

Theory Lab Reading Group (2016-2017): Re-reading Orientalism

Time: Thursdays 4:30 – 6:30

Dates: November 10th, November 17th, November 24th, December 1st, December 8th & December 15th

Location: Queen Mary University of London, Arts One Building – Second Floor, Room 2.18

Reading: Edward Said (1979) *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books).

It seems pertinent to re-read Edward Said's *Orientalism* in 2016. On one hand, recent events in the Middle East brought the agency of the 'orient' back to the center of academic debate. On the other, recent developments in Europe, most recent of which is *Brexit*, highlighted the ubiquity of exclusionary discourses in former imperialist states. This all occurs while the Israeli occupation of Palestine, Said's birthplace, remains a reminder that the age of imperialism is yet to be gone. Rereading *Orientalism* in (and through) such historical context would highly reward our understanding of both Said's seminal post-colonial text and our contemporary post-colonial history.

The reading group will meet weekly – every Thursday from November 10th to December 15th.

In the first meeting we will watch Edward Said's *Last Interview* to briefly introduce ourselves to the legacy of the author and the main issues he covers in *Orientalism*. In the following five meetings we will discuss the book's three chapters, covering almost half a chapter (30-40 pages) each time. The last meeting will cover *Orientalism's* conclusions and main arguments, hopefully in the presence of a post-colonial specialist.

The meetings will take place in room 2.18 – Arts One building at Queen Mary University of London. Each time, the discussion will be opened by a volunteer member of the group. Please bring the text to the meetings.

The Reading Group is free to attend – however, please contact the Reading Group's coordinator, Hesham Shafick Abdelbary - h.h.s.abdelbary@qmul.ac.uk – to confirm your attendance or have any other enquiries prior to the start of the group on the 10th November 2016.