∿ | Introduction

> I've become very, very impatient with the idea and the whole project
> of identity: the idea, which produced great interest in the United States
> in the sixties and which is also present in the return to Islam in the
> Arab world and elsewhere, that people should really focus on themselves
> and where they come from, their roots … That strikes me as colossally
> boring and totally off the mark. I think that's the last thing that we
> should be thinking about in a way. What's much more interesting is to
> try to reach out beyond identity to something else, whatever that is. It
> may be death. It may be an altered state of consciousness that puts you
> in touch with others.[1]
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> Among these multicultural societies, there are, it is true, all sorts of
> inequalities and disparities, but each national identity is fundamentally
> capable of acknowledging and coping with these problems if there are
> suitable models of coexistence (as opposed to partition) provided by
> humanists whose mission, I believe, is precisely to provide such models.[2]

During his brilliant, controversial and sadly curtailed career, cultural
theorist and literary critic Edward W. Said had two particular passions,
namely Western classical music and Palestine. Playing the piano, attending
concerts and writing about music were the main expressions of the first;
the second emerged through membership of the Palestine National Coun-
cil, writing and international lobbying.[3] The two seem to have occupied
quite discrete spaces for most of Said's life, but they came together in 1999.
That year, within Weimar's Cultural Capital of Europe programme, he
contributed to music workshops involving Jews and Arabs led by con-
ductor Daniel Barenboim.

The success of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, the ensemble that
grew out of that collaboration, has tended to place its founders under
spotlights. As a Palestinian and a Jew working together, they could seem to
offer a model for resolving the problems of Israel and the Palestinians.

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[1] 'Edward Said talks to Jacqueline Rose' in Bové 2000: 25.   [2] Said 2004: 49–50.
[3] See Said 1991, 2006, 2009 (a collection of many earlier articles); and see – among others – Said
1992, 1995, 2001.

Interested observers might be left with the impression that these extraordinary individuals, their friendship and shared passions, were the forces behind the orchestral project. And such views probably have some truth.

Yet there are always broader contexts to consider, whether they involve history, politics or any other matter. The last decades have seen the emergence of a range of attempts to address the conflict of Palestine that use music, along with several Western classical musical initiatives that seek explicitly to involve Palestinians. These are in themselves examples of a much broader contemporary phenomenon in which the arts are brought into sites of political conflict or other strife. My book seeks to explore this phenomenon as it connects with the Palestinians.

As my title indicates, one key will be provided by Said's important and much-discussed legacy in theorising European and US relationships with 'the Orient'. The intertwining of political imperialism and cultural practices that he observed characterising the nineteenth century has not been banished to the past: rather, it continues to take new forms today, and it offers one context for considering the appropriation of Western classical music for an initiative connected to the Middle East. In broad terms, then, I will be contributing here to research that addresses relationships between Western music and 'the Orient', Western music and its musical 'others',[4] and broader discussions about cultural imperialism in music.[5] What I expose should also resonate with general studies of music's connection with place,[6] and add to sociological research already undertaken on the global dissemination of Western classical music.[7]

My other key theme, mission, is plainly a broad one that intersects in part with imperialism. Postcolonial methods have triggered some deeply critical inquiries, in contrast to the turn of the twentieth century, when histories of mission were largely affirmative. We can now read about missionary encounter in a range of locations, with beautifully nuanced approaches.[8] But it is one of the most recent developments in the study of

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[4] See, among others, Born and Hesmondhalgh 2000; Head 2003; Locke 1991, 1993, 1998, 2005; Said 1994.

[5] Erlmann 1999; Feld 1994; Guilbault 1993; Lipsitz 1996; Meintjes 1990; Slobin 1993; Stokes 2004; Taylor 1997, 2009.

[6] Stokes 1994; Whiteley, Bennett and Hawkins 2005.

[7] Curt Kraus 1989; Farhat 1991; Lau 2004; Pasler 2004.

[8] Bhabha 2005: chapters 5–9 (all were published earlier as individual essays). Comaroff & Comaroff 1991 was pathbreaking in its historical depth. For more recent work related to Palestine, see Marten 2006; Makdisi 2008; and see Murre-van den Berg 2006, for a collection of relevant essays by diverse authors. Other major studies include several relating specifically to gender, such as Starkey 2008 and Stockdale 2007.

mission that has shaped this book even more, namely a trend in construct-ing historical trajectories that link the nineteenth century with the present day. For example, DeMars has traced the history from 'single-issue move-ments' of the late eighteenth century that were led by dissenting British Protestants towards today's transnational networks for aid distribution. Similarly, Berman has observed German philanthropy in Africa develop through nineteenth-century missions of (Christian) 'civilisation' through to late twentieth-century 'humanitarian' interventions.[9] My book places music in this frame. What I offer is a discussion about changing relation-ships between 'the West' and the Palestinians since the mid nineteenth century, as mediated through Western classical music. It should demon-strate that the Palestinian case can contribute to discussions about both international aid and the political appropriation of the arts in a range of disciplines.[10]

My historical chapters in Part I begin in the early nineteenth century, a time when American and European travels to Egypt, India, Palestine and elsewhere were on the increase. I begin by exposing how visitors heard music in the region – thus complementing recent work on European Orientalist writing on music. But I suggest a parallel movement as well, one that scholars have tended to treat separately, namely the spread of music education (and consumption) in Europe. The two movements are undoubtedly connected: they are developments of eighteenth-century European Enlightenment, combined with the growth of industry, travel and a new bourgeoisie. And they converged when music was dispatched worldwide by missionaries and colonisers, as McGuire's work on the Tonic Sol-Fa movement in Victorian England has demonstrated.[11]

In Part II I focus on more recent years, probing the consequences of a widespread belief that Western classical music can have beneficence on a global level, discussing initiatives led on the West Bank and in Israel. Such projects, I suggest, share a legacy of nineteenth-century European idealism, and often a conviction that the symphony orchestra can transcend some of the dilemmas of an alarmingly fractured world.[12] Said himself said of the

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[9] DeMars 2005; see also Berman 2004; Keck and Sikkink 1998.
[10] Sommer 2005; Steigerwald 2004; Yúdice 2003.   [11] McGuire 2009.
[12] Recent examples abound elsewhere, including the Pacific Music Festival, which was established in 1990 by Leonard Bernstein, aspiring to symbolise and enact a utopia of peace, and the 'World Orchestra for Peace', founded by Georg Solti in 1995 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the United Nations. As its website proclaimed in 2008, 'The "P" of PMF [Pacific Music Festival] stands for "Peace". Bernstein's passionate wish to contribute to world peace through music is carried on every year through PMF.' The festival no

West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, 'strange as it may seem, it is culture generally and music in particular that provide an alternative model for the conflict of identities'.[13] What he was expressing was not only an individually cherished view, but one version of an optimism that has swelled, in recent decades, regarding the capacity of the arts to take over where politics have failed. I hope that my historical perspective may provide a fresh contribution to the emerging field of research into music and 'conflict transformation', which tends to deal primarily with the present.[14]

Ultimately the book is about the pressure to join the global march to nationhood and modernity as defined by Western industrialised nations. It is structured through a series of ideas that articulate moments in the history of interactions between Europeans (and to a lesser extent, North Americans) and the Arabs of Palestine. Each chapter relates to a specific period as well as an idea, with some overlapping between them. In the centre of the book, in a chapter entitled 'Provincialising mission', I de-centre the historical missionary and reflect more closely on the lives of Palestinians. I finish the book with a return to the legacy of Edward Said. Before beginning properly, I offer some theoretical reflections to outline the framework further.

Orientalism

Among the many critical responses to Said's *Orientalism*, Robert C. Young's statements stand out today for their incisive summation. The book set an important challenge, Young writes, namely the 'creation of an object of analysis called "colonial discourse"'.[15] By this he refers to the book's brilliance – it demands very serious reading – but also its flaws. Said's proposals triggered so many objections, after all. In what ways could alternatives to the colonising discourse be found? How could one deconstruct the monolithic duality of Orient and Occident? What scope was there for less conflicted and more sophisticated theoretical bases for looking at colonial relationships? Young also made the significant point

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longer uses this text on its own site, but it can be found at www.polyphonic.org/resource/pacific-music-festival/ accessed 9 October 2012.

[13] Said's speech on being awarded the Prince of Asturias Award for Concord in Spain in 2002. To hear Said's delivery, see Smaczny 2005 (DVD, Track 5).

[14] See, for instance O'Connell and Castelo-Branco 2010; Urbain 2008.

[15] Young 2004: 216.

that even while Said claimed 'the Orient' was essentially an invention of colonial powers, he did not address the 'dislocation' that this inclusive invention embodied. In fact, Young argued:

Orientalism did not just misrepresent the Orient, but also articulated an internal dislocation within Western culture, a culture which consistently fantasizes itself as constituting some kind of integral totality, at the same time as endlessly deploring its own impending dissolution.[16]

Young's expression elegantly captures the way in which a fantasy of totality is challenged by fear of its lack, and how this leads the fantasy to be reinforced, through construction and containment of the fear. Orientalism, as I conceive it here, is an integral part of Western culture, one that is in a relationship with other parts of Western culture that have been less ambivalently embraced.

In order to develop my argument, I will move against the grain of one of Said's observations, namely that Orientalist writers tended to 'excise' themselves from their texts. According to his arguments, the disguises that Western travellers wore in the Middle East, and their deception of the people they met (dressing as Muslims and feigning devotion for instance) allowed them the position of unseen observers. This apparent invisibility, he suggested, facilitated apparently 'objective' accounts of what they had seen. Mitchell takes the argument further in his exploration of Egypt's colonisation, connecting the hidden spectator to modern practices of surveillance and control. Both he and Said focus on cases where they can separate Western observers from the Orient under scrutiny.[17]

Their approaches tend to generate quite sharp differences between the observer and the observed; they also render the imposition of colonial power rather clinical, and do not consider the fact that disguises and deception often fail. To an extent, Said's approach was a product of the literature he chose, because he gathered examples primarily from European writers who were not engaged directly in actual colonising and thus did present their own separation. But this selectivity has marked our theoretical grasp of Orientalism. And arguably even the work of Homi K. Bhabha,[18] although it sought a more dynamic model for grasping colonial encounter on the ground, made the problem all the more acute. While he identified colonial discourse as ambivalent, and thus allowed for interaction and resistance by local people, it is not clear whether such people were responding to discourses – or were simply resisting physical

[16] Young 2004: 180.   [17] Mitchell 1991: 27–8.   [18] Bhabha 2005.

impositions by colonisers (whether or not they were dressed up). 'Colonial discourse' – once considered as a force in the site of the colony – shifted in (and perhaps completely lost) significance. It re-emerged as a product of Western academic thought, floating and disconnected from the place.[19]

One of my interests here, conversely, is Orientalist texts that inscribe the presence of the author within them (as a sign of 'the non-Orient'), or compare the Orient with objects or practices that are explicitly of the non-Orient (types of music, for instance). Such texts can be used to expand Young's point about dislocation very clearly, for they embed the author (or other signs of the non-Orient) within the Orient. They create combinations thereby, even relationships between 'the West' and 'the Orient'. They can be read, I suggest, as signs of what was 'necessary' at the time. By this I mean that the posited relationships contained the dislocation within Western self-conceptions, or even enacted its potential resolution (a restored fantasy of totality).

Palestine is a particularly rich location in which to focus on this type of writing. Understood as the site of sacred history, it was very much part of the West's self-construction, even if an ancient religious part. Its visitors, therefore, travelled there in order to find (or recover) a part of themselves; and their writings often make their personal connection explicit. Even when they were involved in colonial acquisition, writers wrote individual testimonies and placed themselves in the texts in order to affirm their deep connection with the land.

By addressing the integral place of the author, I find a new perspective on Said's 'vacillation', his somewhat unreconciled observation that writers both glorified and reviled what they considered as 'the Orient'. Bhabha's theorisation of 'ambivalence' is helpful on a general level, but the Palestinian case must once again be related to the Bible. Visitors to Palestine glorified this text, and hoped indeed to find traces of the biblical history in everything they encountered. When they failed, and when they were confronted by realities that were strange to them, they retreated to revulsion.[20] While the pattern is similar to the one triggered by the notion that Egypt could be stripped back to its ancient glory, it was more personal and pervasive. It was also more insistent. It was, after all, accompanied by a vast

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[19] See also Young's critique of Bhabha's ambivalence in terms of his use of psychoanalytical concepts without consideration of history or context. Young 2004: 183–8.

[20] These tendencies are discussed by scholars such as Issam Nassar (1997, 2003, 2006), who has focused on visual representations of Palestine and Billie Melman (1992), who has explored female missionary ethnographies of Palestine.

and manifold influx of missions; and led eventually to the 'return' of Jewish people, the apparent reversal of an expulsion described in the Bible.

Said's insight that Orientalist vision was 'textual' is important here. His general argument was that Orientalism involved English and French impositions of literary ideas on regions whose current situations were unknown, and that the region was 'overridden' thereby. This was certainly the case in Palestine, but the biblical connection and nineteenth-century Protestant thought in particular mean that German sources are crucial. These were not addressed by Said, and have not been discussed by scholars of music subsequently. In my first two chapters, 'Revelation' and 'Distinction', I thus consider a broader range of Protestant writing on Palestine than has been explored to date, in order to make this neglected religious context clear.[21] While my main interest is not to create a history of Palestinian music, this does start to hint at ways in which such a project might be begun. Music historians have been fascinated to explore Jewish settling in the region from the late nineteenth century onwards, but we have no literature that addresses the musical activities of Arab Palestinians prior to 1948.[22] The writing of Protestant visitors can offer us some starting points.

The religious context is also crucial for grasping the nature of the modern thought introduced to Palestine by settlers from the West. To understand this, it is worth considering theories of nation that have challenged the modernist stronghold established by writers such as Benedict Anderson,[23] Ernest Gellner,[24] Eric Hobsbawm[25] and Terence Ranger.[26] Whereas the latter group identifies national sentiment as a recent phenomenon, writers such as Adrian Hastings and John Gillingham, benefiting from expertise in the Middle Ages, argue for much deeper roots. Their main sources are English attitudes to the Bible, a book that provided a model of a cohesive group of people surrounded by 'others'. Hastings described attitudes in the eleventh century as follows: 'England is seen in

[21] Bloechl 2008 is an extremely valuable study of an earlier period of Protestant activity in musical contexts. For work on French Orientalism related to music see Pasler 2004, 2006; for research in English travel writing see Zon 2007. For a polemic response to Said that attempts to rescue Orientalist art and music from the charge of imperialism, see MacKenzie 1995. The work of scholars such as Al-Taee (2010); Head (2003); Locke (1991, 1993, 1998, 2005) and Pasler presents a more productive set of critiques, building beyond earlier approaches with a range of nuances and refinements.

[22] For the main Jewish studies, see Hirshberg 1995 and von der Lühe 1998, 1999. Bohlman 1992 is of a yet more specific nature.

[23] Anderson 1983.   [24] Gellner 1983.   [25] Hobsbawm 1992.

[26] Hobsbawm and Ranger 1993.

biblical terms, a nation to be defended as the Israel of the Old Testament was defended'.[27] He also observes that Protestants' later energies in translating the Bible and production of the *Book of Common Prayer* were crucial to the shaping of modern national consciousness in England.[28] The English came increasingly to identify themselves with the ancient Israelites, battling against others (usually Catholics), in their search for freedom.

On one level this further expands my argument that 'Palestine' – as the site of the biblical history – must be understood as part of the West. Although the Crusades came to an end, the imaginings did not, and they were boosted by textual production. But it may also shed light on developments towards the modern state of Israel. Hastings has considered the function of the Bible in this context as well, where it emerges as a multi-paned mirror, available for all national constructions:

The Bible, moreover, presented in Israel itself a developed model of what it means to be a nation – a unity of people, language, religion, territory, and government. Perhaps it was an almost terrifyingly monolithic ideal, productive ever after of all sorts of dangerous fantasies, but it was there, an all too obvious exemplar for Bible readers of what every other nation too might be, a mirror for national self-imagining.[29]

At base, Hastings is observing the formation of a social and political structure (the nation) that is ostensibly secular, but that derives its authority from Christianity. In doing so, he raises a central question of post-colonial research, namely how to articulate aspects of a society that do not conform to the apparently universal march towards national, secular modernity. In my Chapter 2 I start to engage with this matter, joining other writers in assessing how the music of an emergent nation's 'others' – in this case that of the Arab Palestinians – is audible (or inaudible) alongside the emergent nation (Israel).[30] How, I ask, did the modern tools of distinction – reason, science, mechanisation – combine with the religious conception of the land of Palestine? And how was the music of the majority population – all too easily categorisable as the biblical Philistines, as McDonagh has shown – heard in the new situation?[31]

Recent postcolonial work has moved away from Said's focus on representation towards the mechanisms of imperial management. Timothy

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[27] Hastings 1997: 42. See also Gillingham 1992.   [28] Hastings 1997: 58.

[29] Hastings 1997: 18.

[30] Bohlman's work on Jews and Roma in Europe is particularly important in the field. See Bohlman 2007.

[31] McDonagh 2004.

Mitchell and Ranajit Guha, to take just two distinct examples, attempt to explicate the introduction of political and social modernity in Egypt and India respectively, and their contributions are important backcloths for my Chapter 3, 'Education' and Chapter 4, 'Separation'. In these chapters I shift my balance between 'the Orient' and 'the non-Orient', to trace ways in which Western imported music was involved in attempts to transform the population of Palestine. My discussion of educational practice involves some specific confessional relationships: many Protestant educators had sought initially to teach (and indeed convert) Jews, while some considered their work as a crusade against Islam. But on another level, I am engaged with the very broad project of 'people production' that was a component of modernity at large. I ask what the musical tools of control were that were introduced to Palestinians. How did these conform to the broader project of modernisation? And how did they coexist with the notion that Palestine was the site of the most ancient heart of the Christian West?

These questions are also important to my study of the Palestine Broadcasting Service (PBS) (1936–47) in Chapter 4. This British organisation divided air time into Arabic, English and Hebrew hours, and offers a parallel to the case of British identity-creation in India. Chakrabarty's observation on this parallel space is apt; '[j]ust as the British sought to give India a standardized legal system, they also attempted to fix and officialize collective identities (such as caste and religion) in the very process of creating a quasi-modern public sphere in India'.[32] The PBS fixed the divisions in the public sphere, and used 'culture' (not only language, but also music) to inscribe and reiterate the boundaries. I hope my discussion provides a model of how music can be seen to shape relationships between various notions of 'the Orient' and 'non-Orient' – not only in terms of tradition or composition (as other scholars have discussed),[33] but also in mechanisms of control.

At the beginning of this section, I referred to the problem of *Orientalism*'s apparent monolithism, its apparent lack of alternative to a colonising discourse. One consequence of this, critics argued, was the repeated erasure of experiences falling outside the remit of Western constructions: the problem was that of the speech of the Subaltern. Poststructural theory has seemed to offer some alternatives – seen in the work of Bhabha, Derrida and Spivak most notably – but deconstructive approaches do not serve every cause. I have been concerned in this book to construct some

[32] Chakrabarty 2002: 83.
[33] For a relevant discussion of the complex repertories of Syrian Jews, see Shelemay 1998.

kind of history, because – as will become clearer below – it seemed to me crucial to take recent historical research into account before engaging with Palestine, and also to hint at least at ways in which histories of Palestinian music might yet be written. Yet the very act of constructing history – as Chakrabarty has argued so incisively – is inseparable from the secular modern notions of nation, and thus forecloses a great deal.

Perhaps the best one can do, then, is 'provincialise' the project by decentring it. Thus in my epilogue to Part I, 'Provincialising mission', I try to recontextualise relationships between 'the Orient' and 'the non-Orient' by drawing on sources from Palestinians who interacted with colonisers. These do not offer anything as coherent as a counter-narrative, but they may, in combination, reveal a set of alternatives and points of friction. Chakrabarty argues that subaltern histories should make the 'unworking' of history visible; I hope that by the end of that chapter, I have made the 'unworking' at least partially audible.[34]

Mission and the instrumentalisation of culture

Edward Said's involvement in, and celebration of, the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra imply a theoretical twist in his thinking on which several writers have remarked.[35] He wrote within an intellectual tradition shaped most obviously by Theodor W. Adorno, and he was committed to reading music's content as a source for certain broader social relations while preserving it as a realm of relative autonomy. Music was at once above material existence, and yet also a mirror of the same. While he never renounced this position, with the West-Eastern Divan he simultaneously attempted to use music's mirror in reverse and elevate earth into music. The quotation with which I opened this chapter evokes the broader political picture: there he argued for an attempt 'to try to reach out beyond identity to something else' which might be, he said, 'an altered state of consciousness that puts you in touch with others'. Etherington has characterised the effect as an 'instrumentalization of musical ethics'.[36]

One context for Said's new interest may be the rise of a phenomenon often referred to as 'the instrumentalization of culture'. As theorised by sociologist George Yúdice, this is a product of a new configuration of the

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[34] Chakrabarty 2008: 96.
[35] See Beckles Willson 2009b; Etherington 2007a, 2007b; Tregrear 2007.
[36] Etherington 2007a.