

Chapter 13

Figures of the Cosmopolitan Condition: The Wanderer, the Outcast, the Foreigner



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13.1 Introduction

Ethnographies of globalization and borderlands have led me to rethink the cosmopolitan condition through various figures of “border dwellers.” These are the *wanderer*, the outcast or the *pariah*, the *foreigner* or “*métèque*”¹ and the one philosopher Michel Serres, in his meditation on learning and difference, calls the “*tiers instruit*” (Serres 1994, 1998). I will describe each figure by relating their social condition and their story to the places where they are found. Beyond each particular case, the stories of borderlands dwellers fuel the hypothesis of a wide “borderscape” that can be located anywhere inside the city, as much as “on” the border or in camps.²

The *wanderers* in this chapter are African or Afghan, seeking somewhere around the Mediterranean an entry into Europe; the borders are the desert, the sea and the ports, where they are sometimes found in makeshift encampments.

The figure of the *pariah* is associated with the site of the camp that works as a border. Different places – encampments, squats, camps – are perceived to be

¹ The French term “*métèque*,” translated here by alien, refers to the foreigner in ancient Greece with specific but limited residence rights (the “*metic*” [μέτοικος]) but also has a derogatory meaning in French, a wog. (note of the editor)

² On these “border landscapes” or “borderscapes,” see Puig and Bontemps 2014; Wilson and Donnan 2012. (Puig and Bontemps 2014; Wilson and Donnan 2012)

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temporary or precarious settlements even though they represent a form of stability in border situations.

For the Sudanese, Eritrean or Sri Lankan *aliens* working without documents in Beirut, the whole city is a border. They logically find their place in clandestine occupations; squatted buildings can then become their regular place of existence.

And finally, the *tiers instruit* relates to the historical figure of the educated refugee (a scholar) from Europe to the United States in the mid-twentieth century. This allows for a reflection on education as a vector of hybrid identity.

In each of these situations, individuals discover their relative foreignness in the gaze of others. These “others” consist not only of those who live in the cities to which they themselves have only limited access but also those who live in the same borderlands.³ From this experience each takes a certain distance from their own supposedly “original” identity and gains a certain comprehension of the “global.” The exploration of borderlands and their inhabitants leads to investigating the existence of everyday or ordinary cosmopolitanism in specific sites.

13.2 Wandering as Adventure and Border Encampment

Let us start with Mamadou, a so-called *sans-papier* in Paris. He left Guinea for Dakar in 1997, at the age of seventeen, to become a bookkeeper. He wanted to study in the United States or France but did not manage to do so. Having returned to Conakry, he used a false passport to board a plane to France. Arrested and placed in the waiting zone at Roissy, he was then released by the police at midnight in the unknown city of Paris. He slept in a bus shelter, then in a squat, later in a Red Cross centre and then in a house in Nanterre (a shelter for homeless persons). Subsequently he went to Germany and Holland, looking up friends and trying to find ways of become legal. Mamadou was also travelling “to give it a try.” He arrived in Brussels, where he worked *au noir* (illegally). He also worked illegally in Paris: “It’s day to day. I wash dishes, I clean, I do deliveries, it works by contacts.” He had been back in Paris for six months when he told his story to a documentary film-making team in 2003. As he reflected: “We are in the border” (Collectif Précipité 2011).

He was then twenty-two years old, staying in the Emmaüs building on the rue des Pyrénées in the 20th arrondissement. As this “emergency shelter” was closed from eight a.m. to six-thirty p.m., it was just a place to spend the evening and sleep. It allowed for a two-week stay, renewable once. The film-makers wanted to learn the singular experiences of the shelter’s occupants that began with their departure from

³So long as a relationship is not established, it is indeterminate and imagined, abstract and absolute; then it becomes relative, in a particular situation, and the alterity that was “absolute” or “radical” (in the sense that my way of being and thinking is described by others as “radically” other) tends to reduce, if not disappear, since the discovery of singularities now becomes possible. There are different degrees of foreignness depending on the border situation and the moment in the situation.

home. Their stories sketch a “subjective geography that does not coincide with state borders,” a “long wandering of body, emotions, identity.” (Collectif Précipité 2011) But these stories were also “something very concrete: the need to hide in a boat or a lorry, to be constantly changing place” (ibid.). The shelter is an extension of each person’s trajectory: “the same indefinite waiting, the same confinement, the same wandering continues in this shelter, which in the end resembles many other places where they have stopped” (ibid.). But it is also a miniature “observatory of the world.”

The vagabond or wanderer is an old figure who in other times or other places is relatively easy to conceptualize. Fairly close to the peddler or nomad, he is a foreigner who never gives up the freedom to come and go. Arriving today, he can leave tomorrow. Or he could stay. He does not have a fixed dwelling, possibly temporarily “homeless” rather than “undocumented” – which he is too, but this has relatively less importance than his mobility. The acknowledgement of his clandestine status is by chance and almost secondary.

The theoretical notion of wandering has today become something wider and more complex. It does not denote a particular person or a typological category, but rather a moment lived by many displaced persons, including those we call migrants when they cross or try to cross a national border.⁴ A survey of the borders around Europe gives the impression of a contemporary world made up of wandering. Starting in the east, at Patras in Greece among Afghan migrants met at crossing points on the border, wandering is the most visible way of being foreign. These people represent a new figure of the vagabond with no ‘indigeneity’ to claim; even if they have Afghan parents, most of them were born in camps in Pakistan or in Iran. Nor do they have a definite place of arrival, being in this way already more global than many adventurous lives that are proclaimed and presented as global in the discourse and branding of globalization. On the other side of the Mediterranean, in the Andalusian province of Almeria, border crossing from Morocco by the strait of Gibraltar or the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla places the migrant in a situation of relative “vulnerability” and uncertainty. The moment that follows border-crossing is a time of latency and search for solutions (see Carnet 2011). Between the actual journey and the prolonged stationing at the border, a whole world of “clandestinized” migration is formed.

Across the Mediterranean in the Moroccan city of Rabat and in the woods around Ceuta and Melilla, *foyers* (collective urban lodgings) or encampments (in the forest) have become places of social regulation, providing a certain “stability in instability” (Pian 2009). The social organization of these sites and the relationship to identities of origin (national or otherwise) are important topics for the migrants, raising practical questions that have to be resolved. Each encampment or ghetto (a term used by the migrants themselves) is a little cosmopolitan world, like the Emmaüs shelter in Paris.

⁴We should also bear in mind, so as to measure the scale of this condition, that the number of so-called “illegal” immigrants is far larger. According to the PNUD, two-thirds of the world’s population is unable to move freely (Wihtol de Wenden 2010).

In the Sahara a bit further east, the trajectories of migrants who cross from Niger to Libya or Algeria forms what Julien Brachet calls a “delocalized territory” (Brachet 2009; Streiff-Fenart and Kabwe-Segatti 2012). A mode of existence (and waiting) is stabilized in the Dirkou oasis, which serves as a regional transit center, and in the lorries crossing the desert in which communities are formed. According to Brachet, a “real migratory field” from the Sahel to Africa’s Mediterranean shores shapes up along these networks and routes, giving rise to a “cosmopolitan desert” (Brachet 2009, 285). These migrants show little *a priori* interest in the transit region or its population; they stay in ghettos (as the migrants put it), where they rub shoulders with migrants expelled from Algeria and prepare to attempt new migrations.

Whether in Africa, America or Asia, wanderers are never sure of reaching the end of the journey they have embarked upon, which is reconfigured as an ‘adventure’ in their imagination. Of course, the imaginary of the “adventurer” (see the Chap. 4 by Fouquet in this book) cannot be separated from the conditions in which, against the background of deeply inegalitarian North-South relations, the clandestine migrant seeks to control his or her wandering. Desires or strategies are interrupted, diverted, constantly reformulated. In the attempt to provide control that characterizes the adventurer lies the energy of men and women who cannot say exactly where their journey will lead them but who adapt to this wandering by making it the context of their social organization and subjectivity. What we have here is *une pensée du mouvement* – a way to think mobility and to think on the move. This helps people imagine the possibility of going forward in a completely hostile context. “At the moment, I’m not living,” says Mamadou in the Emmaüs shelter. “I’m blocked at this point, and time is getting on for me. The battle I’ve started is sleeping but not dead... At this point I’m in a weak position, I’m retreating. As soon as I have the strength, I’ll be able to continue” (Collectif Précipité 2011) Everything indicates that adventure is one of the languages of uncertainty, giving the wandering subject the capacity to think about their life project and to act in dangerous contexts. The transit country and border spaces become in-between spaces, places for adventurers. Wanderers find it hard to leave these spaces as the perspective of the journey remains present so long as they remain in this place, on the border.

Between 1997 and 2009, the Patras encampment in Greece was home to between 500 and 2000 persons. The Calais encampment in France on the shore of the Channel existed from 2002 to 2009 and sometimes sheltered up to 600 people. Other encampments have developed in major “bottlenecks” close to borders, such as those in the woods around the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in northern Morocco or along the border separating Mexico from the United States (Agier and Prestianni 2011).

When new migrants arrive at Patras, they first go to the squat buildings along the huts of the Afghan encampment (a few years ago, Kurds were living there). They look for a room in the shelters and if one is not available, or if there are new arrivals, the migrants build a house. When Yassir, an Afghan Hazara, arrived, he found someone who came from his “hometown” – a town in Pakistan, actually. This person invited Yassir to share his room. A fellow Hazara from the same town in Pakistan was welcomed to share the room a few months later. Despite not knowing one

another, they have people in common, “so I said to him, ‘Come here!’” (Agier and Prestianni 2011, 39).

Mahmoud is presented as the “leader” of the encampment. He is a social worker by training, but here in the migrant community he moves between Patras and Athens. He keeps one of the encampment’s small shops. “Patras is an outlaw town,” he says (Agier and Prestianni 2011, 45).

After twelve years of existence, the Patras encampment has become a fixed point on migration routes. Patras is known to all those who take these routes. Like Zahedan (on the border between Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan) or Calais, these places have become cosmopolitan crossroads of a peculiar kind: they are staging posts on a worldwide journey, one that is always risky and unpredictable, which runs from Afghanistan (or Pakistan, or Iran) to Europe. The boundaries of exile constantly change for African, Middle Eastern and Asian exiles who head for Europe as well for South and Central Americans heading towards the U.S. or Canada.

13.3 Becoming a Pariah: The Experience of Refugee Camps

Let us turn to Bobo N’K, a refugee from Liberia. He was twenty-nine when I met him in the Boreah refugee camp in Guinea in 2003. He had two children with him, aged seven and nine. His wife fell ill after the birth in 1996 of their second child in the refugee camp of Jui in Sierra Leone and subsequently died. He also had with him three younger brothers (who went to school in the Boreah camp) and a sister with two children of her own. Bobo managed to sustain this family of nine through the “incentive” from the Belgian section of Médecins Sans Frontières (he worked to register sick people who came to the camp’s clinic) and thanks to the rations provided by the World Food Programme.⁵ One day in September 1990, he explains, “at four in the morning, the forces of Charles Taylor’s NPFL [National Patriotic Front of Liberia] arrived in the town; they dug in there, people heard gunfire and fled.” Between surprise attacks by the Liberian army or the rebel forces, then from the Sierra Leonean army, violence and arrests in Guinea, crossing the forests, and several times the borders of all three countries (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea), he went through a whole network of camps, becoming so used to them that they became part of his ordinary life. After twelve years of this rather peculiar wandering, both controlled and forced, Boreah was the ninth camp in which he had lived.⁶

Bobo is very nervous and has difficulty continuing a long conversation, a difficulty that is expressed by nervous tics, disturbed looks, hands that hide his face or rub it vigorously, as if he were washing himself after every sentence. He fears for his safety. Like several hundred other people living in this camp, he has made a

⁵Refugees are not allowed otherwise to work in the host country.

⁶This story and that of other refugee itineraries is presented and analyzed at greater length in Agier 2011, 87–115.

request to the UN High Commission for Refugees for “resettlement in a third country.”⁷ But the UNHCR agent told him that he had to produce a “recommendation” from a humanitarian NGO. This strategy aims to discharge the UN agency from the responsibility of screening thousands of refugees to select the more “deserving,” the more vulnerable, pushing the victimization of refugee identity to a paroxysm. These unfortunate lucky ones would then be able to leave the camps for another life that many still idealize, free and in peace in the “First World.” The delegation of screening to humanitarian NGOs enhances the victimization of refugees and leads international organisations and refugees themselves to perceive their lives in the camp as extraterritorial and undesirable.

Not all the refugees live in camps, but the camp is today the ideal-typical figure of distancing. A total of some 75 million people across the world find themselves in a situation of so-called “forced displacement” – refugees, internally displaced, displacement by natural disasters. 15.9 million refugees (representing 78 per cent of all refugees in 2018) are in protracted situations. They spend protracted time in places separated off – camps, encampments, detention centres, waiting zones or zones of temporary reception. In other people’s eyes their radical foreignness is not a function of their nationality or ethnic identity; rather, it is a product of their refugee status, their statelessness and the place they live in. The absence of rights and distancing from the human community casts them into the ‘human superfluity’ described by Hannah Arendt. With encampment, whether temporary or durable, the distancing characterizes the condition of the foreigner as pariah. Extraterritoriality is the first illusion of this type of foreigner: what grounds his radical foreignness is a biopolitical alterity, produced by the technical and spatial government of migrants and refugees as a separate category of population. Walls and barriers increasingly hard to cross impose radical otherness. Such otherness is primarily manifested in relational terms, rather than cultural differences which are not always experienced concretely. The “pariah” is voiceless and faceless from the standpoint of otherness. How can I get on (or not) with an Afghan migrant if he is placed in a detention center? How can I know whether Bobo N’K is Malinké or Mendé, and in what way this is important or not for him, if he remains inaccessible to me, “enclosed outside” for years?

The experience of encampment (whether extended or not) brings about a rapid cultural change for those who live through it due to the contact made with refugees from other regions or countries. Such meetings would not have been possible without this particular violence. There is also contact with a humanitarian system that is both global and localized. Some refugees learn other languages (including basic international English) and other ways of life, whether in terms of clothes or food. Above all, they learn to “get by” and survive in the humanitarian system: to register multiple times with different administrations to get bigger plots to settle, to duplicate residency (in camp and town), to work informally, to buy (or resale)

⁷The United States, Australia and northern Europe are the main destinations of these UNHCR resettlements.

supplementary food ration cards, etc. If the refugee camp is indeed the hardened form of a spatial and temporal “border” between citizenships and localities that have been lost and are not yet redeemed, it is also a test for a little cosmopolitan world. The encamped adapt to it, by necessity, as they are not sure of finding elsewhere such a feeling of locality and such a relation of citizenship.

13.4 Four Foreigners, and the Squat as Border

Let us now turn to a couple of emigrants in Beirut, Hashani and Peter, with their two small children. She is Sri Lankan, he is Sudanese. They met in Beirut in 2005 where they attended the same Catholic church, a “church for foreigners,” they told me in 2012. At certain times of day, at the morning masses for foreigners and in the afternoons for recreational activities, Sudanese, Sri Lankans and Filipinos meet up, sometimes joined by Lebanese husbands of foreign women.

Hashani arrived in Beirut in 2001 with a contract covering travel and work that an agency had provided before she left Sri Lanka. She started her job as a domestic worker for the household which the agency had set her up with as soon as she arrived. Like many foreign women in her situation, she nevertheless went a whole year without wages (to “repay the air ticket,” she was told). Like many others, also, she slept on the balcony of her employers’ apartment, with a rent deducted from her pay. As official sponsors of her stay in Lebanon, her employers had taken her passport when she arrived to make sure that she wouldn’t run away, she says; she had no other documents, not even a resident card. After two years of this “slave’s life,” as she called it, she left the household but was unable to recover her passport, the “madame” asking for \$1700 for it to be returned. She now works by the hour with various part-time employers. She seems at ease, “controlling” her existence and actually receiving her wages (\$4 per hour). Yet even if she has found her “freedom,” she is in a completely illegal situation.

Peter, forty years old in 2012, also arrived in Beirut in 2001. He left South Sudan at the age of seven. He went to his uncle who lived in a camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) on the outskirts of Khartoum that was run by the Sudanese council of churches. Then at twenty-three he became a “volunteer teacher,” working in Khartoum from 1995 to 2000. He requested and obtained admission to a college in Romania, as well as a visa, but did not have the money for the journey. He got to Syria, where he hoped to earn enough money to be able to continue on to Romania. He worked hard as a cleaner in a restaurant but earned too little. There were many Sudanese in Syria at this time, and some were returned to Sudan. “No way out, I gave up,” he says, but in fact he did not give up completely. Ready to go anywhere, the easiest country was neighbouring Lebanon. He entered illegally, as all Sudanese from Syria do. Many Sudanese workers, from both South and North, settle in Beirut for short periods (six months or a year), often living in extremely precarious conditions (ten or twelve single men in a two-room apartment) and working as caretakers,

garbage collectors or watchmen. Some end up remaining there, without really having planned it.

Without documents, and thus at the mercy of his employers, Peter first worked in a petrol station, then as a hotel cleaner and for the last five years as a cleaner in a nightclub (he is paid \$350 per month). Several hundred other Sudanese from Beirut (mostly from the South) have gained a relative stability in Beirut, keeping an eye on their home country. They sometimes even receive visits from relatives. But the prospect of return becomes more distant with time, just like Peter's plan to go to Romania. For Hashani, the prospect of returning to Sri Lanka also dwindles, even if return is stipulated or at least presupposed in the contracts that bring workers from Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Madagascar, Bangladesh or Ethiopia to Beirut. Acquiring residence papers is expensive, they explain. One needs to consider both the official and "unofficial" cost of regularization, which amounts to \$3500 for each person plus an initial \$1000 sponsorship and a further \$1000 annually for a year's renewal. These amounts are not acknowledged by government administrations or NGOs but migrants know them, and the high cost dissuades them from trying to "become legal."

Peter and Hashani are among those persons referred to in Beirut as *bidoun* ("without"), a term of foreignness that denotes lack of papers but also lack of rights in general, despite the jobs they hold that make a stable existence possible. Peter is often insulted in the street because of the colour of his skin: "Black people are called *Shaytan* [Satan]," he explains, "and some people make the sign of the cross when they see us." He helps to run a Christian association of South Sudanese in Beirut, which plays an important role in assisting newcomers, establishing relations with part of the local population (religious leaders or Lebanese husbands of foreign wives), and providing some sort of space for peaceable sociability.

Through these dynamics of exclusion/inclusion, Peter and Hashani's family left me with a nuanced impression: inclusion through work, exclusion by almost everything else; strong individualization of everyday life, occasional "communitarian" gathering on Sunday mornings. This ambiguity corresponds to another old figure of relative foreignness, that of the ancient Greek *metoikos*. These "residents without city rights" lived *in* the city, providing an indispensable subaltern labour-force (Greek democracy needed the excluded in order to subsist), but alienated from social, political and property rights. Unlike pariahs, their presence was not forbidden. Unlike slaves, they enjoyed relative liberty. But they were also, like Peter and Hashani (and their two children) in Beirut, sustainably settled in an *in-between* which they "occupy" and "inhabit" with relative success.

The squat is a characteristic form of urban residence of these illegal presences in the city, of the condition of residents without civic rights. The so-called "Gaza Hospital" squat in the Sabra district of Beirut allows us to approach this reality via two recently-arrived undocumented migrant workers. Gaza Hospital is the name of an eleven-story building in which close to 500 people live in a precarious situation. Built in the 1970s by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) when it had its headquarters in the Sabra district, the hospital was gradually abandoned after the eviction of the PLO in 1982. It was partially destroyed that same year by the Israeli army when it invaded Beirut (leading to the massacres at Sabra and Chatila). It

burned at the time of the “war of the camps” and the “internal war” between 1986 and 1987, at which point it was finally abandoned for medical purposes.⁸ According to stories collected in 2012, the Gaza Hospital squat was founded in 1987 by three Palestinian women wandering the streets of Sabra with their children in search of shelter after fleeing violence from the neighboring Chatila camp.⁹ They entered the building which had been completely deserted after a fire that had damaged several floors. The Syrian army which then occupied the Sabra zone allowed them to enter and settle in the partly ruined building. “Then in three days, people arrived and it was full,” one of the squat’s three founders explains. Other Palestinian refugees from Chatila joined them, then others again from other Beirut camps or other parts of the city.

Controlled today by two Palestinian families who have invested a great deal in transforming the building, Gaza Hospital is home to Palestinian and Lebanese-Palestinian families, Syrian families who have long been settled there, Syrian migrant workers and many Syrian refugees, Egyptian and Sudanese migrants, and, more recently, Bangladeshi women migrants. The latter rent rooms in the basement, which were built by a son of one of the two leading families. At the end of 2012 there were a total of 127 dwellings of various size (most often one or two rooms, with very few apartments of three or four rooms) and some 500 inhabitants.

The squat counted eight floors when it opened. It now counts ten, and an eleventh was under construction in 2012. No one has property rights, but a distinction is made without real conflict between an owner, who is housed for free, and a tenant. For a few, at least, the squat has become an object of investment (construction) and profit (renting), even if the overall impression is that of a “vertical favela,” extremely precarious in terms of hygiene, water and electricity supply, waste collection and waste water management. The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), an NGO supported by the Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department of the European Commission, intervened in 2008 to improve health conditions in the building.

The people who have remained in the Gaza Hospital squat are the least legitimate and most fragile inhabitants from Chatila. They did not take part in the resettlement process that was organised under the aegis of UNRWA after the end of the “war of the camps,” when Chatila camp was rebuilt. They are illegitimate either because they lived in unofficial zones of Chatila outside the camp boundary or because they were housed or sublet without an occupancy title in the camp itself. In many respects, therefore, Gaza Hospital is an extension of the Chatila camp. It is under this rubric that the NRC, from its office in the Chatila camp, intervened. Family and friendship ties with Chatila inhabitants remain strong. The few hundred meters between one place and the other are crossed on a daily basis. But the squat,

⁸On the political and urban history of the Chatila camp, some 500 m from the Gaza Hospital squat in the Sabra district, see Abou Zaki 2014.

⁹The Chatila camp is a densely-populated urban neighborhood set up by the International Committee of the Red Cross in 1949 as a space of refuge for Palestinian refugees. It witnessed mass massacres during the Lebanese civil war in September 1982 and since 2011 has hosted Syrian-Palestinian refugees.

occupying a space that is entirely Lebanese and Beirut, does not enjoy the exceptional legal and political status of the camp. On top of their illegitimate status vis-à-vis Chatila, the Gaza Hospital inhabitants face the illegality of their settlement in the Sabra district. There is, in fact, a legal void about the status and future of the property of the Palestinian Authority after its departure from Beirut. Added to this is a bad reputation bound up with the insalubrious nature of the place and rumors of arms traffickers – as if a Palestinian “contagion” spread from the camps to the city through Gaza Hospital.

How has the establishment and survival of this place been possible? How was it transformed and stabilized, to the point of becoming, twenty-six years after its opening, a place of enduring urban presence for several generations of refugees and migrants in a precarious situation, with a possible insertion (even if marginal) in the city? Gaza Hospital is, in fact, the culmination of several histories. A Palestinian history, of course, as we have briefly mentioned. But also a history of conflicts and displacements in the region, including the latest Syrian episode which has had substantial economic and social effects on the life of the squat. Many Syrian refugees (potential new tenants), in fact, are adding to the Syrian families and workers who have long been present. It is also a history of migrant workers coming from the region and beyond – mostly construction workers and domestic workers from Syria, Egypt, North and South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Ethiopia – whose mobility and precarious living conditions in Beirut lead them to the squat as a way to access the city. Finally, an urban history, that of the city of Beirut, which has made Sabra a contemporary moral space, different from the “Palestinian grouping” that it was in the 1960s and 1970s. Commentators in Beirut now describe Sabra as a “zone of cosmopolitan misery,” most completely embodied by Gaza Hospital. The squat brings together several generations, several waves and types of migrants and refugees, and it has become a site of a renewed urban otherness as well as a site of mobility.

13.5 The “Tiers-Instruit” in His Labyrinth

Finally, let us turn the case of a forty-year-old Austrian-Jewish emigrant who settled in the United States in 1939 with his wife and children, dying there twenty years later. He was a sociologist and would soon be employed at the New School of Social Research in New York, which in the years of the Second World War became a place of refuge for Jewish European researchers and teachers in the social sciences and philosophy who were persecuted and threatened on account of their religious origins.

Alfred Schuetz, an emigrant sociologist, drew upon his experience to reflect on the experience of adjustment, interpretation and apprenticeship that is the lot of the foreigner everywhere. He was interested in the way that cultural models intersect and overlap, generating new “thinking as usual” that are singular and syncretic. The stranger “starts to interpret his new social environment in terms of his “thinking as

usual" ... with in the scheme of reference brought from his home groups, but this soon proves inadequate as he has to orient himself in a new cultural world (language, customs, laws, folklore, fashions, etc.). "In other words, the cultural pattern of the approached group is not a shelter but a field of adventure" (Schuetz 1944, 506). It is even, he added, a "labyrinth in which he has lost all sense of his bearings" (Schuetz 1944, 507). From this test the foreigner draws two fundamental characteristics: on the one hand, objectivity and "intelligence of the world" (he has discovered that "the normal way of living is far from being as assured as it seemed" [507]) and, on the other, an "ambiguous loyalty" (507), or a reticent or incapability of entirely replacing one cultural model with another. The foreigner is thus made into "a cultural hybrid on the verge of two different patterns of group life, not knowing to which of them he belongs" (Schuetz 1944, 507).

A number of more recent publications have sought to describe and understand this ambivalent "border" position in which the emigrant/immigrant finds himself, a condition of double absence.¹⁰ The European immigrant in the United States in the mid-twentieth century and his cultural labyrinth prefigure an increasingly ordinary condition in the coming cosmopolitan world. The profusion of new walls and the toughening of border policies since the 1990s paradoxically create border spaces - where foreigners tend to spend an increasingly long time - and processes that are increasingly cosmopolitan. Wanderers, pariahs or alien become themselves sites for a new cosmopolitanism.

13.6 A New Cosmopolitan Condition

The wandering of the vagabond traces a path with no return, contrary to Odysseus's journeying, in which Ithaca is both the first and final staging-post. The "pariah" is set aside in a confined place for the undesirable on a border between societies and nation-states, a liveable "in-between" from which it is hard to escape. Aliens are submitted to unlimited exploitation and they live in urban spaces without real access to the "city," without rights, socially undesirably yet economically useful. They squat, they camp, they live in the interstices of urban life. They all experience, with greater or lesser social and economic comfort, a cultural "labyrinth" in which their sense of belonging to the world grows while they move away from inherited identities.

The brief portraits of persons and places I have presented offer a sketch of various social figures that seeks a more general meaning. These persons help us understand the condition of the foreigner today. They are not exhaustive: individual "portraits" retain their singular character. The experience of anthropologists, in fact, is always marked by such singular encounters, often well hidden behind the

¹⁰Abdelmalek Sayad (1977) describes these two absences (of a home country and a receiving country) combined in a single person.

“informant,” through which the scholar has found a real friend and often a fine connoisseur of the society that he has come to study. The figures proposed here illustrate the social possibilities of relative foreignness in which the dimensions of work, residence, personal and family itinerary are essential, as well as the contexts in which they each live their foreignness and cultural transformation. The wanderer, the pariah, the alien, and the *tiers-instruit* seek to be historical and relational, thus universal in their foundation and their processes, rather than ethnically specific and particularistic. These figures do not embody social categories but rather illustrate ways of being foreign or a condition of foreignness. They are present to a greater or lesser extent in every person in the process of living a border situation, representing a moment of uncertainty and relative foreignness.

The figures of “border dwellers” presented above thus lead us to extend the investigation and reconsider the cosmopolitan condition today as a whole. This presupposes de-nationalizing as much as de-ethnicizing the way of thinking the foreigner (Beck 2007). How do we become foreigners, and how do we cease to be so? By multiplying borders while the means of mobility have spread across the planet, is globalization making the condition of foreigner disappear? Or is it, on the contrary, making it the most widely shared condition in the world, despite inherited identities? Border dwellers lead us to borderlands of various kinds where one can experience cosmopolitan life as both specific and universal, ordinary and anticipatory.

The displaced or the people on the move that I have written about are remote from the mobile global class who travel in sealed aseptic bubbles. They are different from these usual champions of world citizenship whose paths they sometimes cross. Their cosmopolitanism derives from the fact that they necessarily have the world in their head, even if they did not choose to do so, even without a personal theory about it. We find here the basic principle of the cosmopolitan *realism* of Immanuel Kant: we have to understand one another “because the earth is round.” In a *negative* sense, as Étienne Balibar notes, we probably do live in “a single world, in the sense that it is no longer in anyone’s power to escape the effects of the actions of others, and in particular from their destructive effects” (Balibar 2010, 41). Being in a world wider than local or even national boundaries can be a painful and dangerous experience, but it also brings expectations and hopes, projections into a distant future of “home,” that are built in a *de facto* multilocality.¹¹ The spirit of adventure and the perception of a cultural labyrinth are clear expressions of a cosmopolitan consciousness. The feeling of being “of the world” but undesirable in the world, or at least less desirable than others, is also a form of cosmopolitan consciousness, that of the alien, the wanderer or the pariah. The world imposes itself onto them in relation to others and this cosmopolitanism is both pragmatic and relational. Being in the world at the border forces one to deal with the organization of everyday life and the definition of one’s place in society. Ordinary cosmopolitanism arises from the concrete everyday

¹¹ I use the term “multilocality” in preference to “trans-” or “supralocality” in order to keep the concrete reference to places and multiple anchoring rather than to uprooting.

experience of the border, denoting a condition that is not *substantially* bound to particular social categories or impoverished classes of migrants, even if it is largely on these that my reflections are based. It seems to me that we can draw from these migrant experiences a decentred perspective on the world. Building upon Edward Said's reflections on exile (2002), philosopher Seloua Luste Boulbina situates the most clearly "decolonized" thought, emancipated from any assignment of identity, in what she calls "between-worlds": those "between" worlds that are formed by experience and the "science of the concrete" – the experience of migrants on their travels (Luste Boulbina 2013; Said 2002).

This knowing-how-to-be in the world is strengthened by the duration and repetition of the border position for those women and men who move around and thus live more than others the encounter between different local worlds. With the spatial and temporal widening of borders, this condition is potentially generalizable, anticipating a culture of borders as a global culture in the process of becoming. This is a cosmopolitanism both wider and more universal, more genuine and authentic, than the elite cosmopolitans often opposed to the locals (Bauman 2001). It is also different from the abstract cosmopolitan "consciousness" of Ulrich Beck (2006) or the *cosmopolitics* of transnational activists (Agier 2020; Tassin 2003). The three most common usages of the "cosmopolitan" word and idea (global class, cosmopolitan consciousness, cosmopolitics) do not describe the cosmopolitan *condition* in the sense of a lived experience, the everyday and ordinary experience of sharing the world, no matter how inegalitarian and violent it may be. My different conception of cosmopolitanism is drawn rather from the experience of border situations, in the broad sense in which I have used the term. The monopolization of the cosmopolitan idea by the global media class, by the cosmopolitanism of world citizens, or by globalized events, shows that cosmopolitanism, just like global mobility, is marked by multiple inequalities, and that its definition is an object of conflict.

It is crucial in this context to say from where and of whom one is speaking when talking about cosmopolitanism: "whose cosmopolitanism?" is the essential question. It is also important to conclude with the most accurate possible description of cosmopolitanism: to answer the question "which cosmopolitanism?"

In a context of identity-based enclosure – nationalist, urban, neo-local or neo-tribal – which highlights the difficulty of understanding and living these border situations, the everyday and ordinary cosmopolitan condition cannot simply be reduced to its sociological component: the circulation of the poor, a "popular," "transnational" or "migratory" cosmopolitanism. In anthropological terms, it is formed by the experience of the border, which globalization is generalizing, and with which we have to learn to live.

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