

Tobias Döring (LMU München) & Mark Stein (WWU Münster)

THE EDWARD SAID SYMPOSIUM: LOCATIONS—READINGS—LEGACIES

Berlin-Griebnitzsee
25.-27. September 2008

<http://edwardsaid2008.de>

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PROGRAMME

Thursday 25 September	Day 1
	Arrival
from 12:30	Registration and Buffet Lunch
14:00	Introduction: Tobias Döring and Mark Stein
14:30-15:45	Keynote GAURI VISWANATHAN (Columbia University) “Said, Religion and Secular Criticism” Chair: Tobias Döring
Refreshments	
16:15-18:15	Panel I GESA MACKENTHUN (University of Rostock) “Overlapping Territories: Edward Said’s Impact on Transnational American Literary Studies” FRANK SCHULZE-ENGLER (University of Frankfurt) “Comparative Literature in a Globalized World: Edward Said and the New Literatures in English” SHALINI RANDEIRA (University of Zurich) “Reconceptualising Space and Culture: Said’s Legacy in Social Anthropology” Chair: Mark Stein
Dinner	
20:15-21:15	Plenary Chair: Renate Brosch (University of Stuttgart) BRYAN CHEYETTE (University of Reading) “Edward Said: ‘The Last Jewish Intellectual’?”

Friday 26 September	Day 2
09:00-11:00	Panel II RAINER EMIG (University of Hannover) “Out of Place or Caught in the Middle: Edward Said’s Works in the Context of Contemporary Critical and Cultural Theory” ALEXANDER HONOLD (University of Basel) “The Art of Counterpoint: Music as a Site and Tool in Postcolonial Readings” ROBERT STOCKHAMMER (LMU München) “Said’s Praise of Philology” Chair: Tobias Döring
Refreshments	
11:30-12:45	Keynote Chair: Elfi Bettinger (FU Berlin) BENITA PARRY (University of Warwick) “Counter-Currents and Tensions in Said’s Critical Practice”
Lunch	
14:30-15:30	Plenary Chair: Markus Schmitz (University of Münster) FERIAL J. GHAZOU (American University in Cairo) “Edward Said and Comparative Literature: The Rebirth of a Discipline”
Refreshments	
16:00-18:00	Panel III CHRIS BALME (LMU München) “Orientalism and Opera” ANASTASIA VALASSOPOULOS (University of Manchester) “Long, Languorous, Repetitious Lines’: Edward Said and Arab Popular Culture” MARKUS SCHMITZ (University of Münster) “Reading Said in Arabic: (Other) Worldly Counterpoints” Chair: Mark Stein
Dinner	
20:15-21:15	Plenary Chair: Cordula Lemke (LMU München) CHANTAL ZABUS (Paris University) “The Archaeology of Said: From French Filiation to World Affiliation”

Saturday 27 September	Day 3
09:00-10:00	Plenary Chair: Virginia Richter (University of Bern) PATRICK WILLIAMS (Nottingham Trent University) “no aesthetics outside my freedom...’: Edward Said and Mahmoud Darwish”
Refreshments	
10:30-11:45	Keynote Chair: Ulla Haselstein (FU Berlin) ROBERT YOUNG (New York University) “Edward Said: The Opponent of Postcolonial Theory”
11:45-12:15	Concluding Discussion
Lunch	
14:00-16:30	Excursion Haus der Wannsee-Konferenz
16:30	Conference Closes
	Check out / Departure

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Chris Balme (München), “Orientalism and Opera”

In this paper I will discuss Said's concept of orientalism in relation to the treatment of alterity in two central works of the operatic canon: Mozart's *Entführung aus dem Serail* and Verdi's *Aida*. Whereas Said has written extensively on the latter in *Culture and Imperialism*, Mozart's opera is only mentioned in passing in *Orientalism*. I shall contextualize both works within the wider context of orientalist themes on the operatic stage. I shall conclude with a discussion of the scandal surrounding the production of Mozart's *Idomeneo* in Berlin in 2006.

Bryan Cheyette (Reading), “Edward Said: ‘The Last Jewish Intellectual’”?

This paper will begin with the well-known interview with the liberal Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* (August, 2000), where Said described himself provocatively as “the last Jewish intellectual” and the “only true follower of Adorno”. Since the mid-1980s, Theodor Adorno has had a privileged place in the Saidian pantheon as both the “quintessential intellectual hating *all* systems” and as Said's primary interlocutor with regard to the utopian place of music. Said's version of Adorno will be explored with regard to the strand of his work which brings together music, Jewishness and humanism. Not that these realms are easily reconciled by Said with his political aesthetic. Adorno, after all, is the intellectual *par excellence* who highlights, for Said, “overlapping yet irreconcilable experiences”.

Frank Schulze-Engler (Frankfurt/M), “Comparative Literature in a Globalized World: Edward Said and the New Literatures in English”

In recent years, a major debate on the theoretical redefinition of “world literature” has emerged in Comparative Literature in which Edward Said (who himself was not only a major postcolonial theorist, but also a comparative literature scholar) has often been evoked. This contribution will take a critical look at the manner in which “postcolonial” literatures have been incorporated into new models of “world literature” by Franco Moretti and Pascale Casanova, contrast these models with Edward Said's own emphasis on “intertwined histories and overlapping territories” in a globalized world, and offer a case for the study of the New Literatures in English as a particularly relevant field for exploring a decentred, transcultural perspective on world literature based on Edward Said's seminal insights.

Rainer Emig (Hannover), “Out of Place or Caught in the Middle: Edward Said's Works in the Context of Contemporary Critical and Cultural Theory”

While Said's life “between worlds” has been assessed by many, including himself, his contributions to literary and cultural theory, though partly taken up and perpetuated, most famously by Homi Bhabha, are still to be positioned on a work-in-progress map of twentieth- and twenty-first-century thinking. There, it becomes evident that, unlike those of his cultural and biographical counterpart Jacques Derrida, Said's ideas not only find inspiration in Western Humanist thinking, but also eventually remain within the confines of its conceptual frameworks. This can be traced back to his family and educational background, but is also evident in his choice of academic disciplines English and Comparative, i.e. European Literatures. His breakthrough study *Orientalism*, although influenced by Derrida and Michel Foucault and ostensibly arguing against essentialisms, can also be shown to be closer to the Byron and Goethe it aims to criticise than to Deconstruction and Discourse Theory in its attempt to do justice to Europe's Oriental Other. Although wary of the construction of binaries, *Orientalism* and those of Said's writings that followed in its wake (such as *Covering Islam* or *The Politics of Dispossession*) also create binaries themselves and have been accused of perpetuating their own form of “Occidentalism”. Like Byron and Goethe, Said's perspective on the (Middle) East is a Western and more specifically a European one. This perspective also features in his literary studies – on Joseph Conrad, William Butler Yeats, even in his edition of Henry James's short stories. Rather than giving voice to a possible

Other of Western thinking, Said voices the anxieties of the Western(ised) self when faced with its own contradictions, of which internal and external colonisation are two dominant ones. Rather than presenting this as a failure (e.g. to achieve the radicalism of Deconstruction), the proposed contribution will show it as a typical reaction of Western thinking to the challenge of what is now in homogenising fashion called “globalisation”. It will also read it as a potentially ethical stance, especially when compared to the sometimes hollow demands of poststructuralist and deconstructionist ideas of thinking without starting points. When read from the perspective of Cultural Studies, Said's predicament of being caught in the middle between cultures or inside Western culture is the typical one of academics and students engaging with cultural difference(s) from their own Western perspective. It is a challenge that is also troubling politicians, economists, and the general public, all of whom are trying to make sense of cultural diversity and change from their own limited points of view. As such, Said's in themselves not unproblematic works still have a lot to teach us.

Gesa Mackenthun (Rostock), “Overlapping Territories: Edward Said's Impact on Transnational American Literary Studies”

Said hardly ever analyzed American literary texts. Yet both American literature itself and critical works of American Studies since the 1980s can be seen to respond acutely to his demand for a transnational and transregional approach to colonial/imperial literature. The paper evokes some of the moments in which America's literary and critical production seems to be particularly close to Said's notion of “overlapping territories,” and it tries to construct a reading of America that responds congenially to his demand for an aesthetic that is both complex and consciously critical of existing (post-) colonial power relations.

Benita Parry (Warwick), “Counter-Currents and Tensions in Said's Critical Practice”

I am attempting a retrospect on Said's work in which I observe – without rigid separation – an early, middle and late period.

Shalini Randeria (Zurich), “Reconceptualising Space and Culture: Said's Legacy in Social Anthropology”

This presentation will address the reception of some of Edward Said's seminal ideas in social anthropological debates on culture and power as well as on coevalness and “othering”. It will also look at their impact on the reconceptualisation of space from a post-colonial perspective in recent scholarship, which eschews an ethnic group based approach long characteristic of the discipline but does not adopt the methodological nationalism common to the social sciences either.

Markus Schmitz (Münster) “Reading Said in Arabic: (Other) Worldly Counterpoints”

This paper focuses on the inner-Arab reception of Edward Said's work. Considering selected Middle Eastern responses to his critical engagement as (other) worldly counterpoints to dominant strategies of reading Said in Western theory it aims at widening our understanding of his cross-cultural legacy.

Robert Stockhammer (München), “Said's Praise of Philology”

While Said's lifelong admiration for, not to say identification with Erich Auerbach has been widely discussed, another aspect of his praise for philology might be equally interesting, but more controversial: An important chapter in “Orientalism” reconstructs the power of philology as a crucial element for the constitution of orientalism in the 19th century. Since Ernest Renan, rightly portrayed as the leading figure of this philological enterprise, was an explicit racist, one might expect Said to write a harsh critique of his work. The chapter,

however, seems strangely fascinated by the power of philology it describes. Perhaps, Said is aware of the fact that his own work is intertwined with even the most problematic traditions of philology.

Anastasia Valassopoulos (Manchester), “‘Long, Languorous, Repetitious Lines’: Edward Said and Arab Popular Culture”

This paper will focus on Edward Said's obituary to the well known Egyptian dancer Tahia Carioca and the opportunity it affords him to comment on Arab popular culture in general. I will also take this opportunity to explore how critiques on popular culture may enact a call for political authenticity.

Gauri Viswanathan (New York), “Said, Religion and Secular Criticism”

Edward Said famously espoused secular criticism as germane to the intellectual vocation, defining it in opposition to religious criticism which he repudiated as steeped in arcane mysticism. At the same time, certain turns in his work suggest that he had a much more complicated view of secularism, and he tacitly acknowledged that, for secular criticism to be directed towards an ethical basis for justice against oppression, the source of ethical knowledge or values would have to be clearly defined. Whether that source led him to religion or not, whether he acknowledges religion as a source of dissent – a place from which to speak truth to power -- will be the focus of my talk.

Patrick Williams (Nottingham), “no aesthetics outside my freedom...’: Edward Said and Mahmoud Darwish”

The recent death of Mahmoud Darwish has robbed the Palestinian people of the only other individual capable of occupying Said's position of global intellectual and cultural representative. Against the background of that double loss, this paper will examine one aspect of the relation between these two remarkable figures, via an analysis of some of Darwish's most recent (and arguably re-politicised) poetry in the context of Said's elaboration of Adorno's concept of Late Style, a project which occupied him in different ways for the last decade of his life.

Ferial J. Ghazoul (Cairo), “Edward Said and Comparative Literature: The Rebirth of a Discipline”

The paper investigates Edward Said as a Literary Comparatist from his early involvement with Conrad and Auerbach to his exploration of non-Western works and his contribution to postcolonial studies. The paper examines in particular how Said opened the field of Comparative Literature to Third World Literatures and in particular his insights into Arabic Literature.

Chantal Zabus (Paris), “The Archaeology of Said: From French Filiation to World Affiliation”

The paper traces the various anxieties of influence in Said's work (from *Beginnings* onward), as they pertain to his indebtedness to the French intelligentsia of the 1970s-1980s, especially Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida. In the process, the paper identifies some blind spots as well as connecting areas in the formation of a poststructuralist Left, the shaping of the secular intellectual in a “median state”, the rejection of “comfortable autonomies”, and “worldliness”.