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Abstract

Beyond Orientalism

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In a post-colonial, postmodern world, what is the intellectual ground on which Asia and Europe can meet and communicate? Historically the meeting place between East and West has often been a place of fantasies, mutual misunderstandings and projections. Have we now at last dispelled the illusions and stereotypes of a previous age? Do we now stand within the global clearing of a single world - beyond orientalism? What can we hope to gain from the meeting of Asia and Europe on this newly cleared ground? The multicultural, globalising conditions which prevail at the close of the century make urgent the need to address these questions, and I argue for a diligent cross-cultural inquiry and educational strategy which is based on the ideals of interactive pluralism which both respects traditional loyalties and identities, yet which is able to set them in creative, agonistic interaction with each other.