

## ***Orientalism's Discourse*** **—Said, Foucault and the Anxiety of Influence\***

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### **Abstract**

This article will reconsider Edward W. Said's notion of "traveling theory" in light of his most influential work *Orientalism* and its appropriation of Michel Foucault's theory of "discourse," which has prompted criticism from a number of scholars, including James Clifford and Robert J. C. Young. Rather than looking at the question of whether Said misappropriates the work of Foucault, I will, via Harold Bloom's concept of "misprision," argue that he "misreads" the French philosopher in order to add a *political* valence that is missing or attenuated in the original work. Also, I will show why Said is less concerned with constructing a theory of Orientalism than with speaking truth to power about the distorted image of the

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non-EuroAmerican other in Western art and culture, and its impact on global politics and history.

**Key Words:** Edward W. Said, traveling theory, *Orientalism*, Michel Foucault, discourse