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Dušan I. Bjelić PhD

University of Southern Maine, bjelic@maine.edu

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Immigrants as the Enemy: Psychoanalysis and the Balkans' Self-Orientalization¹

DUŠAN I. BJELIĆ

EDWARD SAID articulates *orientalism* as Europe's way of coming to terms with the Orient as its constitutive other: 'The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other.'² Europe (the West) has constructed its own identity not only through geopolitical domination, but also through pervasive representational domination that serves to legitimize colonial subjugation of the mysterious other. Precisely in this inscribed connection between the colonial space and the colonial identity lies the liberating aspect of Said's work as a road map to critical awareness of self-orientalization as a product of discursive colonialism. This awareness works to counteract the harmful legacy of orientalizing representation as a continuation of colonial politics, not only for those who still live in formerly colonized spaces, but also for the displaced who are in the process of building an identity in exile.

Some may argue that *orientalism* is not relevant for the Balkans since the Balkans was never colonized in the traditional (political and economic) sense. Yet the colonial politics of representation and colonial psychology have been fully operational there. To prove the presence of *orientalism* in the Balkan technology of subjectivity, I will examine the work of two Balkan psychoanalysts — Julia Kristeva (Bulgarian) and Slavoj Žižek (Slovene) — whose work on the Balkans, exilic identity and immigrants constitutes a contemporary permutation of this representational hegemony. Žižek's and Kristeva's work, interpreted (as it is here) as part of a continuum of centre-to-periphery representation predicated upon the West/East geopolitical split, becomes relevant not only to Said's *orientalism* but, more specifically, to Maria Todorova's concept of *balkanism*, as elucidated in her seminal work, *Imagining the*

Dušan I. Bjelić is Professor of Sociology at the University of Southern Maine. The author thanks Rosemary Miller for her generous help with this article.

¹ This article was originally presented at the conference 'Edward Said: Critical Accounts on (post)Modernity', Birzeit University, Ramallah, West Bank, 15–17 December 2007.

² Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York, 1979 (hereafter, *Orientalism*), p. 1.

Balkans.³ Todorova, emphasizing primacy of representation over physical geography, proposes that what we know about the Balkans cannot be separated from *how* we know it — the conditions which have formed our knowledge of the region. She articulates these representational conditions as *balkanism*, which (similarly to Said's *orientalism*) is a stable representational scheme originating in travelogues, literature and Western journalism. Todorova, however, also points out where *balkanism* and *orientalism* diverge.⁴ She acknowledges the orientalist character of balkanist discourse, and 'shows that balkanism independently developed a rhetorical arsenal of its own via its specific geo-political religious and cultural position'.⁵

Todorova sees this specificity chiefly in terms of the historical and transient legacy of Ottoman rule in the Balkans. And she maintains that *orientalism* operates in the timeless space of a discursive East/West binary that has its origins in the Enlightenment, while the Balkans and its discourse-geography are clearly inscribed in a concrete historical Ottoman heritage: 'it has been chiefly the Ottoman elements or the ones perceived as such that have mostly invoked the current stereotypes'.⁶ She goes so far as to propose that the Balkans are 'tantamount to their Ottoman legacy' and that Europeanization may herald 'an advanced stage at the end of the Balkans'.⁷

Greek historian Ellie Scopetea sees the relationship of the Balkans to its 'Ottoman heritage' as inseparable from its relationship to the West. For Scopetea, the Ottoman legacy is the other 'unity in diversity (besides the relationship to the West)' which underpins the 'time-resistant' ambiguous position of the Balkans between East and West. Yet there is a fundamental difference between the two relationships:

The difference between [the relationship with the Ottoman legacy] and that with the West is that this was not an openly avowed and cherished relationship, not a goal to be achieved. It was, as it were, each Balkan nation's own 'secret': a secret locked up in everyday language, in everyday behaviour, in the underground of each nation's existence, safe from any kind of official ideological scheme.⁸

Each new Balkan nation state aiming to become Westernized enters into a special cleansing relationship with its persistent residue of the

³ Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, Oxford, 1997 (hereafter *Imagining*).

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁵ Milica Bakic-Hayden, "'Nesting orientalisms": The Case of Former Yugoslavia', *Slavic Review*, 54, 1995, 4, (hereafter, 'Nesting'), p. 920.

⁶ *Imagining*, p. 12.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁸ Ellie Scopetea, 'The Balkans and the Nation of the "Crossroads between East and West"', in Dimitris Tziouvas (ed.), *Greece and the Balkans: Identities, Perceptions and Cultural Encounters since the Enlightenment*, Burlington, VT, 2003 (hereafter, 'The Balkans'), p. 173.

'Ottoman legacy'. According to Scopetea, this process runs parallel with Westernization. To become Western, she points out, means adopting both Western values and Western orientalist stereotypes — a Western *telos*. She also points out that, in adopting a stereotype, 'one tends to be oblivious that one is part of that stereotype'.⁹ Or, as Iyaylo Ditchev puts it, '[h]igh culture is constructed precisely by repressing all traces of local culture considered degrading, Oriental, body-centered, amorphous, etc.'. ¹⁰ These 'Oriental', 'degrading' or 'secret' aspects of local culture are then attributed to the Eastern neighbour, a process which activates Western orientalist stereotyping — and is also self-orientalizing.

Milica Bakić-Hayden characterizes this process by which all ethnic groups define the 'other' as the 'East' of them as 'nesting *orientalism*'. And, she writes, '[in the Balkans] the designation of 'other' has been appropriated and manipulated by those who have themselves been designated as such in orientalist discourse'.¹¹ Specifically, the Slovenes see themselves as more civilized than the Serbs, who are farther East; the Serbs, in turn, see themselves as more civilized than the Albanians. In addition, such representational schemes based on spatial hierarchies have been internalized as essential identities because they allow and justify exclusion of the other. Bakić-Hayden, then, significantly extends the concept of *balkanism*. For her, it is not only a system of stereotypical representation and an identificational model, but also a *way of being* in a geopolitically fragmented world.

Todorova, Scopetea and Bakić-Hayden each emphasize a different aspect of *balkanism* in relation to *orientalism*, yet all agree that a fundamental split in Balkan identity has been created by 'local self-representation strategies which aim to both seduce and defy [the Western other]'.¹² And, as we learn from Frantz Fanon's experience of colonial psychology, the doubling and splitting of the subject turns it into a passive supplement to its signifying master. In other words, the colonial subject has been constructed by the very same debilitating power that constructed the split between the Empire and the colony as the archaic Other. The case of the two displaced Balkan psychoanalysts, Kristeva and Žižek, illustrates precisely this point. Their psychoanalysis of the Balkans demonstrates at once Western rationality and self-colonization.

⁹ Ibid., p. 174.

¹⁰ Iyaylo Ditchev, 'The Eros of Identity' (hereafter, 'The Eros'), in Dušan I. Bjelić and Obrad Savić (eds), *Balkan as Metaphor: Between Globalization and Fragmentation*, Cambridge, MA, 2002 (hereafter, *Balkan as Metaphor*), p. 245.

¹¹ Bakić-Hayden, 'Nesting', p. 922.

¹² Ditchev, 'The Eros', p. 236.

Said points out that *orientalism* may assume different forms — scientific, religious, artistic, or other — but all of these forms originate with the Western gaze. Psychoanalysis is a case in point. Said, in *Freud and the non-European*,¹³ shows that Freud, an Eastern European Jew, was himself the subject of stereotyping that today might well be designated 'orientalist'. More specific than Said, Sander L. Gilman argues that Freud responded to antisemitism by internalizing his Jewish identity as the pathological East and then, as assimilated Jew, rejected his origins through self-Aryanization: 'Freud's earliest references to Jews entirely fit the model of the Western, acculturated Jew seeing himself as different from and better than the Eastern Jew (*Ostjude*).'¹⁴

Daniel Boyarin examines Freud's paradigmatic shift, in his sexual theory, toward psychoanalysis as a masculine discipline aimed at purging Oedipal subjectivity of the taint of femininity. Boyarin ties this shift to the rise of Zionism as a masculinized response to antisemitic stereotyping of *Ostjuden* as feminized, thus neurotic, men. He argues that psychoanalysis, like the political Zionism surfacing at the beginning of the twentieth century, promulgated self-Aryanization as the antidote to the figurative 'East' (in psychoanalytic sexual terminology, the pathology of the feminine) in the individual subject.¹⁵ The split in Freud's Jewish identity between Western assimilation and traditional East European Jewry was obviously a traumatic one, but Freud still accepted it as essential to the formation of modern subjectivity — as a sort of external Law of castration. Thus he incorporated the hegemonic structure of European modernity into his own psychological Law as the absolute condition of psychic normality.

There has proven to be a demonic conjunction between the ingrained geopolitical and self-orientalizing structure of psychoanalysis and the Balkans' propensity for self-orientalization. The most notorious example of this is the successful deployment of psychoanalytic rhetoric by two politician-psychiatrists — Jovan Rašković in Croatia and Radovan Karadžić (architect of the Bosnian Genocide) — to foment inter-ethnic violence during the Balkan wars of the early 1990s. Although not practitioners of psychoanalytic therapy, Rašković and Karadžić nonetheless found the language of Oedipal structure, the standard of European subjectivity, useful in justifying ethnic separation

¹³ Edward Said, *Freud and the non-European*, London, 2003.

¹⁴ Sander L. Gilman, *Freud, Race, and Gender*, Princeton, NJ, 1993, p. 13. German and Austrian Jews, well integrated into the middle class of their societies, looked upon Eastern European Jews, *Ostjuden*, as a threat to their own secular European identity. See Steven E. Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers: The East European Jew in German and German Jewish Consciousness, 1800–1923*, Madison, WI, 1982, p. 5, and Stephen Frosh, *Hate and the 'Jewish Science': Anti-Semitism, Nazism and Psychoanalysis*, New York, 2005.

¹⁵ Daniel Boyarin, *Unheroic Conduct: The Rise of Heterosexuality and the Invention of the Jewish Man*, Berkeley, CA, 1977, p. 220.

for political ends. Relying on Freud's theory of character as resulting from the child's fixation to particular erogenic zones during the pre-Oedipal period, Dr Rašković outlines, in his book *Luda Zemlja* (*A Mad Country*, 1990) tendencies in each of the three main Yugoslav ethnic groups toward a specific and ethnically unifying fixation: 'In my practice, working almost thirty-five years on the intersection of the three borders belonging to the Serb, Croat and Muslim populations, I have noticed that members of different ethnic groups act according to different characterological types.'¹⁶ He characterizes Serbs as 'Oedipal', Croats as 'castrated' and Muslims as 'anal'. He then makes a theoretical connection between Freud's 'narcissism of small differences' and his own Oedipal ethno-characterology. Proselytizing mass political gatherings in Croatia and Bosnia, Rašković and his protégé, Karadžić, incited 'irrational delirium' (a 'healthy' form of madness) as a political force on behalf of Oedipal emancipation of the Serb nation from Communist dogma. This 'irrational delirium', I would argue, culminated in Srebrenica, where 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men were executed.¹⁷

Serb nationalism — not psychoanalysis — bears ultimate responsibility for Srebrenica. Yet there remains the question of how, and why, psychoanalytic theory and language, the arbiter of individual subjectivity and civilizational hierarchy, coalesced with the political climate in the disintegrating Yugoslavia of the 1990s to create a rationale for ethnic separation with all its tragic consequences. A partial answer is that the psychoanalytic language of the split subject coincided with, and reinforced, the Balkans' self-perception as the archaic Europe — the East of the European West. Psychoanalysis is also the signifier of a modern and civilized subjectivity requiring Oedipal purification on the national as well as the personal level. In other words, in order to become European and modern subjects, the Balkan nations had to rid themselves of the Eastern taint of archaism and femininity.

Both Slavoj Žižek and Julia Kristeva, speaking from the dominant centre, have sought to disassociate themselves from their own Balkan origins. And, I will argue here, both Kristeva and Žižek, having undergone psychoanalytic training in France, not only disidentified

¹⁶ Dr Jovan Rašković, *Luda Zemlja*, Belgrade, 1990, p. 128.

¹⁷ Ethnic difference, correspondingly, is reconsidered through a sexual analytics, as in the case of Nada Todorova, a Serb academic who employs a deeply psychoanalytic logic in the following characterization of Muslim sexuality as orientals. Since *The Tales of the Arabian Nights* are 'full of eroticism', she claims, 'it is certain that they (the Muslim) read them carefully during puberty; their effect on the personality of the latter is clearly evident. In committing atrocities (rapes) in Bosnia-Herzegovina, (their) conscious, sub-conscious, and unconscious levels or personality have been at work'. Interview with Nada Todorova by Colonel Nikola Ostojić, 'Genocidne poruke is "1001 noći"', *Vojnska*, 8 April 1993, pp. 20–21; cited in Norman Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia: The Policy of 'Ethnic Cleansing'*, College Station, TX, 1995, p. 70.

with their origins in the Communist Balkans but identified their maternal spaces as pathological. Kristeva has embraced the geo-aesthetics of France, her adopted country, and Žižek has become the intellectual standard-bearer of Eurocentric universalism. They have not recognized, either in the origins of psychoanalysis or in their own identity, the workings of the colonial pressure to simultaneously identify and disidentify with the colonial hierarchy dictated by European geopolitics. Their assumption that psychoanalysis is a universal discourse, which is supposed to make them independent of the Balkan political geography, renders these two Balkan psychoanalysts uncritical, normalizing agents of the discourse of European colonialism and promoters of self-orientalization.¹⁸ Failure to assess critically the discursive geography of European colonial discourse as it relates to the Balkans is reflected in their view of immigrants. For them, immigrants are the new Balkans; they represent the archaic substance that needs to be either colonized or expelled as a threat to European colonial subjectivity.

Julia Kristeva: The Balkans as Geopolitical 'Abject'

In recent years, the field of Exile Studies has profoundly influenced Western academic discourse, becoming foundational to the development of the areas of Post-Colonial and Cultural Studies. Julia Kristeva, in *Strangers to Ourselves*¹⁹ and other works, taking a psychoanalytic approach to the question of exile, has made a distinctive contribution to the field, and her work is widely recognized as seminal to it.²⁰ Her position on exile and homeland, psychoanalytically-mediated as it is, radically differs from Said's. For Said, 'homeland' (Kristeva's 'maternal space')²¹ is a location from which to speak against the hegemony of European colonialism and with which to identify. Kristeva, on the other hand, calling for 'oedipal revolt',²² advocates a radical split with Bulgaria and the Balkans as her maternal space: 'in order to establish the symbolic pact, one has to get rid of the domestic, corporal,

¹⁸ On self-orientalization as a part of Europe's colonial discourse, see 'Introduction' to Nataša Knežević, *Narrating Post/Communism: Colonial Discourse and Europe's Borderline Civilization*, London, 2008 (hereafter, *Narrating*).

¹⁹ Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez, New York, 1994 (hereafter, *Strangers*).

²⁰ See in this respect Bonnie Honig, *Democracy and the Foreigner*, Princeton, NJ, 2001; Iver B. Neuman, *Uses of the Other: 'The East' in European Identity Formation*, Minneapolis, MN, 1999.

²¹ Julia Kristeva, *The Sense and Non-Sense of Revolt: The Powers and Limits of Psychoanalysis*, trans. Jeanine Herman, New York, 2000 (hereafter, *The Sense*), p. 20.

²² Julia Kristeva, *Revolt, She Said*, trans. Brian O'Keeffe, Los Angeles, CA, 2002 (hereafter, *Revolt*), p. 106.

maternal container.²³ A prominent thesis in Kristeva's work is that being in exile, bearing the psychic burden of the lost maternal space, is not only closely tied to the process of Oedipal development, but is also a site of dissent: 'exile is already in itself a form of *dissidence*, since it involves uprooting oneself from a family, a country, or language.'²⁴ She reformulates resistance as the revolt of the centre against the periphery, and views the West (France, in particular) as the symbolic father and agent of civilizing 'rescue' from the Balkans as Europe's unconscious source of carnage and violence.²⁵ Her advice to Bulgarian citizens is to 'undergo a psychoanalysis or psychotherapy'²⁶ in order to join European civilization successfully. In short, for Kristeva, the Balkans and France do not meet as two subjects, two equal codes — rather as French subject and Bulgarian abject: 'The abject has only one quality of the object-that of being opposed to *I*.'²⁷ Within her project of Oedipal revolt, she pits Bulgaria as European archaic drive against France as Europe's Symbolic and as a result she loses psychological heterogeneity to the simplified structure of geopolitical differentiation. In other words, 'archaic' in the context of European geopolitics has quite a different denotation than it does in Kristeva's theory of poetics (*chora*).²⁸ The former invokes established political stereotypes; the latter invents new usage of language. To become a French subject, Kristeva had first to demonize her Bulgarian identity according to her own theory of abjection: 'I expel *myself*, I spit *myself* out, I abject *myself* within the same motion through which "I" claim to establish *myself*.'²⁹ From exile, she writes with 'love' to Bulgaria as the geopolitical abject:

You suffer from chaos, from vandalism, from violence. You suffer from the lack of authority. You suffer from corruption, the absence of initiative, the sloppiness that redoubles an unprecedented brutality on the individual level, the arrogance of the mafia and the scams of the newly rich.³⁰

²³ *The Sense*, p. 21.

²⁴ Quoted in Danielle Marx-Scouras, *The Cultural Politics of Tel Quel: Literature and the Left in the Wake of Engagement*, Philadelphia, PA, 1996, p. 195.

²⁵ Kristeva locates the maternal carnage in language, 'This is because, just as Lacan said the unconscious may perhaps be structured like a language, I think that it is above all structured as a *carnage*'. Kelly Oliver, 'Dialogue with Julia Kristeva', *Parallax*, 4, 1998, 3, p. 6.

²⁶ Julia Kristeva, *Crisis of the European Subject*, trans. Susan Fairfield, New York, 2000 (hereafter, *Crisis*), p. 182.

²⁷ Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez, New York, 1982 (hereafter, *Powers of Horror*), p. 1.

²⁸ The 'chora' (Julia Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, New York, 1984) is an important theoretical concept that Kristeva has adapted from Plato's *Timaeus*, where he conceptualizes the formless receptacle of the mother's body that gives birth to the reason which brings form to life. She theorizes 'chora' to be the signifier of the primal desire for unity with the mother against which the subject must struggle in order to acquire language and enter the Symbolic space.

²⁹ *Powers of Horror*, p. 3.

³⁰ *Crisis*, p. 176.

Kristeva discursively weaves her personal history and exilic identity into this geopolitical complex in interesting, provocative ways. She left her native Bulgaria in 1965 when, at twenty-four, she received a scholarship from the French government that enabled her to pursue graduate studies in Paris. There she studied with such eminent scholars as, among others, Roland Barthes, Claude Levi-Strauss and Emil Benveniste, and has become world-renowned as a semiologist, psychoanalyst, and even a writer of fiction. Among the many accolades she has received over the years is a *Doctor Honoris Causa* degree from her Bulgarian *alma mater*, the University of Sofia. This event, which occurred in May 2002, is in many respects emblematic of her career and her self-assigned exilic identity, not only because it marked a triumphal return to her native Bulgaria, but also because her acceptance speech (entitled 'Language, Nation, and Women'),³¹ touches upon the main themes of her work and, while expressing gratitude for the education she received in Bulgaria, specifically acknowledges her allegiance to France and her love and admiration for the French culture and language:

I love the logical clarity of French, the impeccable precision of the vocabulary, the niceness of judgment [...] I have transferred so completely into this other language that I have spoken and written for 50 years already, that I am almost ready to believe the Americans who take me for a French intellectual and writer.³²

Her love of the French language must have been immediately evident to her largely Bulgarian audience, because the speech was delivered in French, with a token passage in Bulgarian at the end.

That Kristeva's acceptance speech at the University of Sofia was written and delivered in French is perhaps not surprising, given the forty (or so) years that had elapsed since she effectively stopped using Bulgarian. However, her predilection for all things French has deeper implications with regard to her personalized civilizational model, which is based on superiority rather than on diversity, and in which she regards language as playing a crucial role. This is particularly evident when she discusses the Bulgarian language in the essay 'Bulgarie, ma souffrance'.³³ In this essay Kristeva describes a rare visit to her

³¹ Julia Kristeva, 'La Langue, la Nation, les Femmes', *Édition Université de Sofia*, 2002 (hereafter 'La Langue'). (Excerpts quoted in this paper translated from the French by Rosemary Miller.) A copy of the speech in the original French was sent to me by Professor Dimitar Kambourov, who was present when Kristeva received the *Doctor Honoris Causa* degree and heard her speak. He reports, 'I would say that people who know details concerning Kristeva's intellectual itinerary would not be that surprised by the fact that she gave her speech in French [...] in fact, there was widespread opposition to what she did then'. Personal communication, 19 March 2007. Quoted by permission.

³² Ibid. pp. 12–13.

³³ Julia Kristeva, 'Bulgarie, ma souffrance', *L'Infini*, 51, 1995, pp. 42–52.

homeland in 1989, just before the fall of the Berlin Wall, accompanying French President François Mitterrand on an official visit. In psycho-analytic terms, she returns to Bulgaria as an emancipated Oedipus with Mitterrand as her symbolic father. And, in the essay, all elements of her theory of language are put into play to produce an apology for the psycho-political necessity of a divided Europe. She finds in Bulgaria, gazing with her French eye, three particularly disturbing and internally related irritants — dirty streets, a dirty national language and Orthodox Christianity. To her the polluted streets and the polluted language are symptomatic of social disorder and the lack of a genuine national identity directly caused, in her judgment, by the failed Oedipal structure of the Orthodox Christian unconscious and Orthodox theology's feminization of the Orthodox Oedipus.

As for the streets, Kristeva laments the post-Communist aesthetics of the public sphere, the black markets and 'the garbage and flies' in the streets of Sofia. Even more, she laments the 'lapses of taste' revealed by the sorry condition of the national language. When Bulgarians began translating Shakespeare and Dostoevskii, Faulkner, Beckett, Nathalie Sarraute, Barthes, Foucault, a bit of Kristeva, '[i]t became clear that there were not enough words, and so they stuffed into this poor language of sensitive peasants and naïve thinkers a whole arsenal of tasteless and rootless loanwords'.³⁴ For her, vandalism, trashy consumer aesthetics, an illegal economy, political corruption and cultural plagiarism — common features of post-Communist societies — are all signs of barbarism and preempt any kind of social grace, politeness, and national taste. She divides European nations into those, like France, which have an aesthetic of the public sphere and those which do not, such as Bulgaria.

Tzvetan Todorov, world-renowned as a historian and literary theorist, is a compatriot of Kristeva and a fellow émigré in Paris, and there are many other circumstantial similarities in their backgrounds. Approximately the same age, both attended French-speaking schools in their native Bulgaria, went to Paris to pursue graduate studies in the 1960s, and were associated with the same intellectual circle during their early years there. After an absence of eighteen years, Todorov first returned to Bulgaria in 1981 to give a presentation at a conference and writes of this experience in the essay 'Roundtrip ticket'.³⁵ It is illuminating to compare his essay with Kristeva's reactions to her own return, articulated in 'Bulgarie, ma souffrance'. In contrast to her, Todorov has no political, philosophical or linguistic axe to grind.

³⁴ *Crisis*, p. 171.

³⁵ Tzvetan Todorov, *L'Homme dépaycé*, Paris, 1996, pp. 11–26. (Excerpts quoted in this paper have been translated from the French by Rosemary Miller.)

Though he returns to Bulgaria in a semi-official capacity, his experience is modestly presented through details of everyday life. For instance, he cleans his parents' yard, wearing a pair of old shoes that his mother has kept in a drawer for eighteen years. His essay is a thoughtful examination, touched with humour, of the 'existential difficulty' of exile and displacement. Though he admits to 'hostility' to the Communist regime, he does not conflate politics with interpersonal relations or with culture. The question of language is of concern to him — as it is to Kristeva. However, his chief concern is with interpersonal communication. He first writes his address for the conference to which he has been invited in French, then translates it into Bulgarian, concerned throughout with not offending his hosts through an inadvertent linguistic faux pas. Todorov's thoughtful examination of questions of exile, language and cultural identity leads him to conclude, 'I cannot debate these questions as an impartial judge because my personal fate has forcibly imposed my way of seeing; but I can try to convey the sense of my experience'.³⁶ The sense of his experience is very different from that of Kristeva's own return, which is completely self-referential, suffusing 'experience' with politics, ideology and, above all, psychoanalytically based judgments.

Kristeva elevates Oedipal cleanliness, the clear sign of the subject's internalization of the Father's Law and the separation with the mother, to a political and geo-aesthetic precondition for the formation of a civic nation characterized by distinct and collectively shared taste. For her, 'nation' is not just a political institution, it is a psycho-aesthetic aggregate like the Greek polis, in which politics, identity and social life all stem from a collective aesthetics predicated on the Oedipal hygienic. Building her psychoanalytic theory of subjectivity upon Arendt's 'veritable politics of narration', Kristeva theorizes that a nation is a political object of order only to the extent that it achieves an aesthetic unity among its citizens — that it has a national 'taste'. France, of course, is the aesthetic nation *par excellence* and the leading example of this principle. 'French taste', she writes, 'is an act of politeness among people who share the same rhetoric — the same accumulation of images and phrases', and although 'each person belongs to his family, a clan of friends, a professional clique, that's anchored in language', people in clans share 'the same battery of readings and conversations', a commonality which is the mark of a 'stable society'. French clannishness has been 'rooted in language, in an art of living and in this harmonization of shared customs called French taste'.³⁷ With respect

³⁶ Ibid., p. 21.

³⁷ *Revolt*, p. 49.

to the art of living, Kristeva even claims that France should be seen as the aesthetic leader of the world:

I lodge my body in the logical landscape of France, take shelter in the sleek, easy and smiling streets, rub shoulders with this odd people — they are reserved but disabused and possessed of an impenetrable intimacy which is, all things considered, polite. They built Notre-Dame and the Louvre, conquered Europe and a large part of the globe, and then went back home again because they prefer a pleasure that goes hand in hand with reality. But because they also prefer the pleasures reality affords, they still believe themselves masters of the world, or at any rate a great power. An irritated, condescending, fascinated world that seems ready to follow them. To follow us.³⁸

Here, Kristeva's uncritical assessment of French colonial history reveals the construction of her own exilic identity. Furthermore, her claim that the French 'conquered Europe and a large part of the globe, and then went back home again because they prefer a pleasure that goes hand in hand with reality' completely ignores the reality that they 'went back home' and relinquished their colonies because of bloody anti-colonial struggles by indigenous people.

Kristeva's pronouncements on the glories of French civilization and the anti-immigrant stands she has taken in public discourse are significant in light of her therapeutic work with immigrants — and her relation to her own native space. Although distant in space, French immigrants and the Balkans are, in Kristeva's orientalist register, related within the discursive framework of her exilic identity. While the Balkans symbolize the mad, archaic mother, the immigrants are angry children, and both are equally dangerous to the Father. In fact, using the same language of Oedipalization with which she abjects the Balkans, Kristeva accuses Third World immigrants, since their arrival in France, of 'Balkanizing the cultural, political, and economic forces of European people'.³⁹ Indeed, she lays the blame on immigrants for the 'gruesome course' that French civil society has taken since the French Revolution. In 1990, many French intellectuals signed a petition in favour of granting political asylum to illegal immigrants. Refusing to do so, Kristeva stated, '[m]uch as I am sensitive to the distress of the immigrants, equally I don't think it's desirable to give the deceptive impression that integration is possible for everyone who asks for it'.⁴⁰ She justifies her position by Oedipalizing the issue of immigration. Immigrants are those who are marked (like her) with 'matricide', who have left their maternal countries and languages, and who can become

³⁸ Ibid., p. 65.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 54.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 46.

fully integrated into French culture and society only if they accept French symbolic authority as their geopolitical Father. Integration is possible and permitted only to the Oedipalized. Otherwise the immigrants would, like the failed Oedipus, drown in the maternal 'swamp' which will foster a breakdown of French symbolic authority and balkanize the French civic space. (Of course she would not expect French culture to be open to the transformation she demands of immigrants.)

Not surprisingly, foreigners under Kristeva's therapy have exhibited the same psychic structure of matricide as she and are equally pathologized. Her clinical notes read, 'changing language often doesn't just respond to a political urgency, but is the sign of a matricide that no satisfactory relation with the Father could prevent or compensate for'.⁴¹ Conflating foreigners, psychologically, with the Balkans, she pathologizes exile as 'a violent, destructive separation from the mother that follows on from maternal violence itself'. And, she adds, '[e]xile often harbors a trauma that's difficult to confront and elaborate on: it predisposes these patients to acting-out that run from cynicism to corruption, defiance to fundamentalism'.⁴² Kristeva's designation of the Balkans as the sign of the archaic Mother in immigrants connects the geopolitics of Europe, the formation of 'intimate democracy', and her own biography into a self-referential scheme anchored in psychoanalytic theory. We may conclude, then, that Kristeva's psychoanalytic exclusionism is *self*-orientalizing in the sense that she locates and subjugates her Bulgarian origins as the East to her French superego. Then, in turn — mimicking 'nesting *orientalisms*' — to maintain her identification with the French superego as her West she orientalizes 'Strangers'.

Undergoing psychoanalysis in Paris led Kristeva to identify her own Bulgarian origins as pathological. As analysand, she then moved from seeing herself as the 'other' in the host country to seeing herself *as* the host — the dominating other. Over time, identification with the 'host' came to dominate her subject position and this perspective was reinforced by her role as psychoanalyst. This point of view is also evident in her disregard of cultural, geographic and historical contingencies of place in formulating her discourse on exile. This ahistorical perspective becomes particularly problematic when she represents the Balkans as the place of archaic violence, of unconscious desire, of the Freudian *Tribe*. In fact, the history of the Balkans shows that violence there has been, for the most part, state-organized on behalf of European political ideals. In the 1990s, the violence that prompted Kristeva's psychoanalytic intervention into the region stemmed from newly established

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 79.

⁴² Ibid.

ethnic states 'defending' the idea of nation and its founding myths against ethnic minorities. Finding the ethnic enemy, the 'archaic' and 'primitive' elements usually located to the East, became the political obsession of Balkan nationalism. Kristeva's psychoanalytic interpretation of exile recreates this obsession — in the heart of Paris — by situating the 'archaic East' in the psyche of unassimilated 'strangers' living in the suburbs.

Strangers to Ourselves is generally regarded as a seminal text on exile studies and offers a complex picture of Kristeva's post-political view of otherness and her understanding of 'stranger'. For example, it is tempting to read Kristeva's portrayal of the biblical Ruth, 'The Model Émigrée',⁴³ as Kristeva's idealized *alter ego*. Ruth, the princess of Moab, married a Jew, stopped mourning her maternal space and was rewarded by becoming the matriarch of Jewish royalty, ancestor of David's line: 'The reprehensible immigration is thus inverted into a necessary condition for the accomplishment of Ruth's destiny.'⁴⁴ Kristeva's interpretation of the story of Ruth shows that she desires immigrants, Bulgarians and the Balkans, to desire *her* French-ness. In this self-appointed role as signifier of the other's desire, she promotes the hegemony of French culture as a unifying tradition, the symbolic hegemony for the diverse community.⁴⁵

My intent here is not to homogenize and simplify Kristeva's complex literary theory beyond recognition. Rather, following her notion of 'immanent critique', I aim to subject her political writings to the operative binary behind her self-proclaimed cosmopolitanism. The closing lines of *Strangers to Ourselves* summarize her concept of a post-Freudian multicultural utopia and politics of 'intimate democracy':

A paradoxical community is emerging, made up of foreigners who are reconciled with themselves to the extent that they recognize themselves as foreigners. The multinational society would thus be the consequence of an extreme individualism, but conscious of its discontents and limits, knowing only indomitable people ready-to-help-themselves in their weakness, a weakness whose other names is our radical strangeness.⁴⁶

Kristeva has arrived at this post-national and cosmopolitan vision of 'multinational society' through her psychoanalytic training as a Bulgarian intellectual in exile during the 1970s in Paris. Having confronted her own strangeness through self-analysis, she arrived at her theory of

⁴³ Bonnie Honig, 'Ruth, the Model Emigrée: Mourning and the Symbolic Politics of Immigration', in *Political Theory: An International Journal of Political Philosophy*, 25, February 1997, 1, pp. 112–36.

⁴⁴ *Strangers*, p. 70.

⁴⁵ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, trans. Quintin Hoare, Geoffrey N. Smith, New York, 1971, p. 6.

⁴⁶ *Strangers*, p. 195.

otherness which, in *Strangers to Ourselves*, she extends to the context of immigrant labour in France. She identifies four kinds of otherness: the other as immigrant in France; the other as the French host to the immigrant; the other as her own unconscious projection of a foreigner; and, finally, the unconscious projection of herself as the other onto her fellow citizens. The first two instances are empirical, the other two psychoanalytic. All of these forms of otherness have the unconscious as their foundation, and thus must be recognized as the psychosomatic foundation of democracy that allows for intimacy as much as for diversity and unity. However, the corollary to accepting that unconscious fantasies constitute the other is accepting that the symbolic castration and repression of prohibited desire toward maternal space is the foundation of otherness just as much as of one's symbolic expression. In other words, the multicultural utopia of radical individuals, radical diversity and radical strangeness requires radical estrangement from the maternal space — whether Bulgaria, Algeria, Morocco, or elsewhere — and acceptance of French culture as symbolic father. Self-orientalization purchases entry into cosmopolitan 'multinational society'. Intrinsically, then, psychoanalysis as the science of the unconscious becomes the ultimate arbiter of political and personal diversity, yet the Oedipal structure of universal subjectivity is deeply invested in homogenizing identity, erasing colonial histories and maintaining cultural hegemony.

Kristeva's post-Freudian politics emerge from her work on literary theory and from Lacanian psychoanalysis, but her political vision must be reconciled with her political practice. Kristeva's support of the French government's prohibition of Muslim schoolgirls wearing headscarves is a specific example of her refusal to recognize diasporic signification, or any aspect of immigrant identity formation that does not conform to the French symbolic system or rests on the incestuous bond with lost maternal space.⁴⁷ Again, this position is consistent with her theory of otherness and cosmopolitan strangeness because abjection of diasporic identity (Islamic identity, for example) is the requirement for cosmopolitan membership. Yet, sociological study of the Islamic tradition in Europe reveals that Islamization of the immigrant identity in an alien space produces neither a simple nor an incomplete self.

⁴⁷ I am not suggesting that Kristeva is racist. However, I agree with David Macey's assessment that she cannot 'escape the confusion that surrounds the entire French debate about citizenship and nationality. All too often, it is forgotten [...] that in many cases the offensive "Muslim woman in a headscarf" is, and has from birth been, a French citizen'. David Macey, 'Rebellion, or, Analysis', *Radical Philosophy*, March/April 2006, p. 47. On the headscarves issue, *l'affaire du foulard*, see Norma Claire Moruzzi, 'A Problem with Headscarves: Contemporary Complexities of Political and Social Identity', *Political Theory: An International Journal of Political Philosophy*, 22, 1994, 4, pp. 653–72.

Rather, in the absence of a spatial connection, Islamization offers 'lineage of belief' with the tradition of the lost space.⁴⁸ For example, a young Turk interviewed by a French sociologist had reported that in order to remain in Germany after his mother requested that he return permanently with her to Turkey, he joined a Mosque, a compromise which satisfied his mother and permitted him to stay in Germany and attend university. Not only had he emancipated himself from the traditional family by signifying himself as an Islamist, he had also found his identity as a European in the exclusionary environment. 'In fact Muslim religiosity serves the individual as a means of constructing himself as the *same* and as *different* within the society' (my italics — DIB).⁴⁹ Thus European Muslim identity can provide a middle ground between living in a space and being excluded from it.⁵⁰ According to Schirin Amir-Moazami,

[t]he hybrid character of identities, represented by *in-between* formations, demands a redefined understanding of borders and markers in the context of migration. Such an understanding has to go beyond the *either/or* scheme: Islamic or *laïque*, modern or traditional, the self or the other, etc.⁵¹

The Balkan in-betweenness would seem to be compatible with immigrants' multicultural backgrounds, yet this cultural hybridity is precisely what Kristeva orientalizes in her articulation of her own exilic identity. Balkan liminality is sacrificed to French cosmopolitanism and the political clarity of the orientalist binary. Yet, for immigrants themselves, geopolitical hybridity rather than 'radical individualism' seems to matter most.⁵² According to Norma Claire Moruzzi, '[i]n Kristeva's individual case, changing international relationships involves a possible personal configuration, such that her former identity as a young Bulgarian stranger threatens to return and confound her mature self, a self internationally recognized as a French intellectual'.⁵³

⁴⁸ Quoted in Nikola Tietze, 'Managing Borders: Muslim Religiosity Among Young Men in France and Germany' (hereafter, 'Managing Borders'), in Armando Salvatore (ed.), *Muslim Traditions and Modern Techniques of Power*, Münster, 2001 (hereafter, *Muslim Traditions*), pp. 293–306 (p. 295).

⁴⁹ 'Managing Borders', p. 300.

⁵⁰ 'In other words, Muslim religiosity is a means for dealing with ambivalence, so that borders lose their power of separation. Continuity and discontinuity, 'Orient' and 'Occident', difference and identity, dogma and heresy become compatible.' Ibid., p. 305.

⁵¹ Schirin Amir-Moazami, 'Hybridity and Anti-Hybridity: The Islamic Headscarf and its Opponents in the French Public Sphere', in *Muslim Traditions*, pp. 307–28 (p. 324).

⁵² For the critical status of Kristeva's exile in the French context, see Winifred Woodbull, *Transfigurations of the Maghreb: Feminism, Decolonization, and Literatures*, Minneapolis, MN, 1993, pp. 88–133.

⁵³ Norma Claire Moruzzi, 'National Objects: Julia Kristeva on the Process of Political Self-Identification', in Kelly Oliver (ed.), *Ethics, Politics, and Difference in Julia Kristeva's Writing*, New York, 1993, pp. 135–49 (p. 144).

Defending French cultural dominance, Kristeva constructs the Balkans as a discursive trope and then subjects her own construction just as she subjects un-Oedipalized immigrants. One might argue that she posits inequality in the very existence of the shared unconscious. In other words, however much we may differ in looks or culture, are we not all strangers to ourselves and others because we repress desire? Yet there remains the crucial question of who claims and exercises the power to repress and interpret this desire.

Slavoj Žižek: The Balkans as the Lacanian 'Real'

In the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, neoliberalism was on the rise, along with a general presumption of the end of ideology. Slavoj Žižek, then already an established Marxist philosopher and founder of what is today known as the Slovenian Group of Lacanian psychoanalysis,⁵⁴ made this rebuttal to that claim: not only is ideology not dead, but the proclamation of its death represents ideology in its purest form. The subsequent ethnic conflicts in Yugoslavia and the rise of European nationalism have proven him right, and today most would agree that ideology in the age of post-Communism and global capitalism is alive and well and has found new ways of generating its exclusionary force. Xenophobia — fear of the foreigner — serves as the political and unconscious ground for inventing a new ideology anchored in cultural differences.⁵⁵ Unlike Kristeva, who subjects her native Bulgaria in the interest of her own cosmopolitanism, Žižek, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, vested his formidable psychoanalytic capital in inventing Slovenia as a modern European nation. However, self-orientalization characterizes his project just as much as it does Kristeva's. This is evident in his discourse as well as in his political practice in Slovenia with regard to internal immigrants from other ex-Yugoslav republics.

Following the declaration of its independence from Yugoslavia in June 1991, Slovenia promised citizenship to 200,000 'internal immigrants', most of whom were labourers recruited from southern and less developed Yugoslav republics in response to a labour shortage in Slovenia. They held Yugoslavian citizenship at the time of Slovene independence from the Yugoslav Federation. The Slovene government upheld its promise to around 170,000 of these immigrants. Of the remaining 30,000, 11,000 left Slovenia, but the rest failed to apply for citizenship for all sorts of reasons. On 26 February 1992, the deadline

⁵⁴ The members of the group besides Slavoj Žižek are Mladen Dolar, Renata Salecl, Rado Riha, Miran Božović, Alenka Zupančič, Zdravko Kobe, Jelica Šumič-Riha and Eva D. Bahovec.

⁵⁵ Etienne Balibar, 'Is There a "Neo-Racism"?', in Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, London, 2005.

for applying for citizenship, the Ministry of the Interior, led by Igor Bavcar (of the Liberal Democratic Party — a part of DEMOS, the Slovene Democratic Opposition), simply erased these people from the register of permanent residents. Through this act, they instantly became illegal immigrants — criminals. The immigrants so affected had no prior notice that they would lose their residence if they did not apply by the deadline. The Constitutional Court of Slovenia remained silent on the issue until, under pressure from the European Union, it issued a judgment in 1999 that this act was unconstitutional. However, the government, now led solely by the LDP, remained resistant to implementing the ruling, thus creating the first constitutional crisis of the newly formed country.

Erasure of documents; revoking citizenship; making application for permanent residence a time-consuming, complicated, and humiliating procedure; numerous arrests; interrogations at the border crossing with Croatia — these are all Slovenian practices that Borut Mekina has called 'soft ethnic cleansing'.⁵⁶ Slovenia may have escaped the horror of outright ethnic violence that tore apart Bosnia and Croatia, but it fell right into the pattern of racist discrimination against foreigners common to European countries. As the *Statewatch* (bi-monthly section) reports, racism and violence across EU member states persists.⁵⁷ What happened in Slovenia with the wholesale erasure of immigrants' legal identity is what Hannah Arendt calls, referring to German Jews, a creation of 'stateless people'.⁵⁸ What was intended to be concealed by the Slovene government, the media and intellectuals was the rise of racism as a *modus vivendi* of the Slovene government and is, as Vlasta Jalušić points out, 'largely part of a global trend and a result of the disintegrations of federal states and the formation of new nation states'.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Borut Mekina, 'Izbrisani: Birokratska samovolja ali politična odločitev? Mehko etničko čiščenje v Sloveniji', *Večer*, 26, November 2002, p. 5.

⁵⁷ Jacqueline Bhabha, "'Get Back to Where You Once Belonged": Identity, Citizenship, and Exclusion in Europe', *Human Rights Quarterly*, 20, 1998, p. 602n.

⁵⁸ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, New York, 1994 (hereafter, *The Origins*), pp. 275–90. See also, Wolfgang Heuer, 'Europe and Its Refugees: Arendt on the Politization of Minorities', *Social Research*, 2007 <http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2267/is_4_74/pnum=9&opg=n24377475&tag=artBody;col1> [accessed 2, 11, 2008].

⁵⁹ Vlasta Jalušić, 'Organized Innocence', in Jasminka Dedić, Vlasta Jalušić and Jelka Zorn, *The Erased-Organized Innocence and the Politics of Exclusion*, Ljubljana, 2003 (hereafter, *The Erased*), p. 13; see also Chris Colin, 'Slovenia's Vanishing Act', *Mother Jones*, 11 January 2007; Jelka Zorn, 'Borders, Exclusions and Resistance: The Case of Slovenia', in Michael Lavalette and Ian Ferguson (eds), *International Social Work and the Radical Tradition*, Birmingham, 2007, and 'Ethnic Citizenship in the Slovenian State', *Citizenship Studies*, 9, 2005, 2, pp. 135–52; Brad K. Blitz, 'Statelessness and the Social (De)Construction of Citizenship: Political Restructuring and Ethnic Discrimination in Slovenia', *Journal of Human Rights*, 7, 2006, pp. 453–79.

According to Matevž Krivic, the legal defender of the Association of the Erased Residents and former constitutional judge, '[t]he story of erasure involved planned and carefully controlled ethnic cleansing, whereby the ruling power presumably followed the principle of national homogenization to "do away with" those others'.⁶⁰ In the public discourse, and particularly media discourse of the new Slovene state, the non-Slovene territory of former Yugoslavia was commonly represented as a place of violence, primitivism and irrationality, and this practice became a condition upon which the construction of Slovene civility and democracy depended.⁶¹ Slovene nationalist anti-Balkan sentiment expressed in the expelling of the Balkans from Slovenia became the necessity for the production of national identity rather than a legal oversight. According to Sašo Lap, Deputy of the Slovenian National Right party in the National Assembly:

Our nationalism always crops up in relation to the issue of citizenship and it remains within the limits of patriotism [...] The type of nationalism against which all Europe fights is the nationalism of the Balkans nations, one which incessantly triggers wars and street terrorism! The only type of nationalism in Slovenia that deserves to be blamed is the tribalism of the Albanian mafia, Serbian chauvinism, and Muslim fundamentalism. Therefore, our state-formative patriotism is not of the same kind.⁶²

Eleven years after the 'erasure', the Slovene media began, belatedly and cautiously, to discuss it. The erased and the silence around them must be assessed in the political context of the rise of Slovene nationalist sentiment during the 1980s and 1990s and the use of government as a tool for defending the nation against the threat coming from the Federal government in Belgrade and for pursuing pro-Western exclusionary politics. The linchpin of the political platform unifying the Communist leadership and the dissident bloc was their anti-Balkans position. This newfound unity gave Slovene Communists the necessary leverage to negotiate with the Serb leadership the conditions of Slovene secession from Yugoslavia,⁶³ and it gave the dissident nationalist bloc

⁶⁰ *The Erased*, p. 19.

⁶¹ Rastko Močnik elaborates upon Slovene anti-Balkanism, 'Balkanism was a mixture of flattery aimed at compelling "Europe" and the current hegemony to admit that this or that country did not belong in the "Balkans" and at mobilizing progressivism which encouraged the natives to make the effort to prove that they do not belong in the "Balkans"'. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 108.

⁶² Jasminka Dedić, 'Discrimination in Granting Slovenian Citizenship' (hereafter, 'Discrimination'), in *ibid.*, p. 109.

⁶³ According to Steven L. Burg, Janez Drnovšek, as the first popularly elected Slovenian representative to the collective Yugoslav presidency, negotiated an agreement with Slobodan Milošević that Serbia would support secession of Slovenia within its existing borders in return for Slovenian acquiescence to efforts by the Serbs to re-draw other borders. *Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Daily Report — Eastern Europe*, 25 January 1991, p. 70, in Stephen J. Blank (ed.), *Yugoslavia's Wars: The Problem from Hell, Report to Strategic Studies Institute, U.S., Carlisle Barracks, PA*, 1995, p. 49.

the required leverage to promote its anti-Balkans stance. In any event, their loyalty to the new national state rather than to law and civil society was at odds with their own political genesis in civil society.⁶⁴

Žižek was not only the most prominent member of the Slovene Lacanians, but was also active in political life. On the ticket of the Liberal Democratic Party — then a small centrist party within DEMOS — he ran unsuccessfully for a seat on the collective presidency of Slovenia in the nation's first free election in 1991. As a founding member, Žižek remained active in the party, advising the leadership and writing political speeches for them. The Democratic Alliance (DEMOS), including the Liberal Party, controlled the government in February 1992 after the first democratic elections, and it was Minister of the Interior Igor Bavčar, a member of Žižek's Liberal Democratic Party, who was responsible for erasure of the files of more than 18,000 people. As a part of the majority in the National Assembly, the Liberal Democratic Party participated in voting down the amendment to allow 'internal immigrants' who had entered the country after a certain date to obtain residence in Slovenia. Acceding to pressure from the right and maintaining silence about the erased, with the Democratic Alliance imploding by playing the nationalist card, the LDP gained power in the National Assembly in the next election. Even when the Constitutional Court declared the erasure of records unconstitutional and the LDP controlled the government, the party did not act upon the ruling and Žižek, as well as other intellectuals affiliated with the party, became complicit through their silence.

Public intellectuals who chose to remain silent did so for their own reasons. Žižek's motive, I argue, is congruent with his psychoanalytic pathologization of the Balkans. He was correct in claiming, in his early works, that ideology would continue to flourish in the post-Communist world. Not only that, but he himself has contributed in surprising ways to its proliferation. His argument refuting the supposed end of ideology was actually constructed around two major ideologies: Marxism and psychoanalysis. One egregious example is the psychoanalytic position from which he and members of the Ljubljana Group have theorized social change in the Balkans, focusing on the Lacanian concept of the *Real* — that which cannot be symbolized — analogous to Freud's concept of the 'unconscious'. Originally a purely philosophical concept, the *Real*, the internal limits of language, soon acquired a useful political application in the construction of the essence of the non-Slovene Balkan people as pre-symbolic and a threat to Slovene national security. Through application of this Lacanian psychoanalytic

⁶⁴ Tomaž Mastnak, 'Civil Society in Slovenia: From Opposition to Power', in Paul Lewis (ed.), *Democracy and Civil Society in Eastern Europe*, New York, 1992.

concept, Žižek and his Group contributed to the formation of Slovene post-Yugoslav nationalism and its politics of exclusion directed at non-Slovene Yugoslavs.

The birth of the Lacanian Group in Slovenia (and the rebirth of the Slovenian state) took place in the political context of the disintegration of multiethnic Yugoslavia and the rise, on its ruins, of nation-states at the beginning of the 1990s. Slovenia, the most Western republic of the former Yugoslavia, traditionally has identified more with the culture of Central Europe than that of the Balkans. 'Back to Europe where we always belonged' and 'This is a choice between Europe and the Balkans', proclaimed Janez Drnovšek, Prime Minister of Slovenia for ten years, then President from 2002–06. Žižek was more specific: 'I'm not even Eurocentric, I'm Germanocentric.'⁶⁵ Historically, the concept of 'Central Europe' has fluctuated according to the contingencies of European geopolitics, and it still fluctuates from nation to nation. In the 1970s and 1980s, toward the end of the Cold War, emphasizing culture and subjectivity, political dissent, ethnicity and individual desire, it gained fresh currency as an alternative to the East/West ideological and geopolitical binary. Freud and psychoanalysis have been an important influence on the post-Cold War construction of Eastern European cultural identity and began to influence Slovenian public discourse in the 1970s through the work of the Ljubljana Lacanian Group.⁶⁶ With its intellectual basis in the European enlightenment and its construction of subjectivity around the idea of Oedipal fantasy, psychoanalysis became both the paradigm of Central European subjectivity and a discourse of dissent against political suppression of subjectivity by totalitarian ideologies. Slovenia, only a few hours by train from Vienna and the most liberal of all six Yugoslav republics, was fertile ground for such expressions of dissent to take root and flourish. Two publications in particular nurtured this spirit of dissent: *Mladina* (Youth), run by the Communist youth, and *Nova Revija* (New Review), run by older, more nationalistic writers. Žižek began publishing in *Mladina* in the 1970s. In the 1980s, after he returned from studying in Paris with Lacan's son-in-law and intellectual heir, Jacques-Alain Miller, Žižek's group took over the art magazine *Problemi* (Problems) and used it as a medium for channelling the precepts of Lacanian psychoanalysis into Slovenian public discourse. Mladen Dolar, who also attended Miller's lectures in Paris, remembers his own and Žižek's return to Slovenia as a sort of mission to establish a Lacanian outpost there, encouraged by their mentor, Jacques-Alain Miller:

⁶⁵ Jason Boynton, 'Saying the Unsayable: An Interview with Slavoj Žižek', *Philosopher's Magazine*, 25, 2004, 1, p. 37.

⁶⁶ Mladen Dolar, 'Freud in Yugoslavia', unpublished paper (hereafter, 'Freud in Yugoslavia').

Miller took enormous interest in us because we came from Yugoslavia. We had been publishing Lacan in *Problemi* and *Analecta* for years, and [Miller] was grateful for that. He thinks very strategically and didn't have anyone else published in Eastern Europe. To him, we were the last stronghold of Western culture on the eastern front.⁶⁷

This statement of Dolar regarding Miller's injunction to spread the Lacanian gospel reflects not only a desire to establish psychoanalysis as a discursive hegemony on the 'eastern front' (the Balkans, spearheaded by Slovenia), it also shows Miller's naturalization of the cognitive map of Europe which, since the Enlightenment, had divided European space into the rational West and the irrational East, a division that has shaped the Western discourse of rationality (including psychoanalysis) along the lines of colonial exclusion. However, in order to pursue the psychoanalytic project envisioned by Miller, the Slovene Lacanians had first to construct a psychoanalytic justification of the notion that Slovenes are 'unanalyzable' — an idea which entered the annals of psychoanalysis in a letter from Freud to Trieste psychoanalyst Eduardo Weiss (28 May 1922). Weiss had complained to Freud that a Slovene patient, who suffered from sexual impotence, was not responding to therapy:

The second patient, a Slovene, was a young man who had been discharged from the army after the First World War. He was sexually impotent. He had betrayed many people and had a very immoral ego. One day I learned that he had told his father that my fee was higher than it actually was.⁶⁸

Freud advised Weiss as follows: 'The second patient, the Slovene, is obviously a scoundrel who is not worth your trouble. Our analytical art is powerless with these people, nor can our insight penetrate the dominant dynamic conditions of such cases.'⁶⁹ While Weiss's reference to 'a Slovene' was purely descriptive, Freud's formulation — 'the Slovene' — was derogatory of the patient's ethnicity. 'The Slovene' can't be helped because of who he is, a member of a collectivity lacking in paternal superego, a sign of an archaic mentality. The clear implication is that psychoanalysis can help only when colonization by, and assimilation into, Western European cultural values is accomplished.

According to Ernest Jones, Freud's travels reveal his imaginary map of Europe as expressive of his civilizational theory grounded in a

⁶⁷ Interview with Žižek, 'Enjoy your Žižek: An Excitable Slovenian Philosopher Examines The Obscene Practices Of Everyday Life — Including His Own', by Robert S. Boynton <<http://linguafranca.mirror.theinfo.org/9810/Žižek.html>> [accessed 28 October 2008] (para. 20 of 40).

⁶⁸ Eduardo Weiss, M.D., *Sigmund Freud as a Consultant: Recollections of a Pioneer in Psychoanalysis*, New York, 1970, p. 34.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 37.

colonial history of Europe.⁷⁰ When going north, he would experience order and civilization; when going south he would find the less civilized but more sensual culture and people already marked on his cognitive map. The Lacanian Group had clearly adopted Freud's cognitive map of Europe as a basis for its own particular form of psycho-cultural discourse. This is apparent when Žižek, articulating a project of national rebirth through psychoanalysis, takes up the case of the failing Slovene Oedipus where Freud's correspondence with Weiss concerning the 'immoral Slovene' leaves it. Instead of questioning Freud's implicit geopolitical bias, Žižek uses Freud's original dictum to assert the collective conditions of the Slovene Oedipus. Elaborating on Freud's diagnosis, he writes,

The 'immoral' Slovene mentioned does not just embody the paradoxical way enjoyment and the Law are linked, but hides yet another surprise, which leads to the key to the Slovene national fantasy, to the theme of the 'maternal superego', to the theme of the mother (not the father) as the bearer of the Law/Prohibition.⁷¹

According to Žižek, Slovenes are excessively attached in their 'national fantasy' to the Mother. The absence of the Father, the bearer of internal law/Prohibition, engenders a 'national fantasy' formed around maternal prohibition of external pleasures and creates the 'impediment' to subjectivity expressed in the Slovene's sexual impotence and immorality. Only the Symbolic and internalized Law of the Father, through inner prohibition, engenders enjoyment as a form of transgression. And, Žižek concludes,

we Slovenes — 'unanalyzable' according to Freud — had to wait for Lacan to find a meeting with psychoanalysis; only with Lacan did psychoanalysis achieve a level of sophistication that rendered it capable of tackling such foul apparitions as the Slovenes.⁷²

In other words, Žižek accepts and perpetuates the 'point of view of the dominating other',⁷³ and Lacanian language as the site of national self-transformation.

The separation and exclusion of the 'other' Balkans from the symbolic in order to establish new discursive mastery over the region was implicit in Miller's charge to Žižek and his Group. The discursive hegemony would begin with the ferreting out of traces of Balkan

⁷⁰ Ernest Jones, 'Freud's Early Travels', *The International Journal of Psycho-analysis*, 35, 1954, 2, p. 81.

⁷¹ Slavoj Žižek, *For They Know Not What They Do: Enjoyment as a Political Factor*, London, 1996, p. 8, 55n.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁷³ Rastko Močnik 'The Balkans as an Element in Ideological Mechanisms', in *Balkan as Metaphor*, p. 95.

femininity ('the archaic Mother') in the Slovene psyche through application of Lacanian principles. This would pave the way for the 'Name of the Father' — the law, the symbolic — in Slovene subjectivity, and for consignment of the undesirable elements of the Balkan psyche to the pre-symbolic 'other' Balkans configured as the Lacanian *Real*.

In Mladen Dolar's unpublished paper, 'Freud in Yugoslavia,' he discusses 'the influence that Slovenia and Yugoslavia had on Freud'. Namely, he discusses journeys made by Freud to the region as a tourist:

The catalogue of Yugoslav topoi in Freud could surely be extended, but there is already an outline of a pattern. Freud takes trips from the Center to the outskirts of that disintegrating Empire, from the spiritual focus of that *anderer Schauplatz* which emerges as the place of forgetting, of repressed thoughts of 'death and sexuality', the place where he has to face the anti-Semitic Master that he can avoid in Vienna, the place offering both the image of Inferno and secret enjoyment, the place of missed opportunities and of surfacing obscenities, the emergence of what is usually repressed with normal Europeans, finally the place of the unanalyzable. The *Weltgeist* on vacation meets its Other. Can one venture to say that Yugoslavia is the Schauplatz of the European unconscious, or that *the unconscious is structured like Yugoslavia*?⁷⁴

Dolar is referring here to various aspects of Freud's journeys to the South that point to the Balkans as the territory where the Symbolic falls into forbidden desire, the Balkan *Real*. The 'anti-semitic Master that he [Freud] can avoid in Vienna' is Dr Carl Lueger, the notoriously antisemitic Mayor of Vienna (and Hitler's personal hero), whom Freud unexpectedly meets while exploring the caves at Škocjan with his brother in April 1898. Dolar describes this meeting as 'the anti-Semitic master and the Jew, meeting in Inferno [...] The myth that conjures the confrontation of the origin of psychoanalysis with the origin of what was later to become fascism'.⁷⁵ Lueger is the master-signifier lurking in the *Real* of the Slovenian caves.

The portentous encounter between Lueger and Freud took place on Slovene soil. Therefore, in the Lacanian idiom — as Miller was almost certainly aware — the territory was characterized by a troubling lack of distance between the symbolic master and the *Real*. However, the interplay between centre and periphery (i.e. between Freud's Vienna and the Balkans as the periphery of empire) that Dolar describes in his paper and the extent to which the latter signifies the former does not absolve the Balkans from its *Real*-name. The 'logical grammar' of the

⁷⁴ 'Freud in Yugoslavia', p. 6.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

Real emerging from Dolar's paper renders this concept into a kind of 'conceptual ghetto', a 'discursive camp' with no way out for the Balkans. If the unconscious of Europe is structured as Yugoslavia, which was in flames at the very moment when Dolar was presenting his paper in Vienna, the clear Hegelian implication was that the application of psychoanalytic discourse was required to usher in Western rationality.

Žižek accepts and perpetuates Freud's Eurocentric perspective and deploys it as the site of national self-transformation through application of Lacanian precepts. And when subjectivity has been restored to Slovenia, what becomes of the 'unanalyzable' identity attributed to it by Freud and Žižek? It may be transferred to the 'other' Balkans via the Lacanian concept of the *Real*, the pre-symbolic world. Not only did this discursive strategy of Žižek's reproduce the hoariest of representational clichés about Balkan violence, but was also really *self*-orientalizing in its adherence to the scheme of 'nesting *orientalisms*' in Balkan identity-formation.

During the early 1990s, when apparently senseless killings, rapes and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia were horrifying the rational West, Žižek's unique position as both insider and intellectual observer allowed his analysis of ethnic violence to be interpreted as coming directly from the Balkan subaltern. But this was far from the case. His analysis of the region — and particularly the ethnic violence of the early 1990s — was, in fact, an orientalizing discourse on the Balkan (non-Slovene) other. Moreover, his submission of the region to psychoanalysis greatly enhanced his status as a global intellectual and purveyor of universalism. *The Metastases of Enjoyment: Six Essays on Women and Causality* appeared in 1994 when the Bosnian war was at its height. In this book, Žižek analyses the Balkans, including the sexual violence of the war in Bosnia, using Lacanian theory and language to relate the Bosnian violence to the Lacanian 'father Thing' (*père-jouissance*). That is, soon after Žižek called upon Slovenes to abandon their incestuous bond with the archaic mother and to ground their enjoyment in the Name-of-the-Father, he turned to Bosnia to diagnose the general conditions of the declining Oedipus and the resurgence of the primal father as the political enjoyment of the Balkans' nationalism. For instance, the Serbs committed horrendous rapes of Bosnian Muslim women and often sadistically forced the father to watch the rape of his daughter. Here is Žižek's interpretation of one such hypothetical instance, in which he situates the ritualized sexual violence in the Lacanian pre-Symbolic, and circumvents the question of ethnicity by focusing on the 'father Thing' in the cruelty of the rape:

Because his desire is split, divided between fascination with enjoyment and repulsion at it; or — to put it another way — because the implicit knowledge that the victim is *enjoying* her suffering, the observer's ability to

act — to rescue the victim-woman from the torturer or from herself — bears witness to the fact that he became ‘dupe of his own fantasy’ (as Lacan put it apropos of Sade): *the blow aims at the unbearable surplus-enjoyment*.⁷⁶

Following Lacan, Žižek presents both facets of the ‘Father’s enjoyment’ here: the symbolic and the pre-symbolic. The former sets the rules and parameters of normative order, and his joy is separate from the *Real*. The father in his pre-symbolic aspect (the primal father of Freud’s *Totem and Taboo*), on the other hand, is the owner of all women, the object of his sons’ hate, and the source of sexual violence. He is also exempt from castration. The Bosnian father hypothesized by Žižek epitomizes the pre-symbolic, the primitive, the Balkan *Real*, one who still enjoys (by force) the incestuous bond. As such, he is inseparable from the history of the established pathology of the place itself, as are the rest of the people living there. This particular Lacanian dyad (symbolic father and pre-symbolic father) of *père-jouissance* discursively replaces the ‘unanalyzable Slovene’ with the Bosnian father as primitive other who is all too readily analysable by Žižek himself as symbolic father and phallic authority.

Discovery of himself as symbolic Other and as the ‘empty signifier’ at the moment of analysing the Bosnian father has enabled Žižek to split from the Balkan substance. It has also purchased him a universalist gaze on global labour, immigration and multiculturalism — as well as status as a global, rather than Balkan, intellectual. The ‘Logic of the signifier’ now supersedes empathy with labour’s spatial particularity — internal immigrants — and replaces it with the notion of ‘class’ and ‘productive antagonisms’. His formulation of ‘productive antagonisms’ leads Žižek to oppose the traditional Marxist categories of ‘worker’ and ‘class antagonisms’ to ‘immigrant’ and ‘multiculturalism’ which, in Žižek’s view, preempt the revolutionary potential within class society by repressing class conflict. But then, in place of ‘class solidarity’ he advocates multiethnic hate, rational and politically organized hate, in order to reaffirm class antagonism: ‘the way to fight ethnic *hatred* effectively is not through its immediate counterpart, ethnic *tolerance*; on the contrary, what we need is *even more hatred*, but proper *political* hatred: hatred directed at the common political enemy.’⁷⁷

In 1996, Žižek gave an interview to *Cultural Theory* in which he was asked about his political involvement in Slovenia. His statements about immigration in the published interview are disingenuous in the extreme and reflect his pro-government stand with regard to immigrants. Although speaking openly about his loyalty to his party, he remains

⁷⁶ Slavoj Žižek, *The Metastases of Enjoyment: On Women and Causality*, London, New York City, 2005 (hereafter, *Metastases*), p. 75.

⁷⁷ Slavoj Žižek, *The Fragile Absolute — Or, Why is the Christianity Legacy Worth Fighting For?*, London, 2000, p. 11.

cryptic about the specifics of the party's failures, stating that, 'I fully supported the ruling party in Slovenia. For this all my leftist friends hate me and of course the whole right wing'. He praises his party: 'What the Liberal Democratic Party did was a miracle. Five years ago we were the remainder of the new social movements, like feminist and ecological groups. At that time everybody thought that we would be vanishing mediators.' Žižek is referring here to the election of 1992, when the disintegrating Democratic Alliance coalesced around the LDP, which became the most powerful party in the government. He acknowledges without being specific that '[w]e made some silly corrupted, but good moves and now we are the strongest party'. The important thing for him is that the LDP is holding the centre against the Balkan extremes:

I think it was our party that saved Slovenia from the fate of the other former Yugoslav republics, where they have the one-party model. Either right wing like in Croatia or left wing like in Serbia, which hegemonized in the name of the national interest. With us it's a really diverse, pluralist scene, open towards foreigners (of course there are some critical cases). But the chances of a genuine pluralist society are not yet lost.⁷⁸

Avoiding mention of the Erased, he touches upon the question of immigration, specifically discussing a professor from Belgrade, Svetlana Slapšak. Slapšak, married to a Slovene academic teaching in Ljubljana, is critical of Žižek's views on immigration. He wants her to reflect upon the benefits conferred upon her by Slovene society — benefits that he himself does not have as a Slovene:

I never taught at any university in Slovenia, I am absolutely alone, without any research assistant. They just give me enough money in order to survive. My answer to Svetlana Slapšak would be: why did she become a Slovenian citizen? Her very position is a contradiction of what she says. In a state of less than 2 million we offered 100,000 non-Slovenians permanent citizenship, against terrible nationalistic resistance. There were no dirty tricks involved, like a test if you knew Slovenian.⁷⁹

Žižek, enumerating the privileges enjoyed by Slapšak which are denied to him as a Slovenian, echoes the anti-immigrant column from the weekly *Nedelo*, '[l]et them go home with all their baggage and stay there, what are they still looking for here. Actually, why do we care at all, nobody cares about us either'.⁸⁰ No wonder Žižek is adamant that

⁷⁸ 'Civil Society, Fanaticism, and Digital Reality: A Conversation with Slavoj Žižek', interview by Geert Lovink (21 February 1996) <<http://www.ctheory.net/articles.aspx?id=79>> [accessed 28 October, 2008] (para. 7 of 45).

⁷⁹ Ibid. (para. 11 of 45).

⁸⁰ 'Ridiculous stories from the "statistical goulash"', *Nedelo*, Ljubljana, 30 June 1996, quoted in Tonči A. Kuzmanić, *Hate-Speech in Slovenia: Slovenian Racism, Sexism, and Chauvinism*, Ljubljana, 1999, p. 42.

'civil society' and the Soros foundation are anti-democratic forces: 'in Slovenia I am for the state and against civil society!' Yet, for all their faults, it is civil society and the Soros Foundation that have taken the initiative in investigating and telling the story of the erased.

Professor Dr Ljubo Bavcon, the former president of the Council for the Protection of Human Rights (1988–94), attests to a conversation with the Slovene prime minister and member of LDP, Janez Drnovšek, about the government's harassment of 'internal immigrants' held on 13 May 1994, two years after the erasure. The prime minister promised that the government would cease these activities. However, it did not and, for this reason, Professor Bavcon made public his reaction to the discussion with Drnovšek:

I had enough reason to believe that these were not individual cases of violations of legal rules and human rights but the government's systematic policy of expulsion of unwanted non-Slovenes. The policy was implemented by ambitiously creating unbearable living conditions for them, problems and obstacles, by placing them into a 'vicious circle' from which there was no escape, whilst claiming cynically that they (the government) were applying the law.⁸¹

Psychoanalysis, deployed by Žižek and the Group in Slovenia, functioned as a Wagnerian call for national rebirth by purging the Slovene psyche of its archaic and feminine taint. But a theoretical case first had to be made that the national psyche was actually endangered. This was done by invoking the theory of the Lacanian *Real* to provide discursive evidence of the archaism and primitivity of the non-Slovene ex-Yugoslavs. Žižek participated in the political process which inaugurated anti-immigrant policies in Slovenia, and as a politician and advisor to the elite of his Party, never publicly challenged its anti-immigrant policies. Then, along with many other prominent Slovene intellectuals who knew about the erased, he became complicit in the policy through his very silence. We recall Hannah Arendt's pronouncement concerning Central European states about 'the transformation of the state from an instrument of the law into an instrument of the nation'.⁸² When Žižek declares his support for the state and his distrust of civil society, he in fact supports the state as an instrument of nation, not of law. Thus he, and others, tacitly condoned a violation of the Slovene constitution and of basic human rights. The wholesale erasure of Balkan immigrants' documents rendered thousands of people stateless and reduced them to a condition approximating that of Agamben's 'bare life'.⁸³ And, it should be noted, Žižek not only voiced no

⁸¹ Dedić, 'Discrimination', pp. 162–63.

⁸² *The Origins*, p. 275.

⁸³ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen, Stanford, CA, 1998.

objection to the erasure, he also was critical of the non-governmental organizations which ultimately exposed it and of civil society in general.

Žižek emerged as a political and intellectual figure with the rise of Slovene civil society. He may usefully be compared with his former Slovene leftist friends, Rastko Močnik and Tomaž Mastnak, with whom he shared participation in Slovene civil society before Slovene independence. While Žižek's numerous analyses represent Yugoslavia as a dead system without class divisions — only populations regressed into the joy of nationalism with *jouissance féminine* substituted for the class principle, Močnik's book, *Koliko Fašizma?* (*How Much Fascism?*, 1993) is focused on Slovene racism and was inspired by such events as the beating of his Bosnian student, the closing of Slovenian borders to Bosnian refugees and the surge of nationalism and political repression in Slovenia. According to Močnik, however, Yugoslav self-management socialism had, in tandem with nationalism, a democratic discourse worth exploration and political investment that has been lost in Žižek's homogenizing scheme.⁸⁴ In fact, Žižek's intellectual activism was carried out within this vibrant climate of political and cultural debate.

While Žižek was exploring the fusion of psychoanalysis and Christian ethics as a ground for new universalism, Tomaž Mastnak questioned, in his *Crusading Peace: Christendom, the Muslim World, and Western Political Order* (2002), the role of Christianity and its transformation into a political discourse. He saw in the Bosnian genocide the configuration of a new European Christian identity around the Muslim as enemy.⁸⁵ Both Močnik and Mastnak remain active in Slovene civil society, committed to the progressive critique of power and, in particular, to exposing government abuses of the human rights of ex-Yugoslav immigrants. Žižek, on the other hand, at the time he was politically active in the 1990s, enthusiastically supported state institutions and was even willing, in the name of 'pragmatic politics' and Leninist discipline, to tacitly condone as a silent executioner human rights abuses by the state while his party was in power.⁸⁶

When Žižek applies his universalistic discourse to the geopolitical *Real* we should be attuned to secret *orientalism*, that 'the "catch" of the Universal resides in what it secretly excludes'.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Rastko Močnik, *Koliko Fašizma?*, translated from Slovene to Croat by Srećko Pulig, Zagreb, 1998, p. 17.

⁸⁵ Tomaž Mastnak, *Crusading Peace: Christendom, the Muslim World, and Western Political Order*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA, 2002.

⁸⁶ About Žižek's dubious Balkan 'expertise', see *Narrating*, pp. 165–73.

⁸⁷ *Metastases*, p. 157.

Conclusion

Roland Boer perceives Kristeva and Žižek as seeking a means of redemption, a 'way to salve the ravages of capitalism'. Žižek has 'recovered a militant Leninist Marxism through Pauline Christianity'. Boer posits that '[t]heir moves to Christianity function as substitutes for a sidelined Marxism (in Kristeva's case) or as a complement to recovered Marxism (in Žižek's case). And for both it is a redemptive program'.⁸⁸ Kristeva has followed Arendt's politics of personalized narrative and public aesthetic and Heidegger's radical withdrawal from instrumental rationality into authentic intimacy and therapy. On this path she has abandoned the Hegelian dialectical foundations of Marxism and particularly Hegel's philosophy of the state — responsible, in her view, for state terror. Žižek, for his part, has returned to everything abandoned by Kristeva: the Hegelian philosophy of the negative, Leninism and Maoism. Kristeva's intimate democracy based on otherness and tolerance contrasts sharply with Žižek's insistence on culture as state, working class politics and hate. I must confess to some scepticism regarding Boer's thesis that Kristeva and Žižek in their different ways sublimate lost socialism through psychoanalysis and Christian love. I am inclined to argue, on the contrary, that psychoanalysis and Christian love allow them to be at home and enjoy the contradictions of capitalism.

We may conclude by saying that Freud's psychoanalytic project illustrates Said's point that the epistemology of European sciences is not free of colonialism and provides the discursive strategy for its continuation by manufacturing 'objective' truth. To achieve the scientific objectivity of psychoanalysis, Freud had to define the subject as separate from his/her natural substance, the primordial desire to bond with the mother (the archaic Other and the Orient). As a self-orientalizing discourse, psychoanalysis conflates desire for the mother and the pathology of the colonial space — in the case of the Balkans, the Slavic East and the Ottomans.

And here psychoanalysis and Said's *orientalism* intersect. While *orientalism* represents the East as Europe's exterior, psychoanalysis represents it as its archaic interior. That is, in accepting the colonial signification of the East as the place of pathology, Freud inverted the political properties of *orientalism* in his theory of castration, regarding the external conquering force of colonization as an internal remedy for the modern maladies of the soul. Paradoxically, then, Freud was pregnant with *orientalism* — that is, with the cure of his own trauma,

⁸⁸ Roland Boer, 'The Search for Redemption: Julia Kristeva and Slavoj Žižek on Marx, Psychoanalysis and Religion', *Philosophy and Society*, Belgrade, 32, 2007, 1, p. 174.

his political unconscious. In *Moses and Monotheism*,⁸⁹ he argues that Moses was an Egyptian. According to Said's generous reading of the essay, this is equivalent to Freud's seeing the Other in his own origins. And it is, above all, an interpretation which, more broadly applied, would go far to heal seemingly irreconcilable differences in the Balkans, the Middle East, and elsewhere.

⁸⁹ Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism: Three Essays. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. 23*, trans. James Strachey, London, 1968.