

# Cultural studies



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

1. Michel DeCerteau, “ Walking in the De Certeau, in his essay ‘ Walking in the , introduces New York as seen from the top of the WorldTrade Center and formulates some abstract general theories to understand everyday life in the city. [91] The writer believes that one needs to get down to the street to obtain a real vision of the city. For him, the city looks like a map; but the pedestrians on the street read the city as a text, and, at the same time, they are capable of writing this text. [92]

The ordinary pedestrians of the city are termed as ‘ walkers’. Walking is an elementary form of experience of the city for the pedestrians. This experience is diametrically opposite to the experience of the ‘ academics’. The pedestrians make use of the spaces that cannot be seen by the visionary. As opposed to the visionary, the pedestrians do not have a single map or a picture of a city, but a series of migrational metaphors which always undergoes alterations. [93]. The author seems to mean that experiencing something is more meaningful than visualizing something. The understanding of the people is managed by speculative and classificatory operations which are always liable to contradictions when they encounter the social extremes. The people who actually walk and live in the city will not agree with the concept of the decaying city. [94] Walking in the city can never be captured objectively by drawing maps because the experience of walking is very much subjective. The writer also speaks about the rhetoric of walking where the walkers unconsciously produce sentences using a series of signifiers that only experience can provide. The signifiers used by planners will be taken over by these walkers. Traveling can replace the lost legends, which once offered a series of ‘ habitual spaces’. Walking is compared to a story that violates traditional notions and extends to the

reality of human experience.

Questions

1. Explain the concept of ' City' as explained by the author?
2. Find out the significance and meaning of the term " walking" in the essay?

Q. 1: Edward Said, " Introduction" from Orientalism

I

Edward Said begins the essay by referring to a French Journalist's comment about East as " the Orient" (P. 1), which purports three independent things: First, an academic discipline; then, the " ontological and epistemological distinction" between occidental Vs. oriental; and finally, a historically defined phenomenon, where orientalism is a device of dominance (P. 2). He further dwells on the Franco-British as well as American involvement in developing the concept of orientalism.

II

Said thinks that both oriental and occidental are not real but fictitious creations, and are interdependent. He examines this interdependency in three dimensions: First, the consistency in the whole western studies about the misconception of the " real' orient"; then, the connection of such discourses with power; and finally, the reality that, orientalism is only a collection of lies and myths created for the dominance of West (P. 5). He also explores how the West always assert their superiority, and which are the ways in which it operates through orientalism.

III

This section examines how he has constructed such a discourse:

1. There is " distinction between pure and political knowledge" (P. 9). All

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humanities subjects are political and, so, are biased. The Western interest in the Orient is created by culture, but is executed by power politics- the two interconnected forces.

2. Then, there are the methodological concerns such as the starting point, references, devices to be used, the audience of his work, and contents of the chapters.

3. He understands that his experiences as a child in the East and as “ an Arab- Palestinian in the West” can give a personal element and authenticity to the study (P. 27).

On the whole, the work tries to analyze the wide scope of orientalism, which is something more than a matter of mere academic interest. Therefore, Said hopes that this work may take a first step towards eliminating oriental-occidental distinctions.

Questions:

1. What are the three definitions of the term ‘ Orientalism’ by Edward Said?
2. What are the ways by which orientalism operates and dominates?
3. Explain the three contemporary realities that Said keeps in mind while dealing with the concept of ‘ Orientalism?’

Works Cited

Certeau, Michel de. (1988). *The Practice of Everyday Life. Walking in the City*. Berkeley.

Said, Edward W. (1978). *Orientalism*. London & Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul. pp. 1-28.