicted Jabotinsky based on a reading of his novels. See Rose, "The Hidden Life of Vladimir Jabotinsky," in *The Last Resistance* (London: Verso, 2007), 93–110.

72. Throughout her writings on the Zionist question, Arendt makes a decisive distinction between the Israeli nation-state and a Jewish homeland in order, I suggest, to differentiate between the unitary form of political organization whose provenance is the European nation-state and whose logic of belonging is grounded in the exclusive/inclusive bio-essentialist principle of identity, and one whose provenance is the pre-state, Eastern Jewish collective settlements (kibbutzim), which, according to Arendt, indifferent to such a bio-logic, were pluralistic and dialogic. See, for example, "To Save the Jewish Homeland: There is Still Time" (May 1948), in Feldman HAJP, where Arendt, commenting on the "insane Revisionist demand" (the incorporation of the whole of Palestine and Transjordan), she writes: "Palestine Jewry would eventually separate itself from the larger body of world Jewry and in its isolation develop into an entirely new people. Thus, it becomes plain that at this moment and under present circumstances a Jewish state can only be erected at the price of the Jewish homeland" (187–88).

73. In her illuminating psychoanalytical/political study of the history of Zionism, Jacqueline Rose identifies an alternative Zionism intent on resisting the militant and self-defeating messianic Zionism that triumphed in Israel in favor of a Zionism committed to a stateless homeland, where Jew and Arab lived cooperatively together. As I have noted, the main figures in this alternative tradition were Martin Buber, Hans Kohn (one of Buber's closest disciples and friends), Ahad Ha'am, and Hannah Arendt. See Chapter 2, "'Imponderables in Thin Air': Zionism as Psychoanalysis (Critique)," in QZ, 58–107.

74. The ultimate goal of this minority group, to which Arendt adheres, was wider. They and she envisioned the establishment of a "non-nationalist" binational society in Palestine as a model for the establishment of a federation of Middle Eastern countries. For Arendt, above all, this initiative was grounded in her revolutionary—and proleptic—recognition of the bankruptcy of the nation-state system: "The true objectives of a non-national policy in the Near East and particularly in Palestine are few in number and simple in nature. Nationalist insistence on absolute sovereignty in such small countries as Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt can lead only to the Balkanization of the whole region and its transformation into a battlefield for the conflicting interests of the great powers to the detriment of all authentic national interests" ("Peace or Armistice in the Near East," 217).

75. Hannah Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism,* Part III, *Totalitarianism*, 447; my emphasis. This passage is, no doubt, the essential source of Giorgio Agamben's illuminating, however controversial, meditations on the death camp, which he sees as the paradigm of the contemporary Western nation-state occasion. See, for example, *Home Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life,* trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998); and *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive,* trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Brooklyn, NY: Zone Books, 1999). Nor should Arendt's anticipation, especially in the second paragraph of the quotation where she refers to "killing the juridical person," of the organization of and uses to which Guantanamo was put during George W. Bush administration's war on terror after 9/11 be overlooked.

76 Hannah Arendt, "Peace or Armistice in the Near East," in Feldman HAJP, 216.

77. This is, admittedly, also true of Lazare's writing on Jewish nationalism. See the essays collected in *Job's Dungheap.*

78. Edward W. Said, "Secular Criticism," in *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 23. Further citations will be abbreviated SC and incorporated in the text in parentheses. Elsewhere in the essay, Said put it this way: "What I am describing is the transition from a failed idea or possibility of filiation to a kind of compensatory order that, whether it is a party, an institution, a culture, a set of beliefs, or even a world-vision, provides men and women with a new form of relationship, which I have been calling affiliation but which is also a new system" (p. 19).

79. Returning to the operations of filiation and affiliation in his inaugural essay "Reflections on American 'Left' Criticism" in *The World, the Text, and the Critic,* Said, in a gesture that recalls even more pointedly Arendt's analysis of the relationship between the nation and the state, writes: "As Raymond Williams has shown, words like *culture* and *society* acquire a concrete, explicit significance only in the period after the French Revolution. Before that, European culture as a whole identified itself positively as being different from non-European regions and culture, which for the most part were given a negative value. Yet during the nineteenth century the idea of culture acquired an affirmatively nationalist cast, with the result that figures like Matthew Arnold make an active identification

between culture and the state" (p. 174). Further citations will be abbreviated RALC and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

80. This term derives from Martin Heidegger's reading of Heraclitus's Fragment 53: "Heraclitus says'. . . 'Conflict [*polemos*] is for all (that is present) the creator that causes to emerge, but (also) for all the dominant preserver. For it makes some to appear as gods, others as men; it creates (shows) some as slaves, others as freemen'") in *An Introduction to Metaphysics* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1959), 61–62. "The *polemos* named here," Heidegger explains, "is a conflict that prevailed prior to everything divine and human, *not a war in the human sense.* This conflict, as Heraclitus thought it, first caused the realm of being to separate into opposites; it first gave rise to position and order and rank. In such separation cleavages, intervals, distances, and joints opened. In conflict (*Auseinandersetzung*, setting a-part) a world comes into being. (Conflict does not split, much less destroy unity. It constitutes unity, *it is a binding-together, logos*. *Polemos and logos are the same*" (p. 62; my emphasis). In short, *Auseinandersetzung,* like counterpoint in music, is an always already belonging together in strife. I invoke the term here, despite the invidious relation it will evoke, because, given the massive influence of Heidegger's thought on Arendt's, it is quite likely that she might be appropriating it in her definition of the polity in *The Human Condition* as the space where saying/doing takes place.

81. Invoking the term "profanation" as one that is more true to the human condition than "secularization" in its privileging of "means without end" or, more positively, "potentiality," Agamben, writes: "For to profane means not simply to abolish and erase separations but to learn to put them to a new use, *to play with them.* The classless society is not a society that has abolished and lost all memory of class differences but a society that has learned to *deactivate* the apparatuses of those differences in order to make a new use possible, in order to transform them it pure means" (*Profanations,* trans. Jeff Fort [Brooklyn, NY: Zone Books, 2007], 87; my emphasis).

82. That Said is emphasizing the "dissonant," as opposed to the "tonal"—the strife as opposed to the harmonic—aspect of counterpoint is borne witness to by the following passage in which he appropriates the music metaphor to speak of his particular version of global comparative literature studies: "Separatist or nativist enterprises strike me as exhausted; the ecology of literature's new and expanded meaning cannot be attached to only one essence or to the discrete idea of one thing. But this global, contrapuntal analysis should be modeled 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 and Imperialism,* 318). This important qualification is underscored by H. Aram Veeser in *Edward Said: The Charisma of Criticism* (New York: Routledge, 2010), where he recalls Said's impatient response to David Barsamian's reductive use of "the word 'counterpoint' as a reliable key to unlock Said's complexities." Said, Veeser goes on, explained to Barsamian "that he now preferred to call his work *heterophony,* saying that he really didn't trust *counterpoint* anymore because 'in Western classical music counterpoint assumes the stability and centering effect of a principal theme in a given tonality'" (128–29). The passage Veeser quotes is from the typescript of "Secular Interpretation, the Geographical Element and the Methodology of Imperialism," a lecture Said gave at Princeton University in 1990.

83. Edward W. Said, *On Late Style: Music and Literature against the Grain* (New York:

Pantheon, 2006), 117; further citations will be abbreviated LS and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

84. This metaphor of the march, so fundamental to modern colonial "settler" societies, for example, presides unthought over Michael Walzer's characterization of the ideal, linear-oriented nation-building process he infers—in opposition to the "cyclical" movement of classical Greece—from the Old Testament story of Exodus, of which, he implies, the modern Israel is the foremost model: "A political history with a strong linearity, a strong forward movement, the Exodus gives permanent shape to Jewish conceptions of time; and it serves as a model, ultimately, for non-Jewish conceptions too. We can think of it as the crucial alternative to all mythic notions of eternal recurrence—and hence to all cyclical understandings of political change from which our [*sic*] revolution derives. The idea of eternal recurrence connects the social to the natural world and gives to political life the simple closure of a circle: birth, maturity, death, and rebirth. The same story is enacted again and again; men and women and the timely deeds of men and women alike lose their singularity; one represents another, in a system of correspondences that extend upward, hierarchically, into the mythic realm of nature and of nature's gods. Biblical narrative generally, Exodus more particularly, breaks in the most decisive way with this kind of cosmological story-telling. In Exodus historical events occurs only once, and they take on their significance from a system of backward-and forward-looking interconnections, not from the hierarchical correspondences of myth" (ER, 12–13). For my critique of Walzer's distinction—and his privileging of linearity (the promise/fulfillment structure)—and see Chapter 4.

85. In an essay precipitated by the revolution in Egypt called "Tahrir Square," or, more broadly, "The Arab Spring," the Arab-American composer Mohammed Fairouz, invoking Said, writes: "There is a concern among many of the world's cultures (the Arab culture perhaps most prominent among them) about losing one's identity in a globalizing world. In a contrapuntal passage of music, each line, even when woven together with other lines to form a cohesive tapestry, retains its own beauty. In this musical technique I see a lesson for the cultures of the world: to exist in counterpoint with one another, with each retaining its individual cultural traits, but enriching the whole. I have used contrapuntal devices as symbolic of this larger meaning throughout my work" (*The New York Times,* July 6, 2011).

86. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life,* trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 181.

87. Giorgio Agamben, "Beyond Human Rights," in *Means without End: Notes on Politics,* trans. Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 236; further references will be abbreviated BHR and incorporated in the text in parentheses.

88. It is worth noting at this juncture that Agamben's primary generic example of the uncounted (and unaccountable) is Herman Melville's Bartleby. See, for example, the chapter entitled "Bartleby," in *The Coming Community,* trans. Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 34–36.7 and "Bartleby, or On Contingency," in *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy,* trans. Daniel Heller-Roazin (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999). This is not only because Agamben's reading of Melville's elusive figure illuminates the potential—and potentiality—of Arendt's and Agamben's figure of the refugee, but also because Edward Said, too, however peripherally, invokes this same non-entity Bartleby—his "I would prefer not to"—as exemplary of the condition and positive potential of the spectral global émigré. Speaking of the mass uprisings of the

1980s "outside the Western metropolis"—*and anticipating his Adornian account of post-imperial resistance cited above*—Said writes:

> these mass protests have all challenged something very basic to every art and theory of government, the principle of confinement. To be governed people must be counted, taxed, educated, and of course ruled in regulated places (house, school, hospitals, work site), whose ultimate extension is represented at its most simple and severe by the prison or mental hospital, as Michel Foucault argued. True, there was a carnivalesque aspect to the milling crowds in Gaza or in Wenceslas and Tiananmen Square, but the consequences of sustained mass unconfinement and unsettled existence were only a little less dramatic (and dispiriting) in the 1980s than before. The unresolved plight of the Palestinians speaks directly of an undomesticated cause, and a rebellious people paying a very heavy price for their resistance. And there are other examples: refugees and "boat people," those unresting and vulnerable itinerants; the starving populations of the Southern Hemisphere, the destitute but insistent homeless who, like so many Bartlebys, shadow the Christmas shoppers in Western cities; the undocumented immigrants and the exploited "guest workers" who provide cheap and usually seasonal labor. Between the extremes of discontented, challenging urban mobs and the flood of semi-forgotten, uncared-for people, the world's secular and religious authorities have sought new, or renewed modes of governance. (*Culture and Imperialism,* 327)

For my contribution to the recent global discourse on Melville's Bartleby, see "'Benito Cereno' and 'Bartleby, the Scrivener': Reflections on the American Calling," in *Herman Melville and the American Calling: The Fiction after* Moby-Dick, *1851–1857* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2008), 105–66; and "Arab Spring, 2011: A Symptomatic Reading of the Revolution," *Symplokē* (forthcoming).

89. Wikipedia usefully defines the Klein bottle, first described by the German mathematician Felix Klein in 1882, as "a non-orientable surface, informally, a surface (a two-dimensional manifold) with no identifiable 'inner' and 'outer' sides. Other related non-orientable objects include the Mobius strip. . . . Whereas a Mobius strip is a two-dimensional surface with boundary, a Klein bottle has no boundary."

90. "Topology," according to Wikipedia, "is a major area of mathematics concerned with spatial properties that are preserved under continuous deformations of objects, for, example, deformations that involve stretching, but not tearing or gluing. It emerged through the development of concepts from geometry and set theory, such as space, dimension, and transformation."

91. See Jacques Attali, *Noise,* trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985). Pointing to the complicity between the tradition of Western tonal music and Western political formations, Attali writes: "Make people believe. The entire history of tonal music, like that of classical political economy, amounts to an attempt to make people believe in a consensual representation of the world . . . [i]n order to etch in their minds the image of the ultimate social cohesion, achieved though commercial exchange and progress of rational knowledge" (p. 46). See also Susan McClarey, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991).

I am indebted to my colleague, David Bartine, for introducing me to these musical theorists and to the many rich conversations we have had about them.

92. For a "metaphorical" vision of the coming community that, in its effort to transcend the limitations of the nation-state system, is remarkably similar to Edward Said's and Hannah Arendt's, see Aamir Mufti's splendid reading in *Enlightenment in the Colony* (pp. 172–176) of Abdul Kalam Azad's poignant allegory, "Conference of the Birds," written by one who can only be called a "non-Muslim Muslim" in the aftermath of the partition of India. Mufti does not draw the analogy between Azad's allegory, which tells of the eventual achievement of co-existence between the sparrows that invade the "man's" room (Muslims and Hindus), and Said's image of the "'complete consort dancing together' contrapuntally," nor with the Mobius strip or Klein bottle at which Agamben arrives in pursuing Arendt's directives, but his analysis of the irresolute resolution of the allegory resonates, in my ears, with the peculiar kind of "loving strife" between plural voices that inheres in both dissonant counterpoint and the "non-orientable space" of the Klein bottle, where "external and internal in-determine each other."

93. The settlements on the West Bank and the enclosure of Gaza are symptomatic of this disastrous Zionist initiative.

94. Though Arendt's and Said's diagnoses of the post-nation-state/imperial occasion focus on the West, what they say about both its global legacy and the coming community its self-destruction has precipitated as a possibility applies as well, indeed, perhaps more fundamentally, to the contemporary Arab world. I am referring specifically to what has come to be called "the Arab Spring of 2011": the singular Revolution that began in Tunisia in February 2011 and has spread like wildfire across North Africa and the Middle East and that, at this writing, has, like Bartleby, resisted the categories of naming (and domestication) endemic to the Western nation-state vocational/imperial discursive regime. See William V. Spanos, "Arab Spring, 2011: A Symptomatic Reading," *Symplokē* (forthcoming).

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"By focusing on themes of exile, the secular, and the modern city, William V. Spanos interweaves his chapters into a compelling portrait of Arendt and Said as unified, in the counterpoint of their critical differences, with each other and the traditions out of which they develop. Spanos is a major critic and his bringing together of Said and Arendt is original and powerful."

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"This is an important and groundbreaking work. William V. Spanos positions himself astutely as a poststructuralist humanist (for many, an untenable position) and from this locus reads the politics of secular humanism as simultaneously ontological and political. The arguments on behalf of exilic consciousness are worked out by way of Said and Arendt, and the complex positions taken by these authors are interpreted and contextualized from a sophisticated theoretical perspective that blends the progressive politics of humanism with the theoretical rigor of poststructuralist critique. Once again, Spanos demonstrates his mastery of the theory-critique nexus."

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Exiles in the City: Hannah Arendt and Edward W. Said in Counterpoint, by William V. Spanos, explores the affiliative relationship between Arendt's and Said's thought, not simply their mutual emphasis on the importance of the exilic consciousness in an age characterized by the decline of the nation-state and the rise of globalization, but also on the oppositional politics that a displaced consciousness enables. The pairing of these two extraordinary intellectuals is unusual and controversial because of their ethnic identities. In radically secularizing their comportment towards being, their exilic condition enabled them to undertake inaugural critiques of the culture of the nation-state system of Western modernity.

As variations on the theme of exile, the five chapters of this book constitute reflections on what is foundational and abiding in both Arendt's and Said's work. They not only document the heretofore unnoticed affiliation between the two thinkers. They also shed light on Arendt's and Said's proleptic activist explorations of the urgent "question of Palestine," especially on the fraught present situation, which bears increasing witness to the irony that the Israeli nation-state's "solution" has, from the beginning, systematically repeated the degradations the Jewish people suffered at the hands of German nationalism.

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