

name just a few. It has also emerged fitfully in the reflections of modern intellectuals dissatisfied by the prospect of being forcibly attached by patriotism and nationalism to cultural and political formations that are wrong, unjust, evil, or misguided and therefore unrepresentative.

As he watched the destructive vortex of World War I suck in so much of what was precious and worth defending in European civilization, Freud lamented the failure of the civilized world to move beyond war as a means of settling its disputes. His essays from that time capture the flavor of the cosmopolitan response offered by powerless and disillusioned individuals who have cultivated a larger loyalty to civilization than their original national states could possibly contain or allow. He describes their predicament and connects it to the acquisition of a nonnational or transnational "fatherland" that can serve the disillusioned and estranged as a "museum" in which the very best and most meaningful elements of human culture might be stored for uplifting contemplation. In this relationship with worldly culture, nothing seems foreign to the disenchanted cosmopolitan who does not reproach "himself . . . for being a renegade towards his own nation and his beloved mother tongue." Freud addresses the cultural gap that opened up during wartime between those who were able to retain their larger loyalties and those whose "susceptibility to culture" was undone by the deception and emotional excitement of geopolitical conflicts that only became meaningful through restrictive, nationalist attachments. The result of this division was alienation from one's fellow citizens, but understanding how it had come about could make the inevitable disillusionment easier to bear:

The state exacts the utmost degree of obedience and sacrifice from its citizens, but at the same time it treats them like children by an excess of secrecy and censorship upon news and expressions of opinion which leaves the spirits of those intellects it thus suppresses defenceless against every unfavourable turn of events and every sinister rumour. It absolves itself from guarantees and treaties by which it was bound to other states, and confesses shamelessly to its own rapacity and lust for power, which the private individual has then to sanction in the name of patriotism.⁸

The same kind of intuitive estrangement can be found in the work of many fugitives and refugees from Nazism. It culminates in a new way of being at home in the world through an active hostility toward national solidarity, national culture, and their privileging over other, more open affiliations.

Cosmopolitanism and the Planetary Mentality

It is important not to see this type of response as an exclusively twentieth-century phenomenon. This sort of thinking has appeared intermittently in a host of writers dotted through the grand tradition of reflection upon European modernity. It was woven into their ethical indictments of Europe's colonial adventures and their critiques of its political and economic inconsistencies and shortcomings since Montaigne's essay "On the Cannibals," where an ironic acknowledgment of one surprisingly wise stranger's alien mode of dress concluded a provocative exploration of problems we would come to know much later as the ethics of translation and the mechanics of intercultural. Rather than recycling the ambiguities in the Kantian system to which I have already referred, I want to return to Montesquieu's satirical novel *Persian Letters*, which is invaluable as a source of clues as to the genealogy of these positions as well as for its example of what a healthier orientation toward the unsettling experience of exposure to otherness might add up to.

Montesquieu's refusal of orientalist fantasy and subtle reinscription of it in a critical anthropology of his own society also makes a number of more general points about the value of estrangement and the disabilities that arise from familiarity with ways of life that can only look odd and irrational to outsiders. His novel concerns the experience of two Persian travelers, Usbek and Ibben, who are transformed by their journey into the metropolitan center of France under the *ancien régime*. Their observations of European and Christian habits in the contested heart of modern Europe's emergent public world address topics from religion and science to ethics, happiness, and revolution. While they are absent from their own place of origin and belonging, specifically from the unfree space of the harem that Usbek rules as husband, sovereign, and proprietor, his wives organize an insurrection. They overthrow the eunuchs whom he has set to control them, take the lovers of their choice, and then, in the storm of their revolution, commit suicide in acts of autonomy that, if they seem politically threadbare, do overthrow his assumptions of mastery: "No: I may have lived in servitude, but I have always been free. I have amended your laws according to the laws of nature, and my mind has always remained independent." We can imagine that these defiant, modern words, drawn from the novel's conclusion, have been spoken by a wife on behalf of slaves everywhere. They do more than register Europe's apprehensions about its colonial adventures and anticipate the debate about master and slave which would follow. They also communicate the dimensions of a different