

Edward Said and *Orientalism*

Listen to the youtube video and fill in the blanks (all words are in the footnote but out of order):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1aNwMpV6bVs>

Welcome to the Macat multimedia series. A Macat analysis of Edward Said's *Orientalism*.

Edward Said was one of the most important cultural _____ of the late 20th century. In his 1978 book *Orientalism*, Said made the _____ argument that scholarly writing from America and Europe presented _____, misleading and stereotyped cultural representations of the East. He argued that the Orient is the stage on which the whole East is confined. Said believed that these biased perceptions hindered a true understanding of Middle-Eastern and East Asian culture.

To understand Said's theory, let's imagine a _____ university professor writing an academic report on the party scene. For research purposes he decides to go to a party. When he arrives, the party is in full _____. Most guests are casually dressed and dancing to loud electronic dance music. Others are sitting around _____ on the floor, kissing and laughing.

The whole situation is _____ to the professor. He has his own set of values and finds it difficult to understand and appreciate the behavior of the party-goers. He can't identify himself with them or understand what made them what they are.

In the same way, Said argued, when Western scholars _____ Eastern culture, they couldn't understand it because it was different from their own. So they portrayed the East as _____, enigmatic and curious, judging and romanticizing it, without ever understanding it.

Deep down, the professor feels his values are _____. After all, he is an academic. His distaste for the party-goers lifestyle confirms that his perspective is correct. He publishes his report, portraying the party-goers as rockers, sensual, _____, unintelligent because they deviated from his own personal values. Just as the professor saw himself as superior to the party-goers, Said believed that the West thought its society was superior to Eastern society.

But Said went further. He thought Western scholarship held strong ties to the domineering, imperialist societies that produced it, concluding that much Western scholarship was inherently political and intellectually _____.

Said argued that stereotyping became a justification of the Western _____ of Eastern countries. The West painted a picture of an Eastern world that needed civilizing. Invasion was framed as _____, rescuing the inhabitants who were too lazy and too pleasure-focused to be fit to govern themselves.

Said deduced that either the West is _____ by its own failings and doesn't recognize that it is stereotyping, or it believes its own culture is superior.

Edward Said's book became the _____ text for post-colonial studies and transformed Middle-Eastern studies. His theory still remains critically relevant today. So much so that it has become part of our language. The term *Orientalism* describes a _____ western attitude towards other cultures. [A more detailed examination can be found in the Macat Analysis.]

Figures, influential, inaccurate, scholarly, swing, lounging, alien, studied, exotic, justified, uncultured, dubious, colonization, salvation, blinded, foundational, patronizing.