Identity, Text, Positioning: On Edward Said's "Voyage in" as Politics of Resistance

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Abstract

Critics often accuse *Orientalism* of totalizing Orientalist discourse and failing to theorize resistance both within and outside it. Probably in response to this criticism, Edward Said proposes "voyage in" as a mode of resistance in *Culture and Imperialism*, which is defined as the conscious effort of Third World writers and critics to enter into and transform the dominant Western discourses so as to repatriate their marginalized histories. "Voyage in" cannot be simply regarded as "write back" or counter-discourse; it actually covers three aspects of Said's politics of resistance: how to construct ethnic or national identities and guard against identity politics, how to adopt and adapt the colonial discourse while being aware of its colonialist ideologies, and how to position Third World writers and critics within the Western metropolis. The paper aims to explore these problems through a systematic study on the textual and political implications of Said's "voyage in" as politics of resistance. It argues that Said's "voyage in" as politics of resistance constitutes the problematic: 1) it asserts counter-discourse as a mode of resistance without any explicit discussion of other issues involved, such as the construction of ethnic and national identities, the subjective agency of the colonized natives, the metropolitan location and positioning of Third World intellectuals; 2) it insists on holding a resisting position from within the power structures of metropolitan discursive and institutional practices, and valorizes the individual's critical consciousness as the self-sufficient subjective agency immune from the constitutive effect of those practices for producing resistance; 3) it provides a potential mode of theorizing resistance that depends on both the hybrid nature of colonial discourse and the colonial subject's agency embodied as critical consciousness.

INTRODUCTION

Critics often accuse Edward Said's *Orientalism* of totalizing Orientalist discourses and lack of attention to counter-hegemonic voices both within and outside it (Ahmad, 1992, p. 172; Childs & Williams, 1997, p. 115; Clifford, 1988, pp. 255-276). Said (1993, pp. 329-345) dismisses this criticism as "the common misunderstanding and misreading" of his book. However, in *Culture and Imperialism* he rethinks his thesis in *Orientalism* and theorizes resistance by proposing "voyage in" as "the conscious effort to enter into the discourse of Europe and the West, to mix with it, transform it, to make it acknowledge marginalized or suppressed or forgotten histories carried out by dozens of scholars, critics and intellectuals in the peripheral world" (ibid., p. 216). "Voyage in" is a re-appropriation of the journey motif in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* that refers to "voyage in" to the African interior in the name of colonization. The reversal of direction suggests the way in which Third World intellectuals "write back to the center" by migrating

a liminal space (Rushdie, 1982). Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin (1989, p. 220), in developing "write back" as a strategy of postcolonial resistance, argues that postcolonial writing means a profound interaction with and appropriation of metropolitan discourse rather than "continuations or simple adaptations of European models".

"Voyage in" as politics of resistance is different from "writing back". It constitutes Said's politics of resistance which involves four aspects: 1) it is characterized by critics or writers' *consciousness*, which is in accordance with Said's valorization of critical consciousness in his works; 2) it denies taking a straightforward opposition outside the operations of power by a simple reversal or rejection of colonial discourse, and stresses effecting resistance from within the dominant power structures by interrogating identitarian thoughts rather than seeking an essentialized pre-colonial identity; 3) how it *appropriates and re-inscribes* the dominant discourse and invests it with subversive intentions through adopting and adapting the colonial discourse in a new and creative way; 4) how it can *make the West acknowledge* the marginalized and suppressed histories even one is situated within the discursive, institutional practices and power structures of the metropolitan center, i.e., how can those "voyage in" writers and intellectuals position themselves in articulating counter-discourses in the metropolis.

Some scholars have discussed Said's "voyage in" in light of resistance. Ahmad refutes "voyage in" as an effective means of resistance because it conceptualizes "the 'Western centre' as the only site where 'contests over decolonization' can now take place" and ignores issues of class origin, social and geographical location. He thinks that, far from producing resistance, these "voyage in" writers become "part of the 'center'" and thus complicit with the dominant power structures (1992, p. 196).[1] Bruce Robbins, disagreeing with Ahmad, Dirlik, and Appiah, argues that Said's upward mobility is a necessary means of postcolonial intellectuals to gain counterauthority to "speak truth to power": "National origin matters; transfers from the periphery to the center do not leave the center as it was. The transnational story of upward mobility is not just a claiming of authority but a redefinition of authority, and a redefinition that can have many beneficiaries, for it means a recomposition as well as a redistribution of cultural capital." (1994a, pp. 28-30, 32).[2] In a similar vein, agreeing with Robbins, Valerie Kennedy (2000, pp. 148-149) considers Said's "voyage in" as "a strategic

choice of position, allowing him the possibilities of both intervention and distance." Peter Childs and Patrick Williams (1997), disagreeing with those who criticize Said's neglect of native agency and indigenous resistance, provide an introductory analysis of Said's resistance in terms of his distancing from Foucault in *Culture and Imperialism*. They argue that Said's discussion of resistance remains largely untheorized because he fails to "provide any theoretical analysis of, or grounding for, an understanding of where agency as resistance originates, or how it functions" and leave the task of theorizing resistance to others (1997, p. 111).

This paper aims to explicate Said's "voyage in" from three aspects: 1) how does it question the straightforward opposition in a simple reversal of colonial relationship and propose internal resistance by a secular interrogation of identitarian thoughts; 2) how does it appropriate and re-inscribe the dominant discourse with a new subversive intention; 3) how do "voyage in" intellectuals make the West acknowledge the marginalized histories even they are implicated within the Western discursive and institutional power structures. It firstly examines Said's critique of identity politics and his elaboration of liberation, then analyzes the problematic nature of textual re-inscription, and finally presents a critique of his metropolitan location and consequent ambivalent positioning.

CRITIQUE OF IDENTITY POLITICS

Construction of an integrated identity by the colonized has played an important part in the decolonization movement for national independence. However, identity politics has been criticized since the day of its emergence. Said's "voyage in" as politics of resistance firstly takes its itinerary from a critique of identitarian thoughts like nativism and nationalism toward elaboration of liberation in imagining a non-coercive human community.[3] It attempts to propose a problematic form of resistance, which attempts to be both intellectually detached, self-critical and politically operative on collective grounds.

Critique of Nativism and Nationalism

Vico's historical vision that human beings make their own history and can only know what they have made is significant to understand Said's critique of identity politics. Said conceives origin as divine, "theological," and privileged while beginning as secular, humanly produced, and can be ceaselessly re-examined (Said,

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[1] In a similar manner, Kwame Anthony Appiah describes postcoloniality as "the condition of what we might ungenerously call a comprador intelligentsia: of a relatively small, Western-style, Western-trained, group of writers and thinkers who mediate the trade in cultural commodities of Western capitalism at the periphery (1992, p. 149). Arif Dirlik considers "postcoloniality as the condition of the intelligentsia of global capitalism" (1994, p. 329). For other similar criticisms see Miyoshi, 1993, p. 728, pp. 750-751.
[2] For similar ideas see Robbins, 1994b, pp. 133-151.
[3] Tamara Sivanandan (2004) offers a useful discussion of anti-colonial nationalism in the independence movements and the subsequent liberation struggle for understanding Said's critique of identity politics and elaboration of liberation.

1975). The distinction between origin and beginning is of significance for his critique of foundational and essentialized notions such as nativism or separatist nationalism. Cultural identity is something humanly and historically constructed rather than "ontologically given and eternally determined stability, or uniqueness, or irreducible character, or privileged status as something total and complete in and of itself" (Said, 1993, p. 315). In this sense, after the colonial encounter it is impossible to rediscover and retrieve a unified, romanticized identity located in the distant past of pre-colonial native cultures and societies.

The abandonment of an essentialist view of identity construction is prominent in *Orientalism*. When commenting on the Orientalist attitude, Said critiques the categories of Orient and Occident as a style of thought based upon a series of fixed, essentialized ontological and epistemological distinctions:

> It shares with magic and with mythology the self-containing, self-reinforcing character of a closed system, in which objects are what they are because they are what they are, for once, for all time, for ontological reasons that no empirical material can either dislodge or alter. (1978, p. 70)

What this critique aims to demonstrate here is that Orientalism, as a form of essentialist thoughts, produces its representation of the Orient in terms of unchangeable stereotypes and reductive categories. This essentialist conception of the Orient ascribes a fixed property or essence as universally valid to its culture and people. In other words, the imposed arbitrary distinctions made between peoples and cultures produce distorted images and stereotyped conceptions, which are repeatedly employed and consequently reinforced by institutional power structures. As strategies of resistance, it is natural that a frequently used means to counter the colonialist or imperialist misrepresentations is to construct a positive collective identity in both historical and cultural terms. However, constructing positive collective identities might run the risk of attempting to retrieve an essentialized, pure ethnic identity supposed to be located in the distant native past. Critique of identitarian thoughts constitutes the first step of Said's elaboration of "voyage in" as politics of resistance because it denies resistance simply as strategies of constructing a pure native identity to oppose a monolithic Western identity.

Said keeps vigilance against the trend that nationalism might extend to be fundamentalism and nativism. When commenting on William Butler Yeats he makes a direct critique of nativism:

> This it seems to me was always the case in every colonial relationship, because it is the first principle that a clear-cut and absolute hierarchical distinction should remain constant between ruler and ruled, whether or not the latter is white. Nativism, alas, reinforces the distinction made even while revaluating the weaker or subservient partner. And it has often led to compelling but demagogic assertions about a nativist past, narrative or actuality that stands free from worldly times itself. (1993, p. 228)

An easy acceptance of the nativist construction of ethnic or national identity reproduces and reinforces the consequences of imperialism and its imposition of the racial and political divisions.[4] Therefore an essentialist assertion of the distant pre-colonial native past as a foundation for producing anti-colonial resistance is dangerous. As Said continues to emphasize:

> To leave the historical world for the metaphysics of essences like *negritude*, Irishness, Islam, or Catholicism is to abandon history for essentializations that have the power to turn human beings against each other; often his abandonment of the secular world has led to a sort of millenarianism if the movement has had a mass base, or it has degenerated into small-scale private craziness, or into an unthinking acceptance of stereotypes, myths, animosities, and traditions encouraged by imperialism. Such programs are hardly what great resistance movements had imagined as their goals. (1993, pp. 228-229)

This passage indicates that the construction of an essentialized identity to counter the colonialist reductive categories and stereotypes of native people and culture cannot necessarily play a positive role in resistance movements, because it abandons the secular and historical world in which it is produced and consequently acquires a theological nature in its easy acceptance of the myths and stereotypes imposed by colonialism. Therefore, Said's critique of identity politics consists of a critique of the Western conceptions of the Orient on the one hand and a secular interrogation of the essentialist construction of ethnic or national identities in resistance movements on the other.

Secularity or worldliness is an important concept characterizing Said's notion of criticism and his politics of resistance. Secularity aims to criticize not only the tendency of academic specialization among professional critics[5] but also the essentialized theological doctrines of nativism and nationalism. In an interview Said provides a critique of nationalist thoughts in light of secular

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[4] This might illuminate some easy misunderstandings that *Orientalism* is a directly anti-Western book despite Said's repeated explanation that he has neither interest and nor ability to provide a true Orient and warning of the danger of a nativist resistance through adopting the Western domination structure. For example, he says that for readers in the Third World his book "proposes itself as a step towards an understanding not so much of Western politics and of the non-Western world in those politics as of the strength of Western cultural discourse, a strength too often mistaken as merely decorative or 'superstructural.'" On the contrary, his purpose is "to illustrate the formidable structure of cultural domination and, specifically for formerly colonized peoples, the dangers and temptations of employing this structure upon themselves or upon others" (1978, p. 25).

[5] According to Said, secular criticism, against the tendency of divorcing literature and literary criticism from power structures in politics and history, holds that critics as responsible intellectuals with critical consciousness should engage themselves with oppositional practices rather than being enclosed within their theologically specialized fields of profession (1984, p. 4, 292).

criticism:

> Therefore, to address such issues, it seems to me that you need a secular and human vision, one based on the idea of human history not being the result of divine intervention but a much slower process than the politics of identity usually allow. […] Correlatively, we now have this reactive Occidentalism, some people saying the West is monolithically the same, opposed to us, degraded, secular, bad, etc. The politics of secular interpretation proposes a way of dealing with that problem, a way of avoiding the pitfalls of nationalism I've just outlined, by discriminating between the different "Easts" and "Wests," how differently they were made, maintained, and so on. (Sprinker, 1992, pp. 232-233)

This demonstrates the intellectual as well as the political limitations nationalism as essentialist, identitarian thoughts entails in politics of resistance. The religious sentiment produced in constructing national identity as a fetish denies the very secular nature of human history. In other words, nationalist idealization of a unified, monolithic pre-colonial identity is suspicious of becoming a "token of submerged feelings of identity, of tribal solidarity" (ibid., p. 232). So the tragedy of nationalism, in its conception of a geographically and homogeneously defined identity, falls into theologically homogenized unities or what Benedict Anderson calls "imagined communities" (ibid., p. 15).[6] According to Said's politics of secular interpretation, the complex human life cannot be categorized into "the rubric of national identity" or "made entirely to this phony idea of a paranoid frontier separating 'us' from 'them'" (ibid., p. 233).

Elsewhere, Said employs the concept of secularity to discuss politics of identity, especially in his political writings on Palestine and the Middle East. For example, in *Covering Islam*, he suggests:

> Neither of the two necessary conditions for knowing another culture – uncoercive contact with an alien culture through real exchange, and self-consciousness about the interpretive project itself – is present, and this absence enforces the solitude, the provinciality, and the circularity of covering Islam. Significantly, these things also make it evident that covering Islam is not interpretation in the genuine sense but an assertion of power. (1981, p. 142)

Here Said implies that, despite his critique of identitarian thoughts, there is still a possibility of knowing other cultures through uncoercive contact and conscious interpretation without negating the knowledge of other cultures, which are usually considered as separate and homogenous entities.

Politics of interpretation are always involved with affiliative situations, which depend on the willed intentional activity of the interpreter in specific time and place. But how can people cross barriers of the different situations of interpretation? Said suggests:

> It is precisely this conscious willed effort of overcoming distances and cultural barriers that makes knowledge of other societies and cultures possible – and at the same time limits that knowledge. At that moment, the interpreter understands himself or herself in his or her human situation and the text in relation to its situation, the human situation out of which it came. (ibid., pp. 156-157)

Thus the self-consciously willed effort to cross cultural boundaries to understand other cultures and societies constitutes Said's critical consciousness in imagining an alternative way out of the notion of enclosed systems of cultural identity-formation. This further takes us to Said's question in *Orientalism*:

> How does one *represent* other cultures? What is *another* culture? Is the notion of a distinct culture (or race, or religion, or civilization) a useful one, or does it always get involved either in self-congratulation (when one discusses one's own) or hostility and aggression (when one discusses the "other")? Do cultural, religious, and racial differences matter more than socio-economic categories, or politicohistorical ones? How do ideas acquire authority, "normality", and even the status of "natural" truth? What is the role of the intellectual? Is he there to validate the culture and state of which he is a part? What importance must he give to an independent critical consciousness, an *oppositional* consciousness? (1978, pp. 325-326)

The series of questions is a demonstration of Said's life-long concern with the problem of identity-formation in representing other cultures and the role of intellectuals in the production and circulation of cultural representations. Following these important questions, he strives to provide possible solutions:

> Modern thought and experience have taught us to be sensitive to what is involved in representation, in studying the Other, in racial thinking, in unthinking and uncritical acceptance of authority and authoritative ideas, in the socio-political role of intellectuals, in the great value of a skeptical critical consciousness. […] Perhaps too we should remember that the study of man in society is based on concrete human history and experience, not on donnish abstractions, or on obscure laws or arbitrary systems. (ibid., p. 328)

This passage implies that reductive categories or stereotyped images in cultural representations are in nature ahistorical abstractions produced by identitarian thoughts. The whole critical focus of *Orientalism* can be seen as part of a critique of the Western identitarian thoughts in the historical encounter between the West and the East. What Said aims to propose is not an Occidentalism as opposed to Orientalism, but a critique of how Orientalism as discourses of power and ideological fictions "failed to identify with human experience" and to "see it as human experience" (ibid., p. 328).

In light of Said's secular politics of interpretation, we can see that his critique of identitarian thoughts is focused precisely on the Western conception of an essentialized, homogenous Orient and the exclusive idea of self-

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[6] However, what Anderson stresses is nationalism's alignment with "cultural systems that preceded it" rather than with "self-consciously held political ideologies" (1991, p. 19). Thus his definition is different from that of nationalism as politically motivated ideologies originated in the decolonizing resistance movement. For more discussions see Chatterjee, 1986, pp. 21-22.

representation:

> I have been arguing that "the Orient" is itself a constituted entity, and that the notion that there are geographical spaces with indigenous, radically "different" inhabitants who can be defined on the basis of some religion, culture, or racial essence proper to that geographical space is equally a highly debatable idea. I certainly do not believe the limited proposition that only a black can write about blacks, a Muslim about Muslims, and so forth. (ibid., p. 322)

According to this explanation, the Orient is constituted within heterogeneous realities of geographical, religious, cultural, and racial differences. Therefore the essentialized conception of an inherent and coherent Oriental identity will ensue serious consequences in its reproduction of an orientalized Orient. Furthermore, because of the internal differences of the Orient, even the Oriental people cannot claim a privileged insider position to represent themselves because it constitutes an exclusive politics of identity.[7] Here Said's critique is valid to some extent in its attempt to assert the commensurability of different civilizations, but it fails to consider its otherwise implications for the actual politics of resistance. For the dominant cultures the notion of a weakened sense of ethnic or national feelings might become a useful means for justifying their assimilation or even manipulation of minority cultures. Nevertheless, for the Third World or minority cultures the search for a unified national or ethnic identity still remains an important strategy to resist the absorption by those economically and technologically advanced nations and cultures. In this respect, Said's active involvement with and steadfast commitment to the Palestinian nationalist politics – attested by his large amount of political writings on the Middle East – constitutes a paradox of his critique of identity politics.

Despite his thoroughgoing critique of identitarian thoughts such as nativism or nationalism, Said always acknowledges the positive role they have played in the decolonization movement for national independence. For example, in *Culture and Imperialism* he concedes that:

> Along with armed resistance in places as diverse as nineteenth-century Algeria, Ireland and Indonesia, there also went considerable efforts in cultural resistance almost everywhere, the assertions of nationalist identities, and, in the political realm, the creation of associations and parties whose common goal was self-determination and national independence. (1993, p. xii)

Later in analyzing the themes of resistance literature, Said further reinforces his positive evaluation of nationalism:

> No one needs to be reminded that throughout the imperial world during the decolonizing period, protest, resistance, and independence movements were fuelled by one or another nationalism. […] I do not want to be misunderstood as advocating a simple anti-nationalist position. It is historical fact that nationalism – restoration of community, assertion of identity, emergence of new cultural practices – as a mobilized political force instigated and then advanced the struggle against Western domination everywhere in the non-European world. It is no more useful to oppose that than to oppose Newton's discovery of gravity. (ibid., pp. 216-218)

In other words, the emergence of nationalism as assertions of national identity can be positively seen as an active response to colonialist and imperialist encroachment. The assertion of identity is supposed to carry the whole implications of cultural and political work in the early phases of nationalist struggle against the European colonial invasion and imperial conquest.[8]

Elaboration of Liberation

As discussed previously, Said gives a positive evaluation of the role anti-colonial nationalism has played in mobilizing and organizing the colonized people in resistance movements for independence all over the world. However, Said regards this oppositional nationalism as the transitional stage of the decolonization project. He suggests liberation as an alternative way of going beyond the pathology of separatist nationalism by stressing the intimate nature of the mutually transforming experience between the colonizer and the colonized in the historical process of colonial encounter. What imperialism entails is a necessary contiguity and overlapping state between various national cultures and histories rather than a simplistic, separate opposition between the metropolis and the periphery.[9]

Accordingly, elaborating of liberation as an alternative way for the development of post-independent nation/state comes naturally after Said's critique of identity politics and his denunciation of "the rhetoric of blame."[10] Said takes Fanon and Césaire as two important figures who articulate self-critical nationalist discourses:

> I do not think that the anti-imperial challenge represented by Fanon and Césaire or others like them has by any means been met: neither have we taken them seriously as models or

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[7] Said time and again insists on the need to go beyond the politics of identity in many interviews: "The marginalization, the ghettoization, the reification of the Arab, through Orientalism and other processes, cannot be answered by simple assertions of ethnic particularity, or glories of Arabic, or returning to Islam and all the rest of it" (Viswanathan, 2004, p. 222). On another occasion he examines the unpleasant aspects of nationalism: "Identity politics becomes separatist politics and people then retreat into their own enclaves. I have this strange, paranoid feeling that somebody enjoys this – usually people at the top, who like to manipulate different communities against each other. It was a classic of imperial rule" (Ibid., p. 240).

[8] For example, Benita Parry (1994) defends anti-colonial nationalism in her critique of the trend to develop an abstract discursivity in postcolonial studies.

[9] Said is not the first to elaborate on liberation politics. For example, he borrows substantially from Fanon's critique of national consciousness and Césaire's discourse on colonialism. For more similar discussions of the colonial encounter and imagining liberation politics see Hall, 1993, pp. 392-403; Gilroy, 1993.

[10] Said proposes this phrase in his political writings on the Middle East Blaming the Victims (2001), which is related to his critique of identity politics as discussed previously.

representations of human effort in the contemporary world. In fact Fanon and Césaire […] jab directly at the question of identity and of identitarin thought, that secret sharer of present anthropological reflection on "others" and "difference." What Fanon and Césaire required of their own partisans, even during the heat of the struggle, was to abandon fixed ideas of settled identity and culturally authorized definition. Become different, they said, in order that your fate as colonized peoples can be different. (1989, pp. 224-225)

Here Said emphasizes a decolonized notion of culture that no longer regards racialized identity as one of its key elements. This brings us to the central intellectual issue in *Orientalism*:

Can one divide human reality, as indeed human reality seems to be genuinely divided, into clearly different cultures, histories, traditions, societies, even races, and survive the consequences humanly? By surviving the consequences humanly, I mean to ask whether there is any way of avoiding the hostility expressed by the division, say, of men into "us" (Westerners) and "they" (Orientals). (1978, p. 45)

Obviously the fixed division supported by a radical difference polarizes the distinction between Orientals ant Westerners and in consequence limits the human encounter between cultures and societies.

Said's critique of separatist nationalism is related to his project of elaborating on liberation. According to Said, Fanon has made a right observation that "nationalist consciousness can very easily lead to frozen rigidity" and a mere replacement of white rulers with colored ones means "no guarantee that the nationalist functionaries will not replicate the old dispensation" (1993, p. 214). So the significance of Fanon's works lies in its vision of liberation. When specifying the difference between Fanon and Yeats, Said suggests:

Fanon's theoretical and perhaps even metaphysical narrative of anti-imperialist decolonization is marked throughout with the accents and inflections of liberation: this is far more than a reactive native defensiveness, whose main problem (as Soyinka analyzed it) is that it implicitly accepts, and does not go beyond, the basic European versus non-European oppositions. Fanon's is a discourse of that anticipated triumph, liberation, that marks the second moment of decolonization. (1993, p. 234)

The observation touches on Fanon's discourses on national culture and liberation. Nationalist conceptions of history fail to understand its own history as an integral part of the history of all subjugated humankind in the complex social and historical situation of decolonization resistance movement.[11] This corresponds to Said's proposal of three different but related topics in the decolonizing cultural resistance: 1) insisting on the right to see the community's history as coherently and integrally whole;

2) resistance as an alternative way of conceiving human history rather than a simple reaction to imperialism; and 3) going beyond separatist nationalism toward liberation in imagining a more integrative view of non-coercive human community.

For Said, Fanon's discourse on nationalism can be seen as an exact exemplar of liberation discourses. The emergence of politics of liberation depends on a transformation of national consciousness into social consciousness, as Fanon writes about "the pitfalls of nationalist consciousness":

We have seen in the preceding pages that nationalism, the magnificent song that made the people rise against their oppressors, stops short, falters and dies away on the day that independence is proclaimed. Nationalism is not a political doctrine, nor a programme. If you really wish your country to avoid regression, or at best halts and uncertainties, a rapid step must be taken from national consciousness to political and social consciousness. (1967, p. 164)

Here Fanon warns that gaining national independence in the former colonies never means the end of domination and exploitation. The purpose of liberation does not refer to a mere transfer of power and authority, replacing the white officer with its native counterpart. This is significant for Said's elaboration of liberation. Because the conflicting violence between the colonizer and the colonized responds to each other in reciprocal relations, the decolonizing struggle "must be lifted to a new level of contest, a synthesis represented by a war of liberation, for which an entirely new post-nationalist theoretical culture is required" (Said, 1993, p. 268). Thus according to Said, Fanon serves, at the shifting crux in the anti-colonial resistance movement, as a prototypical figure working at the terrain of nationalist independence to the theoretical elaboration of liberation.

As the previous discussion shows, Said's critique of nativism and separate nationalism functions to re-conceive the reciprocal relationship between the European colonizers and the colonized natives. The notion of reciprocity provides a new reading method, which is described as contrapuntal in its aim to "rejoin experience and culture" by reading texts "from the metropolitan center and from the peripheries" (ibid., p. 259). The political choices in the decolonization movement must be made in light of the reciprocal nature of the colonial encounter. The experience of domination and resistance to it cannot be studied in a falsely separated manner. Here, the proposition of "overlapping territories and intertwined histories" manifests Said's notion of critical consciousness in imagining a non-coercive community accommodating

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[11] Bhabha similarly makes use of Fanon while problematizing colonial identity in terms of ambivalence and hybridity, commenting that Fanon "is too aware of the dangers of the fixity and fetishism of identities within the calcification of colonial culture to recommend that 'roots' be struck in the celebratory romance of the past or by homogenizing the history of the present" (1994, p. 9). But different from Bhabha, whose appropriation of Fanon remains primarily psychological, Said's reading is more focused on Fanon's discussion of the historical nature of the colonial encounter.

both the colonizer and the colonized and in stressing the impact of the colonial experience on both.

Actually, this contrapuntal notion invokes Fanon's description of the inevitable consequences ensued by the colonial encounter. For the native people, Fanon says, "the appearance of the settler has meant in the terms of syncretism the death of the aboriginal society, cultural lethargy, and the petrification of individuals" (1967, p. 73). The colonized natives have to inscribe on a terrain already contaminated by colonialism and is thus unable to construct a separate pre-colonial essentialist identity because it has to be the "rediscovery and repatriation of what had been suppressed in the native's past by the processes of imperialism" (Said, 1993, p. 253). "The partial tragedy of resistance," as Said recognizes, is "that it must to a certain degree work to recover forms already established or at least influenced or infiltrated by the culture of empire" (ibid., p. 253). This recognition is relevant to his critique of identitarian thoughts like nativism and separatist nationalism.

Meanwhile, the colonizers must rethink their history because it has been intertwined with that of the colonized in the colonial encounter. As Fanon remarks:

> But it is clear that we are not so naïve as to think that this will come about with the cooperation and the good will of the European governments. The huge task which consists of reintroducing mankind into the world, the whole of mankind, will be carried out with the indispensable help of the European peoples, who themselves must realize that in the past they have often joined the ranks of our common masters where colonial questions were concerned. To achieve this, the European peoples must first decide to wake up and shake themselves, use their brains, and stop playing the stupid game of the Sleeping Beauty. (1967, p. 84)

This passage demonstrates Fanon's effort to urge Westerners to re-examine their history in relation to colonialism and subsequently to re-conceive a new history inclusive of the supposedly silent mass of colonized natives. In this sense Fanon's work can be seen as an exemplar that tries to make the metropolis rethink its own history: "Despite its bitterness and violence, the whole point of Fanon's work is to force the European metropolis to think its history together with the history of colonies awakening from the cruel stupor and abused immobility of imperial dominion. (Said, 1989, p. 314) Through reading Fanon as a theorist of liberation, Said's "voyage in" as politics of resistance aims to make the West reconceptualize its history as collective and plural for the whole humanity, incorporating Westerners and non-Westerners alike.

As the previous discussion of Said's critical appropriation of Fanon shows, the post-independent establishment of nation-state does not mean a mere replacement of one kind of violence with another because the subsequent aim of decolonization requires transforming national consciousness into social consciousness. But how does this transformation take place?

Fanon's discourse concerning violence gives some explanation. The phenomenon of totally opposed mutual violence constitutes "an extraordinary reciprocal homogeneity" between the colonial regime and the natives, which is founded upon an exclusive politics of identity. Then what is the alternative way to break this deadlock of confrontation between the two opposing forces? Fanon sees violence as a "cleaning force" for the individual, which can free "the native from his inferiority complex" and "his despair and inaction." The decolonizing violence produces a fearless man with his self-respect restored (Fanon, 1967, p. 74). Consequently, violence provides a motivation for the collective resistance. Fanon suggests in *The Wretched of the Earth*:

> But it so happens that for the colonized people this violence, because it constitutes their only work, invests their characters with positive and creative qualities. The practice of violence binds them together as a whole, since each individual forms a violent link in the great chain, a part of the great organism of violence which has surged upwards in reaction to the settler's violence in the beginning. [...] The mobilization of the masses, when it arises out of the war of liberation, introduces into each man's consciousness the ideas of a common cause, of a national destiny and of a collective history. (1967, p. 73)

Evidently, the discussion of violence provides an alternative for breaking the deadlock of "reciprocal homogeneity" between the colonizer and the native. The very structure of colonialism, as that of all identity politics, is "separatist and regionalist". The colonialist ideology not only constructs but also reinforces the division of tribes. Violence in the historical actions of decolonization is "all-inclusive and national" in nature, which unifies the people from various ethnic tribes and social strata. In consequence it provides a considerable force for "the liquidation of regionalism and of tribalism" (ibid., p. 74). The unity achieved through decolonizing violence can be extended to worldwide resistance struggle of mankind for freedom since the persistent "racialism and hatred and resentment," as results of "a legitimate desire for revenge," ultimately becomes the obstacle to elaborating on liberation (ibid., p. 111).

"Voyage in" as politic of resistance, acknowledging the positive role of nationalism in the independence movement on the one hand while insisting on a secular interrogation of identitarian thoughts on the other, is aimed to dismantle the colonizer/colonized binary opposition and transform national consciousness into social consciousness and ultimately elaborate on liberation by imagining a non-coercive human community. All this can be seen as a result of Said's understanding of the consequences of the colonial encounter in its enforcing necessary "intertwined histories and overlapping territories" between the Europeans and the natives. However, the vision of a non-coercive human community might run the risk of falling into the prevalent

valorization of notions such as globalization and hybridity in postcolonial studies if the simplistic confirmation of resistance by textual re-inscription suspends analysis of the unequal political and economic power relationships in current global capitalism.[12] In addition, Said's vision of a non-coercive society accommodating European colonizers and colonized natives can be seen as a utopian universalism if without looking into the ambivalent positioning of "voyage in" intellectuals within the Western academy. All these questions will be further investigated in the immediate following two parts.

TEXTUAL RE-INSCRIPTION

After having examined Said's critique of identity politics and elaboration of liberation as the first aspect of his "voyage in" as politics of resistance, we know that it emphasizes the intertwined nature of the historical process of colonial encounter and thus denies taking resistance as strategies of a simplistic reversal of the colonial relationship. As a result, it emphasizes the conscious effort to enter into, mix with, and transform the dominant metropolitan discourse. So this section aims to deal with the second aspect of Said's "voyage in", i.e., how can textual re-inscription succeed if it adopts the colonial languages and discourses as a means of initiating resistance?

Text as Structures of Authority and Intention

Said critiques poststructuralists of their making a religious fetish of textuality without paying adequate attention to the worldliness of text. Text as an intentional structure constructed in concrete social and historical circumstances suggests a latitude of freedom for human agency disavowed by lingacentricity. In addition, Said is dissatisfied with the Foucauldian discourse as circulated within the anonymous "microphysics of power" and immune to human intervention. For Said, text and discourse are historical constructs with certain human authority and intention.

Said's conception of text as intentional structure is built upon his critique of the structuralist notion of text. This critique involves the nature of the author's beginning authority over his/her text, its material production, and the specific location of texts in time and society. When analyzing Piaget's definition of text, Said concludes that there are two perspectives in conceiving the relation between subject and text: one conceptualizes "subject as preexisting given, as a necessary *a priori* condition for the fully formed structure," while the other opposing

one regards "the subject as a germinal or beginning principle whose force extends throughout, and therefore empowers, a developing, constituting structure" (1985, p. 192). The first perspective entails the confrontation of the flexible subject with the text as a completed structure or object. The second perspective stresses the text as a flexible structure that proceeds "from the simple to the more complex." This discussion of Piaget promotes Said's notion of text, which is considered to be "a structure in the process of being composed from a certain beginning intention, in the process of realizing a structure" (ibid., p. 194). This explication of text as structure bearing the author's beginning intention in a specific time and society reveals the material existence of text, whose production constitutes an event in both physical and spiritual senses. In other words, a text can be described as an actual event that "engages a particular problematic or style of thought in the writer" (ibid., p. 221).[13]

Said further develops his notion of language into a new conception of text, which is "transformed from an original object into produced and producing structure whose laws are dynamic not static, whose materiality is textual not genetic, and whose effect is to multiply meaning not to fix it" (ibid., pp. 66-67). The authority of a text resides in the fact that it has outlived those who have "participated in its original making." As he further observes:

> This rift between textual authority and the historical individual lifetime further means that a document becomes a text with authority when emendations, excisions, additions, editions, and revisions of it become intentional textual acts displacing earlier textual acts instead of, as before, matters of communal tacit agreement. (ibid., pp. 217-218)

This observation implies that a text as formal object is constituted by a chain of substitutions, which means "every text is something first composed, then transmitted, then received, then edited and interpreted, then reconsidered" (ibid., p. 218). This process of substitution does not presuppose the existence of an absolutely originating text since each act of composition is a rewriting and reinterpretation of other texts.[14]

The overtly political manifestation of text's worldliness is further elaborated as "structures of attitude and reference" in *Culture and Imperialism*:

> […] the way in which structures of location and geographical reference appear in the cultural languages of literature, history, or ethnography, sometimes allusively and sometimes carefully plotted, across several individual works that are not otherwise connected to one another or to an official ideology of "empire". (1993, p. 52)

Actually Said's definition of "structures of attitude

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[12] For example, Bill Ashcroft's argument is typical: "the culturally and politically transformative power of writing" can "change the world, because what can be imagined can be achieved" (1997, p. 21). He further develops this argument in *The Empire Writes Back*.
[13] An extended study of this unity between text and career can be found in Said's book-length study on Conrad, see *Joseph Conrad and the Fiction of Autobiography*.
[14] For a similar discussion see Said, 1984, pp. 45-46.

and reference" is aimed to describe the "distinct cultural topography" in the metropolitan cultures. This descriptive term, as Said acknowledges, is adapted from Raymond Williams's "structures of feeling". Williams coins this term to describe a practical social consciousness, which is distinguished from official consciousness and refers to "what is actually lived" actively in real relationships. Williams stresses "structures of feeling" as practical consciousness almost always works within a specific present located in a living and interrelating continuous social and historical circumstances; and as a cultural hypothesis it attempts to understand social and historical elements and their intimate connections in a generation or period. Ultimately, according to Williams, "feelings of structure" as cultural theory provides "a way of defining forms and conventions in art and literature as inalienable elements of a social material process" (1977, p. 133).

What Said appropriates from Williams is relating literature into the broad sphere of culture as a way of life and its active material operations in socio-political institutions. "Structures of attitude and reference" is elaborated through an extended analysis of several nineteenth- and early twentieth-century European novels such as *Mansfield Park* and *A Passage to India*, in which Said discovers the writers' consistent concern in connecting the "socially desirable, empowered" metropolitan space and the peripheral colonies conceived as "desirable but subordinate" (1993, p. 52). Furthermore, Said holds these references as meticulously maintained so as to produce attitudes to rule, manipulate, control, and profit from the colonies. This ultimately leads to his conclusion that European novels as cultural forms consolidate, refine, and articulate the authority of the social and historical *status quo*. He writes:

> This crucial aspect of what I have been calling the novel's consolidation of authority is not simply connected to the functioning of social power and governance, but made to appear both normative and sovereign, that is, self-validating in the course of the narrative. This is paradoxical only if one forgets that the constitution of a narrative subject, however abnormal or unusual, is still a social act par excellence, and as such has behind or inside it the authority of history and society. There is first the authority of the author – someone writing out the processes of society in an acceptable institutionalized manner, observing conventions, following patterns, and so forth. Then there is the authority of the narrator, whose discourse anchors the narrative in recognizable, and hence existentially referential, circumstances. Last, there is what might be called the authority

of the community, whose representative most often is the family but also is the nation, the specific locality, and the concrete historical moment. Together these functioned most energetically, most noticeably, during the early nineteenth century as the novel opened up to history in an unprecedented way. (1993, p. 77)

This passage suggests that the European colonizer's will to manipulate and control its colonies becomes institutionalized in the emergent literary genre of the novel through its narrative consolidation of socio-cultural authority.[15] The novel has contributed to and participated in the imperial politics that "clarifies, reinforces, perhaps even occasionally advances" feelings and attitudes about Europe and its colonies in a globally "consolidated vision, or departmental cultural view" (Said, 1993, pp. 74-75). These novels never suggest the imperial effort to quit the peripheral world of colonies, but to "take the long-range view that since they fall within the orbit of British dominance, *that* dominance is a sort of norm, and thus conserved along the colonies" (ibid., p. 52). In consequence, the imperial colonies become the easily available narrative devices employed for plotting purposes such as immigration, fortune or exile. However, these structures are not pre-existing categories writers can manipulate at will since they are bound up with the formation of European cultural identity that "imagines itself in a geographically conceived world" (ibid., p. 52).

Said's elaboration of texts as worldly or secular derives from his critique of the valorization of textuality in poststructuralism. In analyzing the present situation of US academic criticism, he charges most of the current theoretical works with isolation of textuality from "the circumstances, then events, the physical senses that made it possible and render it intelligible as the result of human work" (1984, p. 4). On the one hand Said accepts the necessity to understand real history through texts,[16] on the other he insists that that claim never endorses a possibility to "eliminate interest in the events and the circumstances entailed by and expressed in the texts themselves." As he declares:

> My position is that texts are worldly, to some degree they are events, and, even they appear to deny it, they are nevertheless a part of the social world, human life, and of course the historical movements in which they are located and interpreted. (ibid., p. 4)

This statement of his critical position on the worldly nature of text directly affirms the connection between texts and the existential realities of human history. The

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[15] Unlike some criticisms which charge Said with a reductively political reading of these novels as intentional structures of "attitude and reference," Said actually never denies their aesthetic integrity as works of art as he suggests: "But for all their social presence, novels are not reducible to a sociological current and cannot be done justice to aesthetically, culturally, and politically as subsidiary forms of class, ideology, or interest" (1993, p. 73)

[16] Here Said is referring to Hayden White, who argues that historical work, generally poetic and specifically linguistic in nature, is "a verbal structure in the form of a narrative prose discourse that purports to be a model, or icon, of past structures and processes in the interest of *explaining what they were by representing them*" (1973, p. 2). It is notable that there exist many misunderstandings of White's proposition, which is criticized either as denying the existence of historical facts or disregarding the worldly nature of historical work. Actually *Metahistory* mainly aims to describe the poetic nature of historical work in paradigms like metaphor and irony. In another collection of essays White analyzes discourse in historical work in light of the secular nature of narrative, which cannot be seen as "merely a neutral discursive form" because it "entails ontological and epistemic choices with distinct ideological and even specifically political implications" (1987, p. ix).

text cannot be seen as an isolated object divorced from worldly situations through the mystical subject matter of textuality in analyzing their "aporias and unthinkable paradoxes."[17] Texts as structures of intention and authority accommodate social and historical realities of power as well as "resistances offered by men, women, and social movements to institutions, authorities, and orthodoxies" (Said, 1984, pp. 4-5).[18]

Said's elaboration of text as worldly product correlates its effectiveness with matters of "ownership, authority, power, and the imposition of force" (ibid., p. 48). Texts are implicated in the actual world by social, historical, and ideological circumstances, whose production and maintaining as an event involves a "self-confirming will to power". In consequence, considering texts as "a system of forces institutionalized by the reigning culture at some human cost to its various components" rather than as "an ideal cosmos of ideally equal monuments," Said calls for critics to take responsibility for "articulating those voices dominated, displaced, or silenced by the textuality of texts" (ibid., p. 53). In light of this, texts can manifest the unequal power relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. Therefore it remains an urgent task for Said's "voyage in" writers and critics to re-distribute the unequal power relationship through textual re-inscription.

Appropriation and Transformation as Reinvention

As discussed previously, cultural resistance precedes the recovery of geographical territory in decolonization. In his analysis of themes in cultural resistance, Said rejects a nativist construction of identity that aims to rediscover and repatriate a pure native authenticity once suppressed by colonial and imperial invasion and conquest. "Overlapping territories and intertwined histories" entailed by the colonial encounter makes cultural resistance a complicated process whose partial tragedy lies in fact that "it must to a certain degree work to recover forms already established or at least influenced or infiltrated by the culture of empire" (Said, 1993, p. 210). As Said further suggests:

> To achieve recognition is to rechart and then occupy the place in imperial cultural forms reserved for subordination, to occupy it self-consciously, fighting for it on the very same territory once ruled by a consciousness that assumed the subordination of a designed inferior Other. Hence, *reinscription*. (ibid., p. 210)

Here cultural resistance as re-inscription suggests that, with findings of the impossibility to conceive an authentic pre-colonial ethnic identity, the alternative way is to re-map and then occupy the imperial cultural territory through replacing the consciousness of the imperialist Europeans with that of the decolonizing natives. This analysis implies that the colonial and imperial texts as intentional structures are re-interpretable and re-deployable in the concrete historical experience of anti-colonial resistance movement.

Said's understanding of the historical nature of textual authority is related to his study of beginning as an "intentional act". Beginning, as opposed to the "purely circumstantial existence of 'conditions'" implied by origin, implies the possibility of understanding postcolonial re-inscription as an intentional activity of appropriating and transforming the colonial language and discourse. As Said suggests:

> Intention, largely but never exclusively designated by a beginning, is a way of confining a work to one element: writing. With the discrediting of mimetic representation a work enters a realm of gentile history, to use Vico's phrase for secular history, where extraordinary possibilities of variety and diversity are open to it but where it not be referred back docilely to an idea that stands above it and explains it. (1985, pp. 11-12)

According to the above explication, textual re-inscription as the process of linguistic appropriation and textual transformation can be seen as a beginning activity in the sense as described by Said. As a beginning activity that entails discontinuity and rupture, it authorizes the postcolonial writer with possibility and power to appropriate and transform the dominant colonial language and discourse. Nevertheless the will to re-inscribe does not constitute a totally free enterprise considering its difficulty to "begin with a wholly new start." Said's "voyage in" writers and critics have to confront the colonial language and text, which as structures of intention and authority are always imbued with colonial and imperial ideologies.

Therefore, textual re-inscription as beginning action cannot be regarded as a simple assertion of the human will and desire regardless of the textual, social, and historical circumstances that precede and restrict it. As Said further explicates:

> What sort of action, therefore, transpires at the beginning? How can we, while necessarily submitting to the incessant flux of experience, insert (as we do) our reflections on beginning(s) into that flux? Is the beginning simply an artifice, a disguise that defies the perpetual trap of forced continuity? Or does it admit of a meaning and a possibility that are genuinely capable of realization? (ibid., p. 43)

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[17] Eugenio Donato presents an illuminating discussion when comparing Derrida and Said, arguing that the former's philosophical radicalism makes the opposition between world and text impossible, while the latter's insistence on an opposition between historical world against text finally leads to an opaque notion of world and history "resembling the 'Thing-in-itself'" which resists "the attempts of narrative fiction to affect it, modify it, transform it, or comprehend it" (1976, p. 28). Though Donato diagnoses Said's "concern with the empirical materiality and historicity of texts," his argument is arguable considering that Said's concern with the worldly nature of texts is not aimed to isolate the world from the text, on the contrary what he emphasizes is the intimate relationship between the world and the text.

[18] Elsewhere, when commenting on the opposition between speech and text made by Paul Ricoeur, Said re-emphasizes the worldliness of texts whether there are readings or interpretations to actualize them or not, because not only texts "have ways of existing that even in their most rarefied form are always enmeshed in circumstance, time, place, and society" but critics are also subject to and produced by social and historical circumstances (1984, pp. 34-35).

Reflecting on this series of questions, beginning must face the problematic of historically inserting texts into the continuous flow of human experience. Does beginning simply imply a repetition that is eventually trapped in continuity? To what extent can beginning implement a new departure for the active production of meaning? All these questions characterize beginning as activities concerned with ways of defining human freedom in its intention to create and innovate within definite social and historical circumstances.

Said's conception of beginning provides many insights for understanding the issues of textual re-inscription in his "voyage in" as politics of resistance. Appropriating and rewriting the colonial language and discourse cannot be simply asserted as subversive in nature because this project has to start precisely from its object of critique. Colonial and imperial texts as intentional structures must be wrestled with and transformed through the "critical consciousness" of "voyage in" writers and critics, which can be seen as the "sympathetic imagination" of intentional invention providing potentiality for textual re-inscription. After analyzing Ngugi wa Thiongo's *The River Between* and Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North* as rewritings of *Heart of Darkness*, Said concludes:

> The postcolonial writers of the Third World therefore bear their past within them – as scars of humiliating wounds, as instigation for different practices, as potentially revised visions of the past tending toward a postcolonial future, as urgently reinterpretable and redeployable experiences, in which the formerly silent native speaks and acts on territory reclaimed as part of a general movement of resistance, from the colonist. (1993, p. 212)

That is, the colonized native, once repressed as silent natives as described in Conrad's novels, now speaks with a voice through re-inscribing the dominant colonial texts and populating them with their own intention. However, the positive confirmation of the culturally and politically transformative power of rewriting the colonial discourse involves many unresolved problems. Firstly, since the process of textual re-inscription means the reclamation of discursive power once usurped and monopolized by the colonists, then how and from where does this power derive? Secondly, even if Said's "voyage in" writers and critics speak through the counter-discursive strategies of textual re-inscription, does that mean *the entire* colonized natives speak?

AMBIVALENT POSITIONING

As discussed previously, textual re-inscription is conditioned by the preexistence of colonial discourses and metropolitan institutions. Does the metropolitan location provide any advantage or disadvantage for producing resistance? Do Said's "voyage in" writers and critics represent those native people remaining in the peripheries through textual re-inscription? This section will deal with the problem of how "voyage in" intellectuals have to keep critical consciousness in making the metropolis acknowledge the marginalized or suppressed histories of the formerly colonized world.

Metropolitan Location as a Vantage Point of Resistance

In analyzing the problematic of textual re-inscription as a beginning activity, Said confirms it as a strategy of resistance that makes the colonized natives speak on the very terrain of imperial language and discourse. Its political effect is enormous as a large number of remarkable literature and scholarship from the Third World pour into the Western metropolis and thus constitute a vigorous effort of cultural resistance. In other words, textual re-inscription entails a politically transformative effect even though its working process is implicated within the dominant imperial power structures. By this he might refer to Raymond Williams's discussion of the immigrant contribution to the metropolitan cultural formation in *Culture* (1981). The encounter between immigrants and dominant groups produces "especially favorable supportive conditions for dissident groups" (Williams, 1981, pp. 83-85). Here Williams by no means suggests that such encounters will definitely create a radical violent break with the past tradition or they will become co-opted by and become part of the dominant metropolitan culture.[19]

Said subsequently extends William's argument to discussing the historical and political setting of imperialism and anti-imperial resistance movements, outlining three manifest factors:

> First, anti-imperialist intellectual and scholarly work done by writers from the peripheries who have immigrated to or are visiting the metropolis is usually an extension into the metropolis of large-scale mass movements […] Second, these incursions concern the same areas of experience, culture, history, and tradition hitherto commanded unilaterally by the metropolitan center. […] Last, these *voyages in* represent, I believe, a still unresolved contradiction or discrepancy within metropolitan culture, which through co-optation, dilution, and avoidance partly acknowledges and partly refuses the effort. (1993, p. 244)

The net result of the immigrant or visiting writers and critics from the formerly colonized world implies that the decolonization contest has moved from the periphery to the metropolitan center. The distinctive feature of these "voyage in" intellectuals lies in their revisionist employment and transformation of the historical legacy left by imperialism from the perspective of a dissenting

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[19] Raymond Williams makes similar observations when theorizing the constitutive feature of metropolitan modernism, arguing that immigrants from the colonized world have contributed to the formation of the metropolitan modernist culture (1973, pp. 279-280; 1989, pp. 44-45).

native. Their hybrid cultural work constitutes "a sign of adversarial internationalization in an age of continued imperial structures" (ibid., p. 244). The ambivalent attitude of metropolitan culture in its partial acknowledgement and partial refusal to endorse the "voyage in" phenomenon constitutes an "unresolved contradiction or discrepancy" within it. In addition, it further suggests an ambivalent positioning of "voyage in" writers and critics, which problematizes their potential capability to produce resistance within the metropolitan power structures.

The ambivalent positioning of Said's "voyage in" intellectuals has given rise to many controversies and debates within the postcolonial studies. Some simply criticize their geographical location within the Western metropolis.[20] Some others refute the metropolitan location as a vantage point for producing resistance through analyzing the unequal power distribution in the globalized economic and political situation of the present world.[21] One of the most prominent aspects of these studies is that "voyage in" intellectuals privilege the metropolitan location without realizing their own existence as an effect of the unequal distribution of power structures of the current global capitalism. For instance, after describing postcolonial intellectuals as "the intelligentsia of global capitalism," the alternative that Dirlik proposes is to recognize "its own class-position in global capitalism" and to "generate a thoroughgoing criticism of its own ideology and formulate practices of resistance against the system of which it is a product" (1994, p. 356).

In fact, the "thoroughgoing criticism of its own ideology" proposed by Dirlik can be found exactly in Said's elaboration of critical consciousness, which is a self-knowing critique of its own metropolitan location and ambivalent positioning. Said reflects on his own formation of critical position:

> Exactly as in its triumphant period imperialism tended to license only a cultural discourse that was formulated from within it, today post-imperialism has permitted mainly *a cultural discourse of suspicion on the part of formerly colonized peoples*, and *of theoretical avoidance at most on the part of metropolitan intellectuals*. I find myself caught *between the two*, as many of us are who were brought up during the period when the classical

colonial empires were dismantled. We belong to the period of both of colonialism and of resistance to it; yet we also belong to a period of surpassing theoretical elaboration, of universalizing techniques of deconstruction, structuralism, and Lukácsian and Althusserian Marxism. (1993, p. 194, emphasis added)

This passage reveals Said's critical position as caught between the cultural discourses uttered by the formerly colonized natives and the deliberate theoretical avoidance of metropolitan intellectuals in contemporary critical theory. So it implies that he has to make a choice between the suspicious counter-discourse belonging to the period of colonialism and anti-colonialism and the deliberate avoidance of imperialism in contemporary prevalent theoretical jargons.

Exile is a topic that appears repeatedly in Said's works. As an exiled Palestinian intellectual, Said suffers from the "crippling sorrow of estrangement" (2000, p. 173).[22] Nevertheless he conceives exile as a favorable condition that can possibly provide the "voyage in" intellectuals with critical consciousness. When discussing the positive aspects of exiled conditions, Said suggests:

> Most people are principally aware of one culture, one setting, one home; exiles are aware of at least two, and this plurality of vision gives rise to an awareness of simultaneous dimensions, an awareness that – to borrow a phrase from music – is *contrapuntal*. (ibid., p. 186)

This implies that exiles can imagine a new, alternative vision of reality because they are aware of the contrapuntal juxtapositions between cultures, which put them in a better position to diminish and undermine underlying assumptions of dogmas and orthodoxies in dominant cultures. By this, Said attempts to describe exile as "an alternative to the mass institutions that dominate modern life" rather than as a privileged existential category.[23]

In contemporary world, according to Said's characterization of exile, refuges, migrants as well as other displaced communities, the exiled categories are problems produced by the colonial conquests and imperial conflicts. Along with the emergence of independent states after anti-colonial resistance movement there appeared various kinds of dislocated and wandering exiles, who

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[20] For example, Ahmad accuses Said with his shift of positions from "wholesale denunciation of the West" to an "equally sweeping desire for a location in the West" (1992, pp. 199-200). He further criticizes Said's "voyage in" for conceptualizing "the 'Western centre' as the only site where 'contests over decolonization' can now take place" and ignoring issues of class origin, social and geographical location. Finally Ahmad does not see Said's "voyage in" as "adversarial activity" because he regards *Orientalism* as the perfect narrative of oppression getting Said high personal interests in his upwardly mobile into the Western metropolis and becoming "part of the 'center'" (ibid., p. 196, pp. 200-210). Michael Sprinker, disagreeing with Ahmad, argues that "geographical location does not univocally or unambiguously determine political and ideological commitments" (1993, p. 106).

[21] For example, Arif Dirlik (1994, p. 329, 356) considers postcolonial intellectuals as the intelligentsia of global capitalism in describing postcolonial in terms of both intellectuals of the Third World origin and the globalized world situation. For a similar criticism see Miyoshi, 1993, p. 728, pp. 750-751. These criticisms are pertinent to some extent because postcolonial studies share with globalization theory "the large-scale structural determinants" of inquiry such as "capitalism and the West" and "a dubious relationship to the power it purportedly questions" (Brennan, 2004, p. 134).

[22] Said's personal sadness and sorrow brought by exile can be found in his autobiography *Out of Place* and his book on Palestine *After the Last Sky*.

[23] Elsewhere Said (1993, pp. xxvi-xxvii) makes similar reflections on exile, insisting that belonging to both sides of the imperial divide enables him to understand them more easily.

are excluded from new structures of institutional power. Said's historical description of the secular nature of exile does not suggest an uncritically optimistic valorization of exile as a privileged position monopolized only by his "voyage in" intellectuals (1993, pp. 332-333). Said draws a clear distinction between the actual painful, agonizing conditions of dislocated persons and the metaphorical intellectual consciousness that situates itself "between domains, between forms, between homes, and between languages." The intellectual must take the responsibility of "distilling then articulating the predicaments" entailed by the geographical displacement and dispossession of exile. In other words, Said's "voyage in" writers and critics, making use of the exiled consciousness as a vantage point, are required to represent the misery endured by those geographically exiled communities. This brings to Said's discussion of intellectuals, their responsibility and legitimacy in representations. Representation is unavoidably embedded in particular concrete historical and cultural situations, as Said explains:

> However much intellectuals pretend that their representations are of higher things or ultimate values, morality begins with their activity in this secular world of ours – where it takes place, whose interests it serves, how it jibes with a consistent and universalist ethic, how it discriminates between power and justice, what it reveals of one's choices and priorities. (1994, p. 120)

The implication here is that the intellectual cannot find a utopian place outside the power structures of the secular world in which he works. Said criticizes the notion of intellectual as an idealized type of figure who attempts to build the otherworldly values separated from worldly concerns.[24] Therefore the intellectual's representations are always situated in concrete spatio-temporal circumstances and always involved with his appealing to universal values, his relationship with power and authority, and certain interests in his choices and priorities. This conception of intellectuals as secular being acknowledges the impurity of the intellectual activity in its involvement with worldly issues.[25] Accordingly, Said further defines intellectual as an individual with a specific public role to play in society rather than a specialized professional doing his everyday routine work.

But there is one fundamental problem that still remains unanswered, i.e., how does the intellectual as an individual get endowed with the faculty to represent and articulate underrepresented peoples and issues? Actually, Said does not specifically deal with this problem in spite of his insistence on the intellectual's responsibility in producing and circulating representations and his analysis of the secular nature of the these activities. His critique of representation is largely based upon a valorized notion of critical consciousness of "voyage in" intellectuals, which is provided by their exilic position between two cultures. As Bruce Robbins points out, Said's inadequate attention to the source of the intellectual's counterauthority to "speak truth to power" involves a series of problems, such as "why power would listen, what might make it listen, what makes anyone listen." Robbins suggests that these questions might be explained in terms of "*economy of authority*" through turning to Said's sympathetic understanding either of Julien Benda's conception of intellectuals as "a small, highly visible group" or of the Foucauldian "rarefication of intellectuals." It might be suspicious of elitism but nevertheless endows the rarity or scarcity of intellectuals with "an ethico-political legitimacy rather than a meritocratic one." He goes on to argue that it is power that ultimately decides who is a real intellectual because intellectual authority always derives from "a faithful inversion of the authority of power itself, and is dependent upon it." This dependent inversion of power, according to Robbins's subsequent analysis of Said's "voyage in" in light of Pierre Bourdieu's social theory (*Homo Academicus*), can finally be explained as "a recomposition as well as a redistribution of cultural capital" derived from existing institutions, which produces "a redefinition of authority" (1994a, pp. 29-32). Here Robbins's interpretation of the source of intellectual authority is illuminating and insightful, providing an acute understanding of the working process of Said's "voyage in" intellectuals from the perspective of their social and historical positioning within the Western metropolitan institutions.[26] Based upon Robbins's discussion but in a different way, the subsequent analysis will focus on Said's valorization of critical consciousness as his justifying explanation of the source of intellectual authority, which constitutes his main discussions of intellectuals in general and the "voyage in" intellectuals in particular.

The following observation might suggest a gist of Said's conception of the working basis of the intellectual's representation:

> The intellectual's representations, his or her articulations of a cause or idea to society, are not meant primarily to fortify ego or celebrate status. Nor are they principally intended for service within powerful bureaucracies and with generous employers. Intellectual representations are the *activity itself*, dependent on a

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[24] This characterization of the intellectual's worldly activities as moral constitutes an implicit critique of the Kantian transcendental conception of moral agents in *Critique of Practical Reason*, which is supposed to be standing aloof from the specific worldly circumstances of every human being.

[25] Bruce Robbins argues that Said's secular intellectual means "resigning oneself to an inevitable profane untidiness, and impurity, a political incorrectness." However, according to Robbins, such secular intellectual is also suspicious of acquiring "energy and authority from that refusal of virtue" that results in their "strategic acquiescing in institutional or professional hierarchies" (1994a, p. 28).

[26] Elsewhere Robbins (1990, 1993) also studies the problem of the relationship between the intellectual and professionalism and institutional power.

kind of consciousness that is skeptical, engaged, unremittingly devoted to rational investigation and moral judgment; and this puts the individual on record and on the line. Knowing how to use language well and knowing when to intervene in language are two essential features of intellectual action. (Said, 1994, p. 20)

Now it is clear that by Said's characterization intellectual's representations are aimed neither to acquire personal gains through a fortification of one's celebrated status nor to get authority and power from being co-opted by governments, corporations, and various other institutions. On the contrary, what he emphasizes here is that the intellectual representation as the activity of "rational investigation and moral judgment" is dependent upon a skeptical and engaged consciousness, the critical consciousness Said has been valorizing in his theoretical writings and political activities all the time. Critical consciousness, as a sense of being "initially detached itself from the dominant culture" and then adopting "a situated and responsible adversary position for itself," corresponds exactly to the consciousness of intellectual representation, with being "skeptical" as the consequence of detachment and "engaged" as a position of being situated, responsible, and adversary.

The double correlatives of detachment and engagement constitute two seemingly contradictory essential features of Said's conception of intellectuals. Detachment is built upon Said's elaboration of the intellectuals' exile, which makes them located always on the marginal position outside the mainstream power and thus remain unaccommodated, non-co-opted, and resistant.

The national problem is of central significance for Said's conception of exile. As examined previously, Said makes a vehement critique of identitarian thoughts like nativism and nationalism. His exiled intellectuals are especially wary of corporate thinking entailed by nationalist identity:

> Does the fact of nationality commit the individual intellectual, who is for my purposes here the center of attention, to the public mood for reasons of solidarity, primordial loyalty, or national patriotism? Or can a better case be made fro the intellectual as a dissenter from the corporate ensemble? *Never solidarity before criticism* is the short answer. […] With regard to the consensus on group or national identity it is the intellectual's task to show how the group is not a natural or god-given entity but is a constructed, manufactured, even in some cases invented object, with a history of struggle and conquest behind it, that it is sometimes important to represent. (Said, 1994, p. 33, emphasis mine)

Later Said further elaborates on the risk that intellectuals might run in their uncritical identification with national belonging: "It is always easy and popular for intellectuals to fall into modes of vindication and self-righteousness that blind them to the evil done in the name of their own ethnic or national community" (ibid., p. 45). This warning implies that intellectual's representation should be based upon a critical consciousness, which surpasses the restricted concept such as group solidarity, unquestioned loyalty, and patriotism. As an individual of critical mind the intellectual should make independent decisions rather than become a complied follower of identitarian dogmas and stereotypes. In other words, critical consciousness requires the intellectual to take the group identity as secularly constructed by men and women in definite historical circumstances rather than as a pre-given, originally determined entity. The obstinate, narrow-minded adherence to national or ethnic identity is dangerous in its oppositional division of "us" and "them" and lack of attention to link the sufferings of one race and nation with another.

To some extent, exile provides Said's "voyage in" intellectuals with a vantage position to maintain critical consciousness in interrogating and resisting such corporate thinking about national identity. In addition, exile provides a possibility to transform the seemingly disadvantageous marginal status into positive results: one is "the pleasure of being surprised, of never taking anything for granted, of learning to make do in circumstances of shaky instability that would confound or terrify most people." This might be understood as the critical consciousness that is always skeptical and optimistic in finding alternatives. The exiled condition provides the "voyage in" intellectuals with a double perspective for understanding in a contrapuntal rather than isolated way. The second point is that one is made to "see things not simply as they are, but as they have come to be that way." In other words, exiled intellectuals will view the historical and social facts and situations as contingent because it is the results of historical choices made by human beings rather than as naturally pre-determined and in consequence hopelessly unchangeable. Third is that exilic displacement provides one with "a sort of freedom, a process of discovery in which you do things according to your own pattern" (ibid., pp. 59-62).[27] In summary, the exiled condition of marginality provides "voyage in" intellectuals with a vantage point to respond "to the traveler rather than to the potentate, to the provisional and risky rather than to the habitual, to innovation and experiment rather than the authoritatively given *status quo*," and to "the audacity of daring, and to representing change, to moving on, not standing still" rather than "the logic of the conventional" (ibid., pp. 63-64).

This characterization of exilic space as a privileged point can be seen as Said's explanation justifying the legitimacy of representations of the intellectual. But can this hypothesis account for the actual working process of

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[27] Said (1984, pp. 5-8) takes Eric Auerbach as a perfect model when explicating the advantage entailed by exile, arguing that his great work *Mimesis* is the result of exile being "converted from a challenge or a risk, or even from an active impingement on his European selfhood into a positive mission."

representations in a deliberate avoidance of its underlying source of authority and power? Does it idealize the marginal status as the exclusive privilege of a handful of exiled intellectuals? It is problematic because it gives an inadequate examination of the concrete historical and material conditions producing and simultaneously restraining Said's "voyage in" intellectuals. Exile cannot be conceived as an idealized liminal category that privileges its utopian space of in-betweenness in representations.[28] As Said explains in a personal tone: "[…] as an intellectual I present my concerns before an audience or constituency, but this is not just a matter of how I articulate them, but also of what I myself, as someone who is trying to advance the cause of freedom and justice, also represent" (ibid., p. 12). The valorization of a seemingly transparent critical consciousness supports the whole intellectual conception of Said's "voyage in" as politics of resistance. In consequence, Said's "voyage in" is suspicious of privileging the transparent exilic space as a site for producing resistance and disregarding the indigenous resistance built upon the consolidation of cultural identity. The next section will situate Said's valorization of exilic space into a historical and material analysis in light of his self-representation.

Unlearning One's Own Privilege

As the above analysis shows, the exiled condition as a vantage point in representations can provide Said's "voyage in" intellectuals with critical consciousness for producing resistance within the Western metropolitan center. But is it possible for critical consciousness to transcend the metropolitan power structures through privileging the exiled condition as an in-between space? This section aims to problematize critical consciousness as the product of the exilic metropolitan location. Actually, Said's persistent critique of academic professionalism reveals his ambivalent attitude toward the intellectual's inevitable implication within the dominant discursive and institutional practices. Early in his elaboration of secular criticism Said has criticized the trend of professionalism within the academy of literary criticism (1984, p. 25). This can be seen as a severe critique of the professionalized critics who pay little attention to the outside world because of their exclusively specialized interest in nothing but issues of textuality. The implication is that critics are imprisoned within literary criticism as a specialized institution due to their lack of critical consciousness. Said thinks professionalism constitutes a particular harm to the intellectual activity today. By professionalism he refers to

> […] thinking of your work as an intellectual as something you do for a living, between the hours of nine and five with one eye on the clock, and another cocked at what is considered to be proper, professional behavior – not rocking the boat, not straying outside the accepted paradigms or limits, making yourself

marketable and above all presentable, hence uncontroversial and unpolitical and "objective" (1994, p. 74).

In the immediate following he enumerates several pressures induced by professionalism that confront the intellectual: one is specialization that leads to technical formalism and a failure to "view knowledge and art as choices and decisions, commitments and alignments." The second is expertise that makes the intellectual a certified product of certain authorities and a pre-located individual speaking the right language. The third is "the inevitable drift towards power and authority in its adherents, towards the requirements and prerogatives of power, and towards being directly employed by it" (ibid., p. 80). In other words, intellectuals must resist the pressure to be co-opted by any power or authority. Said proposes amateurism as an alternative to challenge these pressures, which is explained as "an activity that is fueled by care and affection rather than by profit and selfish, narrow specialization." He goes on to elaborate:

> The intellectual today ought to be an amateur, someone who considers that to be a thinking and concerned member of a society one is entitled to raise moral issues at the heart of even the most technical and professionalized activity as it involves one's country, its power, its mode of interacting with its citizens as well as with other societies. In addition, the intellectual's spirit as an amateur can enter and transform the merely professional routine most of us go through into something much more lively and radical; instead of doing what one is supposed to do one can ask why one does it, who benefits from it, how can it reconnect with a personal project and original thoughts. (ibid., pp. 82-83)

Literally, intellectual amateurism refers to the overcoming of the pressures brought by professionalism through doing one's work with "care and affection" rather than personal profit and gains. On the other hand, it implies a self-acclaimed marginal status that separates the amateur intellectual from the mainstream professional field. The space of marginality can equip the intellectuals with critical consciousness to surpass the professional routine work into a self-questioning of their own positioning. Professionalism as pressures upon the intellectuals comes from the power of institutional practices within metropolitan academy.

Intellectual's representation of others entails his/her own self-representation. Said is inevitably implicated within the institutionalized and professionalized Western academy in spite of his insistence on the need to keep critical consciousness. Even though he is politically committed and often intervenes in public space, it has to be admitted that only a small circle of academic insiders take interest in his writings and tend to professionalize them in forming a new Saidian academic industry. So compared with Spivak's relentless persistence of "unlearning one's privilege," Said lacks an enduring, concentrated, and self-

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[28] Andrew Smith (2004, pp. 246-260) provides a similar analysis when presenting a critique of a series of concepts valorized in postcolonial literary studies, such as migration, hybridity, and diaspora.

conscious critique of his own ambivalent positioning within the discursive and institutional power structures of the metropolitan academy.[29]

The above examination of the metropolitan location and ambivalent positioning of Said's "voyage in" writers and critics is significant for a critique of his politics of resistance. The metropolitan location can certainly bring a particular vantage point for producing resistance even though writers and critics have to work within the metropolitan discursive and institutional practices. There is no possibility to find an outside, utopian place to initiate and maintain resistance. Those "voyage in" intellectuals can become responsible, active participants in producing resistance from within through maintaining critical consciousness. Nevertheless the metropolitan location entails an ambivalent positioning, which always runs the risk of reinforcing and reproducing the dominant power structures such as their original targets of dismantling. Said's elaboration of critical consciousness as built upon an idealized exilic space fails to discuss this problem of complicity. In addition, it runs the risk of reifying exile as an exclusive privilege of a few elite postcolonial writers and critics. The neglect of class problem tends to reduce various postcolonial experiences into an idealized, homogeneous discourse of liberation and progress. It might result in a repeated, unproblematic confirmation of the postcolonial counter-discourse as resistance, neglecting its necessary material conditions in both economic and political terms.[30]

CONCLUSION

The above analysis of the three structural elements of Said's "voyage in" demonstrates that, as politics of resistance, they must be seen as an integrated whole. A critique of identity politics and elaboration of liberation serves as the prerequisite of theorizing "voyage in" as politics of resistance. It is only through going beyond the anti-colonial strategy as a simplistic reversal of colonial relationship that the adoption and subsequent adaptation of colonial language and discourse becomes possible. Textual re-inscription is the necessary means through which the colonized can become acquainted with the very nature of colonial language and discourse that once promoted colonialism and imperial conquest. Meanwhile it is also the very means to acquire power to narrate one's own story. So the metropolitan location constitutes the main site for attaining power to re-inscribe the colonial texts so as to make the West acknowledge the once

suppressed histories of the peripheral world. By contrast with "voyage in", resistance theories in the early anti-colonial writings and more recent postcolonial studies often exclusively concentrate on discussing either the issue of colonized identity and subjectivity or postcolonial "writing back" as counter-discourse and the metropolitan location of writers and critics, consequently failing to provide a comprehensive mode to theorize resistance from its various aspects.

Said's "voyage in" can be seen as politics of resistance, which provides an implicitly systematic mode of theorizing resistance in contemporary postcolonial studies. Its textual and political implications are significant for theorizing resistance. For Said, resistance lies neither in the simplistic strategy of constructing an exclusively essentialist identity nor in the autonomous operation of ambivalent colonial discourse and the endlessly deferred, irretrievable colonial subjectivity. It resides in the critical consciousness of "voyage in" writers and critics manifested in the critique of identity politics, textual re-inscription, and ambivalent positioning. Nevertheless, Said's "voyage in" as politics of resistance is problematic in holding a resisting position from within the metropolitan discursive and institutional practices while valorizing critical consciousness as a transparent site for producing resistance. Resistance should depend upon a sense of critical consciousness that acknowledges both the necessary constitution of colonized subjectivity by dominant discursive and institutional practices and the colonized subjective e agency to resist such constitution.

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[29] For example, on more than one occasions, even though acknowledging universities as institutions affiliated with worldly power, Said (2000, pp. 386-404; 2004, pp. 66-67, pp. 89-91) thinks that they can offer a utopian place to cultivate intellectual integrity and critical consciousness of individuals without specifically making any critique of his own positioning within the metropolitan institution. In various ways Spivak examines the postcolonial intellectual's representation as "very dependent upon one's positionality, one's situation" (Landry, 1996, p. 210; Spivak, 1990, p. 57; Spivak, 1993, p. 6; Spivak, 1999, pp. xii-xiii, p. 249). Meili Steele (1997, p. 113) also argues that Said's brilliant analysis of the relationship between imperialism and culture "leaves out the story of achievement that makes his analysis possible."

[30] For more discussions, see Parry, 2004, pp. 73-74, p. 80; and Ganguly, 2002, p. 245.

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