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**David Henry Hwang's *M. Butterfly* (1988) and Monica Ali's
Brick Lane (2003): An Orientalist Reading.**

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DEDICATION

To my parents who have shown a great understanding in hard times: I finished this work to be honored with your presence and your tender tap on my head.

To my greatest grandmother Djouher

To my dear brothers Lyes, Toufik and my sister Sabrina for their support, no one could have had your noble motives.

To my beloved husband Imad Eddine for his unconditional support.

Nouara

DEDICATION

To my parents who have shown a great understanding in hard times: I finished this work to be honored with your presence and your tender tap on my head.

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the Orientalist representations in David Henry Hwang's *M. Butterfly* (1988) and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003). It aims to argue that both authors' depiction of the Easterners, as Asian and Bangladeshi is Orientalist. To achieve our purpose, we have relied on theatrical implication of Edward Said in his well known work *Orientalism* (1978) and to shed light on important concepts; 'Self' versus 'Other' and stereotypes. The first chapter of the dissertation, we have dealt with the representation of the Self versus the Other. We have found out that both authors Hwang and Ali tackle the same issues of the representations of the Orient. The second chapter has been devoted to the representation and double oppression of the Oriental women. We have concluded that both female authors' characters provide stereotypical images, besides, oppression against Oriental women. It also explores the way these characters embodied Said's illustration of the Orient.

Key words: Self, Other, Stereotypes, Oriental Women, and Double Oppression.

General Introduction

For centuries, Oriental women have been represented as the oppressed ones; also they have been regarded as being seductive, submissive, and voiceless. Generally, the Oriental women have been depicted in mass media as perfect wives; they lived absolutely and selflessly for their husbands. These clichés of Oriental women are historically rooted in the Western civilization. Literature is considered as an ideal ground where these recurrent prejudices are represented especially in Western fiction. One example of Orientalist reading is the representation of Oriental women in both works *M.Butterfly* and *Brick Lane*.

The following research aims to compare the Oriental women in David Henry Hwang's *M.Butterfly* (1988) and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003). Our research will be articulated around an Orientalist reading as it has been defined by Edward W.Said in *Orientalism* (1978). To start, David Henry Hwang is one of the greatest Asian American playwrights and screenwriters. He is the first Chinese American playwright who won great prize. Also, his works examine the Asian immigrant experiences from an American Asian perspective. One of his famous works is *M.Butterfly* (1988). *M.Butterfly* is a well-known play inspired from Giacomo Puccini's Opera *Madame Butterfly* (1904). It is story of a French Embassy Rene Gillimard in Beijing, who had an affair for twenty years with Song, Chinese spy masquerading as a woman, in order to have access to secret documents about the Vietnam War.

Furthermore, Monica Ali is one of the best young British novelists; her name appeared in the prestigious literary journal *Granta*. One of her well-known works is ***Brick Lane*** (2003). ***Brick Lane*** is a story of a Bangladeshi woman, Nazneen, who married an older man Chanu, who lives in London. She faces many troubles in her new life; she does not speak English language.

Review of Literature

David Henry Hwang's ***M.Butterfly*** (1988) and Monica Ali's ***Brick lane*** (2003) have received a large bulk of criticism. Indeed, both have been studied from different perspectives. To start with ***M.Butterfly***, it has been analyzed by Sawyer Henderson and Dr Tanya Bennett, from a psychoanalytical perspective, in their work named "*Exploring Sexuality: An analysis on Hwang's M Butterfly*". Henderson and Bennett explore homosexuality and heterosexuality of the two characters Gallimard and Song within the play ***M.Butterfly***. Song has been represented as a man masquerading as a female to cover up her homosexuality. Otherwise, Gallimard has been shown as a Western heterosexual white man. Besides, they asserted that both are gay; there are many symbols that lead to this assumption. For instance, the space where he has been imprisoned demonstrates his inner sexuality; also, he commits suicide because he cannot accept his own homosexuality and being without his lover. They claim "Gallimard is living in this "fallacy of Thought" that refuses to accept his inner sexuality" ¹. For this reason, Gallimard has been disappointed by his fantasy.

In addition, *M. Butterfly* has been treated by Nubuco Anan in her work named “*M. Butterfly Reconfiguring Gender and Geography*” from gender perspective. Her purpose is to describe the binary opposition between Gallimard as being the dominant masculine West, and Song as being the obedient feminine East, to highlight the power relationship between them. She says: “Song succeeds to convince him that “she” is, as an Asian woman, inferior to him”². Then, she claims that the transformation of the characters in the final scene is the reproduction of gender and racial binaries.

The final scene of *M. Butterfly* is twisted; it is the Westerner Gallimard who has become a Japanese woman and it is the Easterner Song who has become a Western man. Gallimard commits suicide as Butterfly, wearing a kimono, make-up, and a wig. And Song, who wears an Armani suit, a Western designer's suit showing wealth, power, and masculinity.³

Mainly, Nubuco Anan discusses Song’s identities, and demonstrates the deconstruction of the binary opposition between the West and the East in the following quotation: “S/he is not a powerless and stupid woman who wants to be dominated by Westerners... Gallimard also crosses the boundary of gender and geography through his transformation to Butterfly in the last scene”⁴. At the final scene the roles are twisted, Song becomes a Western man, and Gallimard becomes Butterfly.

Nonetheless, *M. Butterfly* has been explored by Hsin Fa Wu from romantic tragedy perspective entitled “*A Terrible Beauty is Born M. Butterfly as a Romantic Tragedy*”. Hsin Fa Wu claims in his work that the protagonist Gallimard is a romantic tragic hero, who falls in love with a perfect woman Song Liling is actually a spy serving her country. Hsin argues that: “thus from Gallimard’s reconstruction of his experiences arises a combination of the romantic

and the tragic in the whole play”⁵. The romantic fantasy leads Gallimard to transcend, and disillusionment. He says: “death with honors is better than life with dishonors”⁶. Gallimard prefers death than life.

Similarly, Monica Ali’s ***Brick Lane*** also received a large bulk of criticism. To start with, Sayeda Samara Mortada discussed ***Brick Lane*** from a cultural perspective in her work “*The Notion of Women as Bearers of Culture in Monica Ali’s Brick Lane*”. Her aim is to reveal how a Bangladeshi woman has been regarded as cultural bearer. She tries to examine the position of the central character Nazneen in society, then, how she has been considered by her family as a bearer of their culture. Samara asserts that: “Nazneen, does everything the Bangladeshi community condemn her from doing. Chanu does not like her because he thinks she is not respectable”⁷. Thus, she has been rejected and oppressed by society.

In addition, Junn Iselin Storengen has dealt with Nazneen’s identity, in her work named “*Identity through Themes of Life, Death, and Loneliness in Monica Ali’s Brick Lane*”. She discusses how Nazneen has been developed in her new life, and culture in unfamiliar country. Junn Iselin tackles ***Brick Lane*** through the themes of life, death, and, loneliness, Nazneen faces many obstacles; she does not know English language and culture. Even, she has a problem of communication with her husband Chanu, because of that she has not found her true self that made her lonely in her life. She maintains that:

Nazneen describes how lonely she feels. She misses people and has never been alone before. Back in the village, there were always people everywhere. Her new life is quite the opposite. The thoughts of Nazneen when she starts bleeding may show her own reflections about suicide. Even though she never directly shows that she wants to end her life, the passage tells the reader about

her ideas. Because she feels so lonely and lost in her new world, she has also lost her grip on how to handle everyday life.⁸

Moreover, *Brick Lane* has been investigated by Fakhare Alam in his work named “*Racism A Study of Monica Ali’s Brick lane*” from a social perspective. He explores racism through characters of *Brick Lane*. Fakhar shows the forms of hatred and discrimination, for instance Chanu is a victim of color discrimination as a barrier to his promotion. Besides, he warns his wife and his daughter not to trust whites, and he obliges his daughters to wear Indian clothes. After the events of September 11th Muslim immigrants were viewed as terrorists and extremists. The following quotation confirms Alam’s thought:

Chanu’s awareness of racial discrimination and injustice of white people has been expressed by his wife, Nazneen, in the following lines: “My husband says they are racist, particularly Mr. Dalloway. He thinks he will get the promotion, but it will take longer than any white man. He says that if he painted his skin pink and white then there would be no problem. . . . My husband says it is discrimination. . . . He says that racism is built into the system.” (72) It is what Chanu has concluded about the racial issues from all his decades of working among the white people.⁹

Issue and Working Hypothesis

From the above review of literature, it is obvious that both David Henry Hwang’s *M. Butterfly* and Monica Ali’s *Brick Lane* are two important works, whose has drawn great critical attention. Yet, one can notice that many critics have dealt with the two selected works separately. The critics we have reviewed tackle both works from different perspectives. To the best of our knowledge, no previous study has been undertaken so far to analyze both works from an Orientalist reading.

Thus, we intend to study David Henry Hwang's *M.Butterfly* (1988) and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003) from an Orientalist perspective. Both works are relying to the theory of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978). Our attention is to highlight how both authors succeed in dealing with the same issues of the representation of 'the Self' against 'the Other' and the stereotypical images about the Oriental women.

Our main interest in this research paper is basically to picture the way both selected works reflect Edward Said's classification of 'the Self' Vs 'the Other'. Also, we will try to recognize the affinities we presume that both works share.

Methodological outline

At the methodological level, our research paper is undertaken following the IMRAD system. Our research is composed of an Introduction that states our aims. It includes a review of literature that deals with some criticism of the two selected works. The Methods and Materials part it contains the explanation of Edward W. Said theory *Orientalism* (1978). It also includes two succinct biographies of the two authors and summaries of the two selected works, besides two historical backgrounds. In the Results part, the findings are reached. In addition, the Discussion part will comprise two chapters. In the first one we will demonstrate the representation of 'the Self' versus 'the Other' in David Henry Hwang's *M.Butterfly* (1988) and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003). In the second one is divided into two parts, we will show the representation of the Oriental women by Westerners and the double oppression

about the Oriental women in David Henry Hwang's *M.Butterfly* (1988) and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*(2003). Finally, our dissertation ends with a General Conclusion that concludes the main issues dealt within this piece of research.

METHOD AND MATERIALS

Method

As we intend to tackle the issue of the representation of the Self versus the Other and the representation of the Oriental women in David Henry Hwang's *M.Butterfly* (1988) and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003). For relevance details, we will appeal to Edward Said's theory *Orientalism* (1978).

Orientalism: An Introduction

Throughout our research we need to establish a theoretical ground to set our arguments. Thus our work focuses on Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), which is a theory that emphasizes the distinction between the Orient and the Occident. The term Orient has often used as an alternative to the term East, it refers to those countries around the Mediterranean and stretch through Asia associated with the Muslim world. Also, the term Occident has often used as an alternative to the term West that represent Europe and America.

Edward Said is a well known Palestinian-American scholar and an important figure in postcolonial studies. In his prominent acclaimed work *Orientalism* published in 1978, he

explores the history and nature of Western perception and attitudes towards the East. According to Said, the word ‘Orientalism’ does not only mean something related to the Eastern countries, yet it also refers to the misrepresentation of the Orientals and their culture.¹⁰

Structurally, Edward Said’s book *Orientalism* (1978) is divided into three parts. The first part, ‘*The Scoop of Orientalism*’ focuses on the Western representation of the Orient. In the second part, ‘*Orientalist Structures and Restructures*’ Said explains how philological, historical, and literary writers looked at the East in the Nineteenth century. The third part, ‘*Orientalism Now*’ is about the contemporary American discourses on Orient and the analysis of modern *Orientalism*.

According to Edward Said *Orientalism*. Firstly is an academic discipline, European interested in the culture of the East and they persist in contemporary world they focused on different studies such as Area, Oriental, and Islamic studies. This academic discipline emerged in the Eighteenth century. Many researchers write large of texts where the unfamiliar world of Orient became familiar. These texts or discourses lead to the emergence of Western stereotypes about the Orient. Secondly, Orientalism defined by Edward Said as a style of thought based upon a binary distinction between the ‘Orient’ as being ‘Inferior’ and ‘Occident’ as being ‘Superior’.¹¹

Thirdly, Said defines Orientalism as a corporate institution; according to him, the Orient is produced by the Occident. That is to say, the Occident maintains to teach, still,

describe and rule the Orient to make the unknowable known in order to dominate and rule the Orient .He refers to Michel Foucault’s notion of discourse to explain the systematic discipline of Orientalism “by which the European culture was able to manage and even produce the Orient.”¹². The following lines demonstrate Said’s thought about corporate institution“the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient-dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short. Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.”.¹³

It is essential to point out that Edward Said’s conception of *Orientalism* was influenced by a diversity of thinkers such as the French theorist Michel Foucault and the Italian communist Antonio Gramsci. Edward Said was influenced by Foucault’s notion of discourse as being a system of thought that defines what can be known. This system is inextricably linked to power in all its forms, that is to say knowledge and power are inter-related. Also, Said is inspired by Gramsci’s notion of hegemony in understanding the representation of *Orientalism* in Western scholarship and their relation to the establishment of power over the Orient.

Said states that *Orientalism* is the result of certain earlier circumstances which are ‘fundamentally indeed radically fractious’. Therefore, we can suppose that the coming of the Western world in close contact with Eastern regions in the European imperial period cause the misrepresentation of East as being the ‘Other’ who are existed just to be ruled and dominated

by Occident¹⁴. This is asserted in the following quotation “The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other.”¹⁵

The first chapter of *Orientalism* (1978), emphasizes the three binary oppositions that will be demonstrated through the work , 'Ours' versus 'Theirs' , 'Western' versus 'Eastern' , and 'civilized' versus 'uncivilized'. These binary oppositions reinforce the idea of the Orientals as the 'Others' and the Westerners as the 'Self'. Said argues that the relationship between 'Occident' and 'Orient' is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex 'hegemony'. He points out the distinction between the 'Self' and 'Other' as being the heart of post colonialism that means the Occident are the colonizer and the Orient are colonized “For Orientalism was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted the difference between the familiar (Europe, the West, "us") and the strange (the Orient, the East, "them").”¹⁶

According to Edward Said, the West characterized the 'Orient', particularly the Middle East, Arabs, and Muslims in order to better define themselves. On the one hand, the Occident viewed all Easterner as inferior, uncivilized, irrational, and repressed to themselves as being superior, civilized, rational, and liberated. On the other hand, the occident characterize the 'Orient' as the same by giving individuals a group identity without getting to know these individuals, this was stereotyping by West world. Said refers to the stereotypical

images through the writings of some great intellectuals such as; Disraeli, Kipling, Homer, Nerval and Flaubert, whose depictions have mostly contributed to the West exotic and romantic picture of the Orient. Said refers to Flaubert's quotation toward Oriental women who are depicted as being shy, naïve, innocent and passive.

She never spoke of herself; she never represented her emotions, presence, or history. He spoke for and represented her. He was foreign, comparatively wealthy, male, and these were historical facts of domination that allowed him not only to possess KuchukHanem physically but to speak for her and tell his readers in what way she was "Typically Oriental".¹⁷

Furthermore, Westerners find the Oriental women sexually extremely desirable. "it viewed itself and its subject matter with sexist blinders. This is especially evident in the writing of travelers and novelists: women are usually the creatures of a male power-fantasy"¹⁸. We notice that what is represented about the Orient is not the truth, but misrepresentations.

Materials

BIOGRAPHIES

David Henry Hwang

David Henry Hwang is an Asian American playwrights and screenwriters. He was born in Los Angeles, California on August 11, 1957 to Chinese American parents. Hwang attended Harvard School in North Hollywood, California. Later he majored in English Literature at Stanford University, graduating in 1979. His first play, *FOB*, premiered in 1980. He has written many other plays, including *The Dance* and *the Railroad* (1981) *The Sound of a Voice* (1983) and *Golden Child* (1996). Among other projects his successful play

M. Butterfly (1988), which gained members, honors Tony Award for the best play of the year. He is the first Chinese American playwright who had won the great prize. Hwang began working as director of the playwriting concentration at Columbia University School of the Arts. His works, examine the immigrant experience from an Asian American perspective.¹⁹

Monica Ali

Monica Ali is a British novelists; she was born in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on October 20, 1967. When Ali had three years she moved with her parents to England, she entered Wadham College of Oxford University, and graduated with PPE degree, the acronym for the Philosophy, Politics, and Economics course. She went to work in the marketing department of small publishing house *Pluto*, then, she moved on to a similar job at another house before joining a branding agency. Monica Ali's first novel at 37 was an absolute hit and gained generous honor, which is *Brick Lane* (2003). Ali's name appeared on a much-anticipated list of the 20 Best Young British Novelists under 40 from the prestigious literary journal *Granta*. The title of the novel *Brick Lane* is a street at the heart of London's Bangladeshi community. *Brick Lane* was interpreted as a movie in 2007. After that, Ali published three book *Alentjo* 2006 *In the Kitchen* 2009 and *Untold Story* 2011.²⁰

Summaries

M. Butterfly

David Henry Hwang's well known play ***M. Butterfly*** (1988) had its premiere on February 10, 1988 at the National Theater in Washington D.C. The title is an adaptation from Giacomo

Puccini's Opera *Madame Butterfly* (1904) in which a Japanese woman sacrifices her life away for the love of a white man. It is also crafted from the event 30, June 1983 The French embassy employee Bernard Boursicot is accused of having given Chinese officials unclassified diplomatic documents while assigned at the French embassy in Beijing and Shi Lei Lu a singer in Chinese traditional opera, is accused of being his accomplice and spy. Boursicot thought for nearly twenty years that his lover Shi Pei Pu was a woman who bore him a child²¹.

The play opens with the protagonist, Rene Gallimard, speaking from his prison cell, explains to the audience the events that led to his imprisonment to correct the misunderstanding that had made his mockery. He tells them that he has been serving as a French diplomat in China. Gallimard attends a performance of Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*. He has been influenced by the Opera itself, and seduced by the performer Song Liling. In addition, Gallimard identifies Song with the character of Butterfly as a perfect Oriental woman, otherwise, he considers himself as playing the role of Pinkerton another character from Puccini's Opera.

After many weeks both go to develop an intimate relationship, Song appears nervous and shy in front of Gallimard; For this reason, he is disappointed for been unsuccessful at physical and emotional level in his relationship, so he decides to give up her away. Indeed, Gallimard received a letter in which Song expresses her grief; at the same time, he received a promotion that allows him to decide, how the French will conduct political and military relationship in

China. After that, he announces the news to Song. Gallimard begins to advise American military leaders, who are beginning a war against Communists in Vietnam. Later on, we discover that Song, Gallimard's lover is actually a man masquerading as a woman, he seduces him in order to get information to undertake China; Song is a spy working for the Chinese government. However, the later keeps his secret by making sure that Gallimard never sees his naked body. They carried on their relation for twenty years, but they have been separated for four years during the Vietnam War. Song has been sent to a forced labor camp for being an artist and a homosexual because it is considered as a crime by Chinese authorities. Besides, Gallimard has sent back to Paris, in order to resume his affair where he has imprisoned for giving Song secret documents. Song visits Gallimard in prison telling him it is time for him to confront the truth, that what he loved is fantasy of "Butterfly". Gallimard throws Song out of the prison cell, saying it is time for him to return to Butterfly. In the play's final scene, Gallimard interprets the Opera of *Madame Butterfly* wearing woman's kimono, wig, and makeup as Butterfly. He introduces himself to the audience as being Rene Gallimard known as Madame Butterfly. Then, just as the heroine of Puccini's Opera does, he commits suicide with a hara-kiri knife.

Brick Lane

Monica Ali's well known first novel is *Brick Lane* (2003) is a portrait of the Bangladeshi immigrants in London. It is a story of a Bangladeshi woman ripped away from her rural home

and sent to live with her older husband in London Tower Hamlets. Nazneen Ahmed is the central character of the novel; she tries hard to be a good Muslim woman, as well as to dive into her work as a good wife and mother.

Nazneen was born in Bangladeshi village, where she lives with her parents. After her mother is suicide, her father in an arranged marriage forces her to marry an old man Chanu Ahmed who lives in London. Nazneen faces many challenges in her new life such as English culture and language. She gives birth to a boy Raqib, who died at an early age in hospital and two girls' shahana and Bibi. Chanu begins to get frightened, that his daughters are exposed to drugs and alcohol, so, he decides to go back to Bangladesh to avoid these troubles.

Chanu tries to improve his intellectual education in order to impress his boss and have a promotion in his job. Unfortunately, he mistakes and loses his job. Also, Nazneen maintains contact with her sister, Hasina, who ran away with a man to Dhaka in a love marriage. In her letters, Hasina describes her life working in a factory and then later a prostitute.

As soon as Chanu leaves his job without any reason and becomes a taxi-driver, Nazneen decides to help her family by buying a swing machine and take piece of work, finishing blue jeans. A handsome young man Karim enters into Nazneen's life. Both fell in love and had physical contact. Later, he proposes her to divorce Chanu and marry him. Nevertheless, Ahmed's family faced many difficulties in their life in London; Mrs Islam requests them each

time to pay the rent, in addition, the attacks of September 11th, 2001 take place in the United States.

Chanu decides to return into Bangladesh and this decision make conflict between members of family, Shahana runs away from home because she is not willing to leave London, Nazneen also revolts against her husband's decision. Finally, she chooses to stay in London with her two daughters and give up her intimate relationship with Karim. Chanu returns to Bangladeshi village alone.

Historical background

30/06/1983 In Paris and Vietnam War

David Henry Hwang's *M.Butterfly* (1988), has been inspired from the real event 30, June 1983 in Paris. A French embassy employee Bernard Boursicot has been accused of giving a Chinese singer Shi Lei Lu official unclassified diplomatic documents when France and the People's Republic of China are established diplomatic relations. He assigned at the French embassy in Beijing during 1960's. He thought for nearly twenty years that the Chinese spy is a woman, who has given birth to his son Shi Du Du.²²

In addition, the subject matter of *M.Butterfly* is drawn in the early 1950's, the Western power France and the US with a vital interest in Vietnam. A Civil War between the Chinese Communist Party and the Nationalist Party begins in 1949 known as Kuminatag. Song character refers to that period as sudden political changes. The Vietnamese forces are guided

by the Communist government with modern weapon from the Soviet Union to fight against France that maintains control over Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. This event takes place after Indochina War, which begin in 1960.²³

During the presidency of John F Kennedy from 1961 to 1963, Dwight Eisenhower sent US military advisors to South Vietnam, in order to defend Nationalist Party against Communist aggression. The action of the play begins when US increase its troops Vietnam to 170,000 soldiers, in order to defend South Vietnam; it was the first direct US military support. In 1963, the leader Diem South Vietnamese was assassinated by a general, who acted with tacit support of the US.²⁴

The Cease line was finally signed in January 1973, and the last US military personnel left Vietnam in March 1973. The South Vietnamese capital of Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese, who reunited the country under Communist rule Social Republic of Vietnam ending the Vietnam War on April 30, 1975.²⁵

9/11/2001 In U.S.A

The novel *Brick Lane* (2003) written by Monica Ali, was influenced by 9/11 attacks on the US Twin Towers that lead the American to live moment of fear and terror. After the bombings, the technological media progress and the press all over the world have accessed into the event. The attacks have been planned by an extremist Islamic group known as Al Qaeda. They directly linked Islam and Muslims with terrorism by describing them with words

such as extremists, fundamentalists, and terrorists. Therefore, this misrepresentation had affected Muslim immigrants living in Britain, as the case of *Brick Lane*'s characters²⁶.

The attack caused 67 UK nationals decay, the largest loss of life from any nation other than the US where the attacks took place. In these attacks, 19 militants associated with the Islamic extremist group al Qaeda hijacked four airplanes and carried out suicide attacks against targets in the US. Four planes crashed in the Twin Towers of the world Trade Center in New York City, the Pentagon just outside Washington, and in Pennsylvania. The previous attacks also caused many crises such as killing hundreds of people in total of 2,996 victims; hundreds more in higher floors and caused devastating inferno that led to the structural collapse of a portion of the giant building.²⁷

Moreover, 9/11 attacks influenced Muslims all over the world; they were seen as terrorists, especially Media who spread terror and fear through people. It is also called 'Moral Panic' stories, Westerners define all Muslims as dangerous and terrorists, besides the US and other European nations brought new federal regulations and changes in immigration policy. These changes, also effect immigrants by criminalizing them, similarly, to *Brick Lane*'s Muslim characters.²⁸

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²¹ Wolder Joyce, *The Spy who fell in Love with a Shadow*, 30 june 1983, in Paris, accessed on March 27, 2018-https://www.nytimes_come2015/05/15/magazine/the-true-story-of-m.butterfly.

²² Wolder Joyce, *The Spy who fell in Love with a Shadow*, 30 june 1983, in Paris, accessed on March 27, 2018-https://www.nytimes_come2015/05/15/magazine/the-true-story-of-m.butterfly.

²³ Antonio Cantu, Sandy Cantu, *A Vietnam War: A National Dilemma*, Organisation of American Historians, and the National Center of History in the School, UCLA, 5-8. Pdf

²⁴ Ibid., 10-12

²⁵ Ibid., 18

²⁶ Paul Baker, Costas Galoriotors and Tony McEnery, *Discourse Analysis and Media Attitude: The Representation of Islam in the British Press* Combrigde University press, 2013, 146.

²⁷ John Williams, Statistics 12 years after 9/11, video, accessed on 30 April, <http://www.youtube.com>

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Results

This part of research is concerned with the stating of the major findings that we have reached after our study of the two works David Henry Hwang's *M.Butterfly* (1988) and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003). Our research analyses the two works from an Orientalist reading. This is clear through Hwang and Ali's view of the principles that shape this assumption. Our investigation has been conducted in the light of Edward Said's theory of *Orientalism* by referring to his famous work *Orientalism* (1978), and borrowed some of its concepts.

To attain our purpose, we have included some important stereotypical images about the Oriental women and the conflict between the Occident and the Orient. Besides to understand better the issue cited above we have focused mainly on Hwang' and Ali's portrayal of their characters.

Throughout our analyzing of the two works, both of them share similarities in representation of the characters the Self dominant West against the Other inferior Orient. Indeed, the stereotypical images and violent behavior towards the female characters that are depicted as submissive Orient.

Our exploration through reading Edward Said's *Orientalism* we have acquired that the relationship between the Self and the Other is based on power, domination and varying

degrees; which represent the ‘Other’ Orientals he or she as primitive, irrational and submissive categories in front of Westerners.

In addition, our analysis has shown that Asian and Bangladeshi characters are experiencing the same conflicts of domination, hatred and varying degrees. Both David Henry Hwang and Monica Ali tackle the same issues throughout their cited works. We have deduced that they are facing racial discrimination, Western prejudices and gender inequalities.

More broadly, our Orientalist reading has revealed that Hwang and Ali share the same mutual aspect at the level of the characters and themes. However, they are not totally equivalent since both works differ in the form, the construction and the development of their stories.

Discussion

In this section of our work, we will explore the representation of The Self versus The Other and the representation of the Oriental women in both David Henry Hwang's *M. Butterfly* (1988) and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003).

Chapter I

The Representation of the Orient in David Henry Hwang's *M. Butterfly* and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*

In this chapter, we will examine the idea of Western superiority towards the Orientals in David Henry Hwang's *M. Butterfly* and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*. This idea, in fact, is mainly related to the aspects of the representation of the Self or Occident versus the Other or Orient. Indeed, Hwang's *M. Butterfly* and Ali's *Brick Lane* show the Western belief of superiority and power over the Orient. For more details, it is important to shed light on the binary opposition between the West and the East within the characters in the two cited works in relation to Edward Said's theory *Orientalism*.

Edward Said draws *Orientalism* to the period of European Enlightenment and colonization of the Arab World. Besides the West sought to dominate the Eastern World for more than two thousand years since classical antiquity²⁹. The binary opposition between the Self and the Other can be translated to the term 'Occident' versus 'Orient', 'Us' versus 'Them', 'the West' versus 'the East' and 'Superior' versus 'Inferior'. The Westerners need a reason to come in the East to take their lands and change their cultures under the pretext that

the Orientals need of outside intervention because they are viewed inferior, uncivilized and passive. In addition, they present the Orientals specially women in pictures as exotic and alien to them. As it is asserted in the following lines “The relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony.”³⁰. We can say that, power predominate on West and East relationship.

Said’s analysis of *Orientalism* demonstrates how the Western literary and cultural canon has Otherized its Other and how they have misrepresented the Orient. Said’s *Orientalism* begins with a quotation by Karl Marx: “they cannot represent themselves, they must be represented’. As a result, it is a Western career to represent ‘them’.”³¹.

It is worth mentioning that David Henry Hwang’s *M.Butterfly* highlights the distinction between Occident versus Orient. *M.Butterfly* is a sort of dramatization of Orientalism. The plot is inspired by the real life story of a French diplomat Bernard Boursicot, who has been accused of espionage for China. It is also crafted from Puccini’s Opera *Madame Butterfly* (1904). Hwang recalls “I was driving down Santa Monica Boulevard one afternoon, and asked myself, ‘What did Bouriscot think he was getting in this Chinese actress?’ The answer came to me clearly: ‘He probably thought he had found Madame Butterfly’ ”³². It draws the fantasy of a Western man to find the perfect Oriental woman.

Throughout our analysis, we find out that Hwang depicts the dichotomy of the Self Vs the Other almost on the two central characters. Gallimard, a French Diplomat working in Benjin, represents the Self, and Song Liling, Opera singer, represents the Other who were in

relationship for nearly twenty years. The relation between them represents power and domination, where the West is represented by Gallimard and the East is represented by Song. As Edward Said maintains in his analysis, the West has created an imaginative dividing line so as to separate itself from the East, and the idea of *Orientalism* is not far from the collective notion identifying European as 'Us' against those non Europeans³³. That is to say, European identity and culture are superior to all other cultures and humans. Thus, the first encounter between Gallimard and Song happens after the performance of *Madame Butterfly* by Song. Gallimard comments the story of the Opera as beautiful; he refers to his fantasy about the Oriental woman who sacrifices herself for love of the white Western man.

“GALLIMARD: No! I was about to say, it's the first time I've seen the beauty of the story”
 “SONG :Really?”
 “GALLIMARD: Of her death. It's a a pure sacrifice. He's unworthy, but what can she do? She loves him ... so much. It's a very beautiful story.”
 “SONG: well yes, to a Westerner.”
 “GALLIMARD: Excuse me?”
 “SONG: It's one of our favorite fantasies, isn't it? The submissive oriental woman and the cruel white man”³⁴

The above conversation between Song and Gallimard indicate the conflict between the West versus the East. Song explains to him, if the story of *Madame Butterfly* happened in another way he would not find it beautiful. Gallimard believes in the superiority of a Western man over an inferior Oriental woman. From the beginning of the story, Gallimard fantasizes Song as Butterfly a submissive, weak Orient and Gallimard as Pinkerton, Puccini's Opera character, a cruel superior Western man. Song says to him: “It's one of your favorite fantasies, isn't it? The submissive Oriental women and the cruel white man.”³⁵. That is to say,

those Westerners made standards about the Oriental woman as being silent, obedient, and irrational. This echoes Edward Said's arguments about Orientalism "what is commonly circulated by it is not "truth" but representations"³⁶. That means the West perceived stereotypical images about the Orient by giving individuals Orient a group identity. Moreover, Song keeps writing letters begging Gallimard to come in her flat. She says: "I have already given you my shame"³⁷. But he refuses to meet her. That act makes Gallimard carry out the Self dominant role in the play towards Song. When, Gallimard gets promotion, he comes to meet Song because he wants to assure his dominant superiority over Song as being submissive and inferior Asian woman. Once Song submits, Gallimard always calls her Butterfly "are you my Butterfly?".³⁸ Gallimard even sets clichés about typical Oriental woman. He asserts that:

There is a vision about the orient. That I have. Of slender women in chongsams and kimonos who die for the love of unworthy foreign devils, who are born and raised to be the perfect women. Who take whatever punishment we give them, and bounce back, strengthened by love, unconditionally. It is a vision that has become my life.³⁹

In addition, Gallimard decides what to do; Song must follow and give him what he desires. This reflects the dominant Self versus the obedient Other. Gallimard says: "she would always have prepared a light snack and then, even so delicately and only if I agree, she would start to pleasure me."⁴⁰. Yet, Song is depicted as weak and passive Oriental woman occupying domestic sphere; she serves and pleases the white Western man. As Said underlines that Orientalism improve a clear distinction between Occident (Europe. The West, "us") and the strange (The Orient, the East, "them")⁴¹. Therefore, the effect of this representation helps the

creation of the binary opposition of the Self and the Other, that tend the Occident to define themselves as being civilized, also they describe the Orient as they wish and make it their objects of study. Otherwise, Song is subjected by Gallimard as a shy, modest, and silent woman; for this reason, he treats her as a mere object not a human, Gallimard says:

I am starting to doubt the words of my friend Marc. But no, not really. In my heart, I know she has ... an interest in me. I suspect this is her way. She is outwardly bold and outspoken, yet her heart is shy and afraid. It is the Oriental in her at war with her Western education.⁴²

The quotation cited above demonstrates the stereotypes about the Orient made by Westerners, where Gallimard thinks that Western education and civilization provides Song to be outspoken and that the East accepts to be submissive and uncivilized to the West. Gallimard's vision reveals the West misrepresentation of the East as the inferior Other. He argues that: "did you hear the way she talked about, Western women? Much differently than the first night. She does she feels inferior to them and to me."⁴³ . The earlier means that Song is ignorant just because she is from the East. Similarly, to what Said points out about the Western vision "the Orientals are irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, "different". Thus, the European is rational, virtuous, mature, "normal" "⁴⁴ . This is obvious in Gallimard's thought against Orient. In the same case the character Renee, Gallimard's friend, describes the East as primitive and inferior third world. She states: "I like it. It's primitive, but.... Well, this is the place to learn Chinese, so here I am"⁴⁵ also she says: "I'm student my father exports a lot of useless stuff to the third world"⁴⁶ Orientals are regarded as irredeemably uncivilized and sub-human to Westerners.

Moreover, power relation between the West and the East is exemplified through Gallimard's minds about the Orientals, he claims that: "I determined to try an experiment In *Madame Butterfly*, CioCio San fears that the Western man who catches a butterfly will pierce its heart with a needle, then leave it to perish. I began to wonder; had I too, caught a butterfly who would write on a needle?"⁴⁷. Again he says: "I felt for the first time that rush of power—the absolute power of a man."⁴⁸ The East is shaped by the West as uncivilized and powerless, in this fact they justify their domination over the Orient.

Further, Song character which represents the Oriental still supports Western dominance throughout the play. Gallimard comments about Oriental women that "women willing to sacrifice themselves for the love of a man."⁴⁹ He is sure that Song will do anything for him. Also, Gallimard compares between an Oriental woman Song towards a Western woman Renee that, the Western girl is confident with her naked body and her sexuality as a woman. Instead Song who has never been naked in front of him; thus, he does not want to be with a woman more powerful and confident than him; as a result, he feels his masculine sexuality and his male power with Song⁵⁰. Gallimard claims that: "what she would say if he were unfaithful ... nothing. She would cry, alone, into those wildly soft sleeves, once full of possessions, now empty to collect her tears. It was her tears and her silence that excited me, every time I visited Renee."⁵¹ The submissiveness of the character Song is clear in the above lines that she does not revolt against Gallimard's unfaithfulness. Indeed, the Oriental woman

are depicted as sexual objects, and exotic Other. This reflects Edward Said view about the Oriental woman as “sexist blinders”⁵².

Originally, the Orient is “Europe’s greatest, richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant.”⁵³ as Said points out in his analysis *Orientalism*. The Western countries dominate the rest of the world, also they came in contact with the lesser developed countries including Asia. Gallimard notes that, Asian people are welcoming West invasion. He tells Ambassador Toulon that: “There is a natural affinity between the West and the Orient.”⁵⁴ adding that: “Orientals will always submit to a greater force.”⁵⁵. So, it establishes the idea of Western superiority and the Orient’s inferiority within the Western thought.

Therefore, in the play *M. Butterfly* Toulon and Gallimard believe in the opposition between the West and the East because Gallimard assures him that the Chinese. “Deep down, they miss the old days, you know, cappuccinos men in Tuxedos”⁵⁶ Gallimard says. This may elucidate Western superiority over the Orientals, Vietnamese will submit to the Americans power. And they are ready to open to Western trade:

“Toulon: So what do we tell the Americans about Vietnam?”

“GALLIMARD: Tell them there's a natural affinity between the West and the Orient.”

“TOULON: And that you speak from experience?”

“GALLIMARD: The Orientals are people too. They want the good things we can give them. If the Amencans demonstrate the will to win, the Vietnamese will welcome them into a mutually beneficial union.”⁵⁷

We can notice that a series of binary opposition between the Self Vs the Other is a Western imaginative creation that aims to present themselves as the superior to its opposite.

Soon, Song comments about what happens during World War II. The latter presents the hatred acts of the West toward the East during this period. She asserts in the following lines that: “convincing? As a Japanese woman? The Japanese used hundreds of our people for medical experiments during the war, you know. But I gather such an irony is lost on you.”⁵⁸ These shows Western exploitation, discrimination, and hatred acts in Eastern countries.

It is important to point out that throughout our analysis the binary opposition between the Self towards the East is clearly portrayed in *M. Butterfly* Hwang’s play within characters, setting, and theme. That is to say, the period of colonization in Asian countries show the power domination of the West, and the way the Orient are perceived by stereotypical images. This is what Said calls the unchanging Orient in the mind of Westerners. As a result, they justify their imperial expeditions and their excessive desire for domination; the West established *Orientalism* and constructed artificial boundaries such as the Occident and the Orient, which according to Edward Said: “such geographical designations are an odd combination of the empirical and imaginative.”⁵⁹ These representations attempt to the creation of clashes between the Occident and the Orient.

It is worth noticing that similarly to Hwang Monica Ali’s *Brick Lane* discusses the same issue by emphasizing the ambiguities between the West Vs the East. Thus, we have deduced that Ali treats specifically life experiences of the Orientals immigrants in Western land and reveals the problems woman faces in the East are different from that of the West.

Monica Ali tells the story of Bangladeshi community living in London in Tower Hamlets and the life experiences of women, who were raised in Bangladesh.

In this analysis we intend to shed light the differences between the Self versus the Other in *Brick Lane* characters from an Orientalist angle in relation to Edward Said patterns. The central character Nazneen, a young Bangladeshi woman, is married to Chanu Ahmed who lives in London. Nazneen has to face a lot of challenges in order to accomplish her eventual emancipation. She is portrayed as irrational “Nazneen could say two things in English: sorry and thank you.”⁶⁰. Also, she is pictured as a weak, submissive Oriental woman occupying domestic sphere “It was the middle of the day. Nazneen had finished the housework. Soon she would start preparing the evening meal, but for a while she would let the time pass. It was hot and the sun fell flat on the metal window frames and glared off the glass.”⁶¹. Nazneen not only has to learn to live with Chanu, but she has to survive in a completely new culture. Besides the Oriental woman depicted loneliness and disappointment throughout the novel. Thus, Nazneen is isolated from the society around her; she often stays at home “she is a good worker. Cleaning and cooking and all that. The only complaint I could make is she can't put my files in order, because she has no English. I don't complain though. As I say, a girl from the village: totally unspoilt.”⁶². We can notice that Ali provides issues of the Oriental woman as being oppressed and dominated by man, as a result when Nazneen exposed to Western civilization and culture benefits, she searches her freedom whereas Bangladeshi traditions are presented through the novel as oppressing the Oriental woman. Ali

narrates that: “when she thought about Gouripur now, she thought about inconvenience. To live without a flushing toilet, to abandon her two sinks (kitchen and bath room), to make a fire for the oven instead of turning a knob—would these be trades worth making?”⁶³. Monica Ali inclines a creation of the binary opposition between the West and the East. Ali’s references of the West, London as a place of liberation and the East Bangladesh as a place of complexities and suffocation need to be requested. Similar to what Said underlines about Europeans who define themselves through defining the Orientals. According to Said, the Orient is presented as a society that is irrational, brutish, underdeveloped and further in need of modern Western enlightenment.

In addition, Westerners categorize all Orientals as being all black together this criterion lead to the discrimination of Orientals as inferior to the Occident who are white.⁶⁴ When Chanu sees the leaflet distributed by the Lion Heart, Christian group, he becomes angry “Putting African with India all dark together”⁶⁵ Monica Ali presents Western people as being associated with certain characteristics of prejudice about skin color. It is relied to Chanu as a victim of color discrimination working among the white people; Chanu has experienced Western superiority. This echoes Edward Said’s examination of *Orientalism*, he claims

Orientalism, therefore, is not an airy European fantasy about the Orient, but a created body of theory and practice in which, for many generations, there has been a considerable material investment made Orientalism, as a system of knowledge about the Orient, an accepted grid for filtering through the Orient into Western consciousness, just as that same investment multiplied—indeed, made truly productive—the statements proliferating out from Orientalism into the general culture.⁶⁶

That is to say, these misrepresentation and social prejudices regarding Indian as biologically and culturally subordinated, as well as, in need of European enlightenment are created by the West in order to dominate the Orient. All these descriptions according to Said are carried out for generations by scientists, philosophers, writers, economists and political theorists, then, become widespread within Western consciousness, for instance Joseph Conrad's perception and construction of the Orient in his Malay Fiction. This is drawn in the novel, through Chanu's perception of class and color barrier to his promotion because when he worked for the local council, he is sure he will get the promotion in his job, as it is mentioned in his statement "I think I am certain of the promotion in any case."⁶⁷ But, his colleague is also in the line of promotion, and he is very close to the boss. Chanu thinks that he does not get this promotion because of not being a white man. It is what Chanu has concluded about the issues of working among the white people, is to be obliged to support Western superiority. Here is another example from Chanu about the superiority versus inferiority. The conversation takes place in the kitchen where Nazneen is washing dishes.

Chanu talks to Nazneen

You see, he said, a frequent opener although often she did not see, 'it is the white underclass, like Wilkie, who are most afraid of people like me. To him, and people like him, we are the only thing standing in the way of them sliding totally to the bottom of the pile. As long as we are below them, then they are above something. If they see us rise then they are resentful because we have left our proper place. That is why you get the phenomenon of the *National Front*. They can play on those fears to create racial tensions, and give these people a superiority complex. The middle classes are more secure, and therefore more relaxed.'⁶⁸

There is no direct source in the novel about the white people's opinion of Chanu's failure to get the promotion. But, from Chanu's disappointment, one can conclude that the tensions between the Western people, the British specifically, and the Bangladeshi immigrants do exist. It means that the Westerners would not welcome the Easterners like Chanu to live in their "proper place"⁶⁹. The Orientals are supposed to be at the lower place to make the Western feel superior. As long as the Other are in lower position, the Westerners feels superior because they have the inborn advantage of light skin, in contrast, the Bangladeshis like Chanu cannot have and will not have this opportunity. For the Westerners Chanu, an educated man, cannot be a success in Britain. He is treated like any Other illiterate Bangladeshi person. Chanu has realized that:

When they jump ship and scuttle over here, then in a sense they are home again. And you see, to a white person, we are all the same: dirty little monkeys all in the same monkey clan. But these people are peasants. Uneducated. Illiterate. Close-minded. Without ambition.⁷⁰

One can point out that Chanu's experiences subordination as underdevelopment Other, it is obvious through the novel. As Said maintains, the Orientals are perceived as irrational, depraved, childlike and different, otherwise the European are rational, virtuous, mature and normal.⁷¹

Further, Chanu always forbids Nazneen not to trust the white people and come in close contact with them. He warns his wife from Westerners injustice and stereotype about the Orient. Nazneen tells her friend, Razia: "my husband says they are racist, particularly Mr Dalloway. He thinks he will get the promotion, but it will take him longer than any white

man. He says that if he painted his skin pink and white then there would be no problem.”⁷² the experience of hatred against Orientals pushes Chanu on the point of depression, disappointment, and humiliation. From the beginning of the story, the latter is shown enthusiastic but as the novel moves forward he seems sad

He stopped making plans. . . . Before that, each collapse of ambition, though it dented his surface, had goaded him to new determination, a more urgent reaching. He started every new job with a freshly spruced suit and a growing collection of pens. His face shone with hope. And then greyed with frustration, with resentment. . . . But he was slighted. By customers, by suppliers, by superiors and inferiors. He worked hard for respect but he could not find it.⁷³

Additionally, Chanu is indignant when Lion Hearts leaflet, Christian group, points out Western prejudices against the dress code of Bangladeshi women. In order to show his rebellion, he forces his two daughters Bibi and Shahana to wear exactly as Bangladeshi dress code; it is reflected in the following lines “if he had a Lion Hearts leaflet in his hand, he wanted his daughters covered. He would not be cowed by these Muslim-hating peasants. If he saw some girls go by in hijab he became agitated at this display of peasant ignorance. Then the girls went out in their skirts”⁷⁴. That emphasizes Western superiority towards Bangladeshi immigrants by forcing the Oriental women to wear like Western women. Monica Ali demonstrates the Occident as haters to Muslims in the novel. For instance, a police white man asks Imem in the mosque for two hours this show disrespect towards Muslims. Jorina, Nazneen’s neighbor, retells what happened “that police had been to the mosque and questioned the imam for two hours. No one had any idea why, although many predicted trouble and everyone doubted that a church had ever been treated with such flagrant

disrespect.”⁷⁵. The Occident Christians cannot accept anymore the Orientals’ Islamic culture penetrating into their life, they felt it is time to fight. Where the Christian group, Lion Hearts takes actions against Bengal Tiger, Muslim group, and stops the islamification of the community by attacking them

The Lion Hearts made the opening salvo: HANDS OFF OUR BREASTS! The Islamification of our neighbourhood has gone too far. A Page 3 calendar and poster have been removed from the walls of our community hall. How long before the extremists are putting veils on our women and insulting our daughters for wearing short skirts? Do not tolerate it! Write to the council! This is England! .⁷⁶

Muslims are misrepresented by Westerners. Said analyses of Massignon’s visions of Islam, he argue Westerners misrepresented Islam.

Much as one may be inclined to agree with such theses-since, as this book has tried to demonstrate, Islam has been fundamentally misrepresented in the West-the real issue is whether indeed there can be a true representation of anything, or whether any and all representations, because they are representations, are embedded first in the language and then in the culture, institutions, and political ambience of the representer.⁷⁷

The effect of this representation helps the creation of the binary opposition of the Self and the Other and spread the clashes between them.

It is important to mention that when the attacks of September 11th took place, the conflicts between the East and the West stepped up. Monica Ali highlights the changes in the attitude of both Westerners and Easterners towards each other. The Muslim immigrants were viewed with mistrust even if the attacks take place in America but influenced all Muslim across the world. The Occident essentialise the Orient as terrorists extremists and aggression. It is reflected in *Brick Lane* even though some innocent, who goes to pray in Mosque some of

them have to support aggressive behavior from Westerners; As Said put it, while witnessing the incident, Karim, Nazneen's lover, states that: "The racists – they cleared out of here ages ago." "what about Shiblu Rahman? Nazneen recognized the name. The man had been stabbed to death. It could happen again. 'Thing is, see, they is getting more sophisticated. They don't say race, they say culture, religion'"⁷⁸. Indeed, Ali describes in the novel Razia, as an Oriental woman hatred by the Occident, because they see her as a danger to their society. Even though she is wearing like Western women, she is humiliated and regarded as a symbol of Islam. Westerners think that all Muslim are proud of what their brothers have done in America, and it is regarded as threat and danger to Britain.⁷⁹. Moreover, Karim, Nazneen's lover, also thinks that Westerners try to disguise superiority with culture to avoid being criticized as haters or racists. Karim states: "There is one crime against humanity in this last decade of the millennium that exceeds all others in magnitude, cruelty, and portent. It is the US-forced sanctions against the twenty million people of Iraq."⁸⁰. This show Western discrimination against Muslim, after the 9/11 incident, Chanu decides to return with his family into Bangladesh for their safety. He says:

In all my life, I feel this is the best decision I have made – to take my daughters back home. I am preparing them. You see, to go forward you must first look back. We are taking some stock of the glorious British Empire. When I was in school, do you know what we learned? The English gave us the railways. As if we should get down on our knees for this." He appealed now to his public. "Do you think they would have brought the railway if they did not want to sell their steel or their locomotives? Do you think that they brought us railways from the goodness of their hearts? We needed irrigation systems, not trains."⁸¹

The superiority of the white people is obvious in the novel where tensions raised up between the West and the East especially between natives and immigrants in Britain.

To conclude we have deduced that both writers David Henry Hwang and Monica Ali have shaped the representation of the Orient versus the Occident in their work throughout characters. Firstly, in *M. Butterfly* Song is depicted as an inferior, passive, and irrational woman, in other words she is represented as a perfect Oriental woman, who sacrifices her life for the love of a Western man. These are stereotypes made by Occident, and believed by Gallimard who lives in his fantasy that, Song is his Butterfly. Secondly, in *Brick Lane* Nazneen is represented as submissive and uncivilized woman occupying domestic sphere living in a new country, has to face Western superiority and discrimination. Then, Chanu Ahmed, her husband, loses his job because of the injustice of Westerners, he is considered as uncivilized and judged by the color of his skin.

According to Edward Said, the Europeans divided the world into two parts, the West, and the East or the Occident, and the Orient or the Superior, and the Inferior. These boundaries are considered totally artificial; and it was put on these important basis concepts of 'Us' and 'Them' or 'Ours' and 'Thiers'. Said also argues that Westerners defined themselves as the superior race compared to the Orient, also they justified their colonization by this division.

First, in *M. Butterfly* the invasion of France and America in China is justified by them as this country is uncivilized needs to be enlightened. The two characters Song and Gallimard

enter into conflict between the West versus the East. Second, it is also the case of the two Bangladeshi immigrants Chanu and Nazneen who live in the Western land London. They also face a lot of clashes like new culture and Westerns behavior towards Muslims specially when, the 9/11 attacks took place, the Bangladeshi community in *Brick Lane* were obliged to support Western hatred over them.

Edward Said states that, the duty of the Occident is to civilize the uncivilized world they think they are the supreme power of the world. Then, they created a certain image about Orientals and associate this prejudice to all Easterners as savages, primitives, irrationals, and obedient Oriental women. In *M. Butterfly*, Gallimard has visions about the Orient that Easterners will submit to the Westerners power, also he considers Song as a perfect Asian woman who lives just to please and serve him. He believes certain standards about the Oriental woman as being obedient, modest, and silent. In addition, when Chanu is fired from his job for him it is due to the dark color of his skin and because he is an irrational Orient this reflects Western discrimination towards Orientals. Moreover, Nazneen is depicted as a weak, ignorant, and inferior Oriental woman who is dominated by her husband and society. So, the two writers' attempt to reflect the ambiguous conflicts between the West Vs the East, from two different visions; on the one hand, Asian Orientals as natives undertaken by Westerners, on the other hand Bangladeshi immigrants living in a Western country.

End notes

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³⁹ Ibid.,91

⁴⁰ Ibid.,49

⁴¹ Said, *Orientalism*,43

⁴² David, *M.Butterfly an Afterword*, 27

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⁵² Said, *Orientalism*, 207

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⁵⁶ Ibid., 45

⁵⁷ Ibid., 46

⁵⁸ Ibid., 17

⁵⁸ Said, *Orientalism*, 5

⁶⁰ Monica, *Brick Lane*, 18

⁶¹ Ibid., 17

⁶² Ibid., 21

⁶³ Ibid., 61-62

⁶⁴ Fakhar, Alam, *Racism: A Study of Monica Ali's Brick Lane*, Volume v, Issue ii, February 2017, Reseqrch Scholar Dept. of English & Mel University of Lucknow India.pdf

⁶⁵ Ibid., 190

⁶⁶ Said, *Orientalism*, 6

⁶⁷ Ibid., 33

⁶⁸ Ibid., 32

⁶⁹ Ibid., 32

⁷⁰ Ibid., 25

⁷¹ Said, *Orientalism*, 40

⁷² David, *M.Butterfly an Afterword*, 57

⁷³ Ibid., 52 53

⁷⁴ Ibid., 200

⁷⁵ Ibid., 154

⁷⁶ Ibid., 195

⁷⁷ Said, *Orientalism*, 272

⁷⁸ David, *M.Butterfly an Afterword*, 181

⁷⁹ Mustafa Shakir, *Defendingthe Faith : Islam in post 9/11 Anglophone Fiction*, The University of Notre Dame, vol. 41, No. 2, 281-288, pdf.

⁸⁰ David, *M.Butterfly an Afterword*, 215

⁸¹ Ibid., 188

Chapter II

The Representation of the Oriental Women in David Henry Hwang's

M.Butterfly (1988) and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003)

In this chapter, we will focus on the representation of the female characters as it has been portrayed in David Henry Hwang's and Monica Ali's main protagonist Song, Nazneen, and Hasina. For more details we will highlight how the two authors depict Western stereotypes and double oppression of the Oriental women, as well, the way Edward Said's *Orientalism* pictures the Oriental women.

Edward Said analyses *Orientalism* as a critique of Western texts that have represented the East as an exotic, inferior Other and they are pictured by a set of stereotypical images and clichés. According to him Oriental women are represented as seductive, submissive and voiceless ones. Said advocates those stereotypes, about the Oriental women are the creatures of male fantasy. In the first part, we will highlight Western stereotypes of the Oriental women in Hwang's *M.Butterfly* and Ali's *Brick lane* at the level of female characters related to Edward Said's exploration of the Other.

Further, Edward Said claims that the Oriental women are oppressed by society as obedient and inferior; this is obvious in the writing of travelers and orientalist, who made the native women as their objects study. He underlines "what is commonly circulated by it is not 'truth' but representations"⁸²

a. Western Stereotypes about the Oriental Woman

All through our analysis, we perceive that Hwang sheds light on the Western stereotypes of the typical Oriental woman in his play *M. Butterfly*. The Eastern woman is represented by the female character Song Liling who is misrepresented by Gallimard a Western man. The latter is influenced by the story of *Madame Butterfly* Puccini's Opera portraying the sacrifices of the Oriental woman for the love of the unworthy Western man. From the first encounter between Gallimard and Song, he has a vision about the typical Oriental woman as a submissive, obedient, and inferior one. In the following lines he speaks with Song when he attends her performance

“GALLIMARD: Of her death .It's a ... a pure sacrifice. He's unworthy, but what can she do? She loves him ... so much. It's a very beautiful story.”

“SONG: well yes, to a Westerner.”

“GALLIMARD: Excuse me?”

“SONG: It's one of our favorite fantasies, isn't it? The submissive oriental woman and the cruel white man”⁸³

Throughout the play, Gallimard fantasizes about the perfect Oriental woman. He is confident that Song will do whatever he wants to satisfy his desires. He presents Song as looking admiringly to him “we, who are not handsome, nor brave, nor powerful, yet somehow believe, like Pinkerton, that we deserve a Butterfly”⁸⁴ he states. In the play the character Song Liling is given the task of exposing the stereotypes about the Oriental woman just as they are made by Westerners in order to control and manipulate Gallimard. Thus, Gallimard adheres blindly to the stereotypical images of the Asian woman raised as docile, irrational and submissive, he says:

There is a vision of the Orient that I have. Of slender women in chongsams and kimonos who die for the love of unworthy foreign devils. Who are born and raised to be the perfect women. Who take whatever punishment we give them, and bounce back, strengthened by love, unconditionally. It is a vision that has become my life.⁸⁵

A series of stereotypes dominates Gallimard and Song relationship; he feels in love unwillingly because he thinks that he is taking the upper position dominant and superior Western man in their relation, and Song his submissive Oriental woman. He claims that “Orientals will always submit to a greater force”⁸⁶. Moreover, Gallimard’s obsession about the typical Oriental woman continues, when he compares between the Western and the Oriental girls, then, he argues that the Oriental woman wants to be badly treated. He states: “not like American girls. It is true what they say about Oriental girls. They want to be treated bad.”⁸⁷. According to him they want to be maltreated by Western man. Gallimard’s mentality confirms Western clichés about the typical submissive Oriental woman; thus Edward Said remains on what the Western perceived about the Orient as being a static frozen object. The male character Gallimard begins to imagine the perfect Oriental woman to be his Madame Butterfly and himself to be Pinkerton, Puccini’s character in his Opera *Madame Butterfly*. Besides, he wishes to live the adventure that Pinkerton has experienced when, he meets the Chinese actress Cio Cio San. Gallimard says “while we men many all want to kick Pinkerton very few of us would pass up the opportunity to be Pinkerton.”⁸⁸. The Chinese women are presented as typical Oriental women, so it becomes the task and the dream of each Westerner to find such woman.

We soon learn that Gallimard is blinded by the stereotypes that he had made in his mind to have an Oriental seductive, obedient, and naïve woman to please his fantasies. He says: “I determined to try an experiment In *Madame Butterfly*, Cio Cio San fears that the Western man who catches a butterfly will pierce its heart with a needle, then leave it to perish. I began to wonder; had I too, caught a butterfly who would writhe on a needle?”⁸⁹. Gallimard is determined not only to have a Butterfly but also to suffer her and leave her just as the Western man Pinkerton does. He wants to impose his masculinity dominance over Song to dominate and abuse her cruelly; this reflects Western belief about the typical Oriental woman. He says: “I had finally gained power over a beautiful woman, only to abuse it cruelly. There must be justice in the world I had the strange feeling that the ax would fall this very evening.”⁹⁰ Furthermore, Gallimard continues in fantasizing on Song as being sexual objects, obedient, and submissive Oriental woman. He claims that:

Butterfly and I. She would always have prepared a light snack and then, ever so delicately, and only if I agreed, she would start to pleasure me. With her hands, her mouth ... too many ways to explain, and too sad, given my present situation. But mostly we would talk. About my life. Perhaps there is nothing more rare than to find a woman who passionately listens.⁹¹

From the above quotation one can notice that Song is depicted as a perfect Oriental woman occupying domestic sphere, loving unconditionally her man and voiceless. Similar to what Edward Said asserts about what travelers advocate about the Oriental woman as “sexist blinders”⁹². The Chinese woman is presented by Gallimard’s clichés as nothing more than a

sexual object that exists for the pleasure of white man, who gets them to do anything in silence just as they suppose to be an inferior, submissive, and seductive Oriental.

Throughout the play Song represents the silent defeated Orient manipulated by a Western man, due to her submission and weakness. When Gallimard had an affair with Renee, Gallimard's Western friend, at the same time he is in relation with Song. The latter character is sure that she knows about Renee, unlike of Western girls who revolt, Song does not care. He says: "I saw Pinkerton and butterfly, and what she would say if hewere unfaithful ... nothing. She would cry, alone, into those wildly soft sleeves, once full of possessions, now empty to collect her tears. It was her tears and her silence that excited me, every time I visited Renee."⁹³ These are Western negative images about the Oriental woman; the fact that she is voiceless excited him.

In his analysis *Orientalism*, Edward Said maintains that the relationship between the West and the East is based on the dichotomies between the Self superiority and the Other Inferiority, also, he stresses that what is said about Orientals is not the truth but representations. These are obvious in Hwang's representations of the West clichés against the Orient as inferior, weak, and irrational. Gallimard who represents the superior West treats Song as inferior to him. He says: "I know she has ... an interest in me. I suspect this is her way. She is outwardly bold and outspoken, yet her heart is shy and afraid. It is the Oriental in her at war with her Western education."⁹⁴ He is sure that she is educated by Westerners and

she feels inferior to him, as he argues: “did you hear the way she talked about, Western women/ Much differently than the first night. She does she feels inferior to them and to me.”⁹⁵

One can deduce that Song is looked as mere objects not as human, Gallimard states: “the Orientals simply want to be associated with whoever shows the most strength and power”⁹⁶. Through the entire story Song is misrepresented as seductive, submissive and obedient Other, Gallimard associates her certain prejudice about the typical Oriental woman. Said’s *Orientalism* is a critique of Western texts that have represented the East as an exotic and inferior Other, besides construct the Orient by a set of recurring stereotypical images. Like Gallimard who perceived these clichés to find out his perfect woman. In this regard, he states: “men like that-they should be scratching at my door, begging to learn my secrets! For I, Rene Gallimard, you see, I have known, and been loved by...the Perfect Woman”⁹⁷. He enjoys his success of possessing a perfect woman.

It is worth noting that Both David Henry Hwang and Monica Ali have shaped stereotypes about the typical Oriental women in their works mainly on the female characters. Ali portrays through *Brick Lane* the Bangladeshi girls living in Bangladesh and even in London as a typical Oriental woman as being submissive, obedient, and irrational. One can notice that, the representations of women in *Brick Lane* are Western clichés about the Orientals, also how they supposed to be and act in society.

In the novel, Nazneen, the protagonist is a Bangladeshi young woman, given in arranged marriage by her father to Chanu Ahmed, an old man, who lives in London.

Throughout the narrative we deduce that Nazneen's personality is portrayed as weak, submissive and obedient traditional woman. She never disobeys her parents

Soon after, when her father asked if she would like to see a photograph of the man she would marry the following month, Nazneen shook her head and replied, 'Abba, it is good that you have chosen my husband. I hope I can be a good wife, like Amma.' But as she turned to go she noticed, without meaning to, where her father put the photograph.⁹⁸

In addition, as she does not discuss her father's decision to marry an unknown person she reflects the stereotypes about the Indian norms, which are a young woman cannot choose her husband. When Nazneen arrives in London, she is in front of many ambiguities. She had to live with a man twice her age in a new country, a new culture, and a foreign language "Nazneen could say two things in English: sorry and thank you."⁹⁹. The female character Nazneen is shown as irrational Oriental woman; she does not know speaking and writing in English. Besides, she is depicted as a perfect Oriental woman occupying domestic sphere, obeying her husband and caring about her children "it was the middle of the day. Nazneen had finished the housework. Soon she would start preparing the evening meal, but for a while she would let the time pass. It was hot and the sun fell flat on the metal window frames and glared off the glass."¹⁰⁰ Nazneen fights in order to be a perfect wife and a good mother. However, when she wants to learn English language and makes friends, Chanu her husband, does not allow her to learn English the conversation between them reflects Chanu's mentality " 'I would like to learn some English.' said Nazneen. Chanu puffed his cheeks and spat the air out in a *fuuff*. 'It will come. Don't worry about it. Where's the need anyway?' He looked at his

book and Nazneen watched the screen”¹⁰¹. Men in *Brick Lane*, never encourage their wives to be open minded or enlightened these are shown through Chanu behavior.

Moreover, Chanu warns Nazneen not to make friends or trust Western people. He says in the following lines: “all the time they are polite. They smile they say ‘please’ this and ‘thank you’ that. Make no mistake about this, they shake your hand with the right, and with the left they stab you in the back.”¹⁰². Additionally, Nazneen and her two daughters Shahana and Bibi always submit to Chanu’s wishes they reflect the typical woman of the Bangladeshi values. As Said argues that “since the Oriental is a member of a subjected race, he/she must be subjected.”¹⁰³. The female characters has been raised to obey and accept man’s dominance, the two daughters Shahana and Bibi are obliged to wear traditional sari dress in contrast if they disobey Chanu will beat them. He says: “well, I won't beat you,' he said quietly. 'And I won't leave you behind either.”¹⁰⁴ the latter wants his daughters to be well wrapped by their clothes and are not allowed going out alone. Thus, Chanu imposes them traditional Bangladeshi dress and obliges his wife to obey his decision. He says: “I get everything from you that you need from the shops. Anything you want you only have to ask”¹⁰⁵, these are stereotypes about the submissive, and voiceless Oriental woman who is subjected and in general Orientals who are oppressed, Chanu thinks that women have no reason to go out; if she disobey him it is seen as a shame and failure by Bengali community in Tower Hamlets.

In addition, submission is portrayed through Rupban, Nazneen’s mother, who taught her daughters Nazneen and Hasina to give importance to fate and leave all the issues to God to be

good women “so when Rupban advised her to be still in her heart and mind, to accept the Grace of God, to treat life with the same indifference with which it would treat her, Nazneen listened closely with her large head tilted back and her cheeks slack with equanimity.”¹⁰⁶. One can notice that this remains the stereotypes about the traditional Oriental women who are ignorant. Besides, Hasina, Nazneen’s sister, is shown throughout the story as an exotic, seductive, and inferior Orient when she writes letters to her sister Nazneen in London she writes in poor and broken English, for instance, when she speaks about going to hospital to visit Monju, Hasina’s friend, she states: “Cheek and mouth is melt and ear have gone like dog chew off. [...] It is her husband who has done his with brother and sister. Brother and sister hold tight and husband pour acid over head face and body. All over is infection on body and smell make it difficult for people to go near”¹⁰⁷ this show Hasina as irrational woman.

In his analysis *Orientalism* Edward Said notes that, “identity of ‘self’ or of ‘other’ is a much worked-over historical, social, intellectual, and political process that takes place as a contest involving individuals and institutions in all societies.”¹⁰⁸. That is to say, what is said about the East contributes to the creation of stereotypical images of the submissive and voiceless female Other, as the case of the character Hasina who is shown as a prostitute abused by a section of men and beaten by her husband Malek. She says: “Just because man is kind to wife it does not mean she can say what she like. If women understanding this no one will beat.”¹⁰⁹. From the above quotation one can point out that, women in *Brick Lane* are pictured as uncivilized and inferior to men. Nazneen also thinks if she did not do the

housework properly she would be beaten by her husband Chanu. She claims that: “a wife could reasonably be beaten for a lesser offence.”¹¹⁰. Again, she is sure to be a good wife she must stay at home and serves her husband. She says: “...it was foolish to assume he would never beat her. He thought she was a 'good worker'...He would be shocked if she lapsed.”¹¹¹. So, from their reactions we can say that they represent the stereotypical images of the submissive, obedient Oriental women.

Nevertheless, the women in the novel are depicted as unfaithful and prostitutes. Nazneen and Karim, a young Bangladeshi immigrant, were in secret relationship; he even proposes Nazneen to marry him; he says: “she was his real thing. A Bengali wife. A Bengali mother. An idea of home. An idea of himself that he found in her.”¹¹². He wants to be with her because she represents the traditional Oriental woman, also, Hasina is portrayed as a seductive and nonbeliever girl, she says:

All the time I thinking my life cursed. God have given me life but he has curse it. He put rocks in my path thorns under feet snakes over head. Which way I turn any way it is dark. He never light it. If I drink water it turn to mud eat food it poison me. I stretch out my hand it burn and by my side it wither. This is what He plan for me. This is how I thinking. I telling you everything so you know the sort of person I am.¹¹³

Thus, women in *Brick Lane* are depicted as unfaithful wives and sexual objects to satisfy male desires. As Said claims in his analysis *Orientalism* “this is evident in the writing of travelers and novelists; women are usually the creatures of a male power fantasy”¹¹⁴. In other word, what is represented in the novel about women, are clichés made by Westerners and novelists in their discourse to create the typical Oriental women. Indeed, Nazneen, Hasina

and Rupban are illustrated as traditional Indian women living for fate and not allowed to discuss the decision of men.¹¹⁵

To conclude, it can be argued that David Henry Hwang and Monica Ali carry some patterns of Edward Said's *Orientalism*, conveyed through the representation of the female character in the two cited works. Initially, in *M. Butterfly* Hwang portrays Song as a submissive, obedient and inferior Eastern woman. These representations are Western stereotypical images to draw binary opposition between West as superior and East as inferior, similarly with *Brick Lane* Ali renders mostly the women characters as uncivilized, voiceless, and obedient Other. These confirm Western clichés about the typical Indian woman. Similarly to Said's analysis *Orientalism* is the fact that the West is deliberately creating an inferior Other through narratives, in order to sustain its dominance and superiority and to reinforce stereotypes about the Orient. Therefore, the two authors attempt to shed light the stereotypical images about the Oriental women it is obvious that these clichés are misrepresentations of the Orient as being submissive and irrational Other.

b. Double Oppression of the Oriental Women

Around the world, women faced discrimination from patriarchy dominance and society. Their status is subordinated to the lack of legitimate rights and little freedom. Women are represented as inferior to men, and that Oriental women were doubly inferior, being both women and Oriental. Also double oppressed by the natives men and exploited or

misrepresented by the West colonizers. Nowadays, they still fight for equal rights and recognition.

This second part, undertakes to examine Henry Hwang's *M.Butterfly* (1988) and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003) from the perspective of women representations. We will also explore the way Edward Said's patterns of *Orientalism*, are used through the portrayal of the Oriental women.

The female characters in the two cited work, are doubly oppressed bearing moral and physical violence by the dominance of men. Besides, they are seen as voiceless and docile in society. In contrast, man is viewed as the head of the household and woman as a perfect symbol of motherhood. Similar to what Said argues about the typical Oriental women, he said

She never spoke of herself, never represented her emotions, presence or history. He spoke for and represented her. He was foreign, comparatively wealthy, male, and these were historical facts of domination that allowed him not only to possess KuchukHanem physically but to speak for her and tell his readers in what way she was typically Oriental.¹¹⁶

Oriental women are depicted as submissive and alien Other. For more details we will analyze firstly, Song character in *M.Butterfly* who bears double oppression. She has the task to represent the Oriental woman dominated by a Western man Gallimard, bad treats her, in order to confirm his supreme authority. He says: "I stopped going to the opera I didn't phone or write her. I knew this little flower was waiting for me to call, and, as I wickedly refused to do so, I felt for the first time that rush of power-the absolute power of a man!"¹¹⁷.

Moreover, Gallimard from the first encounter tries to conquer Song because he is blinded by his fantasy to find the perfect Oriental woman. He thinks all the clichés made by Westerners are the true images of the Orient. Thus, Song must be weak, obedient, and submissive to his male fantasy, Gallimard even calls her “Butterfly”¹¹⁸ referring to Puccini’s well known Opera *Madame Butterfly*. He is confident that Song will sacrifice her life as CioCio San, Opera’s heroine, does in the story. The female character is represented as a modest, shy woman occupying domestic sphere serves and pleases man willing. He says: “of course! God who creates Eve to serve Adam, who blesses Solomon with his harem but ties Jezebel to a burning bed-that God is a man. And he understands! At age thirty-nine, I was suddenly initiated into the way of the world.”¹¹⁹. Gallimard justifies his behavior towards Song as normal treats. Thus, Song receives double oppression exploited by colonizer, Western clichés, and inequalities just for being a woman. In the play Gallimard shows Song as the typical Oriental woman. He claims that:

And so over the years 1961, '62, '63 we settled into our routine, Butterfly and I. She would always have prepared a light snack and then, ever so delicately, and only if I agreed, she would start to pleasure me. With her hands, her mouth ... too many ways to explain, and too sad, given my present situation. But mostly we would talk. About my life. Perhaps there is nothing more rare than to find a woman who passionately listens.¹²⁰

From the above quotation we notice that David Henry depicts her as a woman must be seen but not heard, also as an object for sexual desires to confirm his masculine dominance.¹²¹ the intensity of his patriarchal authority is shown through what he perceives about woman. He says: “I’ve become patron saint of the socially inept. Can they really be so

foolish? Men like that-they should be scratching at my door, begging to learn my secrets! For I, Rene Gallimard, you see, I have known, and been loved by...the Perfect Woman".¹²² Song's relationship with Gallimard is based on this binary opposition of Occident Vs Orient as a means to generate patriarchal dominance and establish women's Oriental inferiority.

In addition, Marc, Gallimard's friend, thinks that male supremacy is the natural order of the world. He treats women as objects who just exist for the pleasure of men.

MARC: ... Doesn't matter whose ... is between whose legs, whose teeth are sinking into who. You're just in there, going at it, eyes closed, on and on for as long as you can stand. *(Pause)* Some. fun, huh?

GALLIMARD: What happens in the morning?

MARC: In the morning, you're ready to talk some philosophy. *(Beat)* So how about it?

GALLIMARD: Marc 'I can't', I'm afraid they'll say no the girls. So I never ask.

MARC: You don't have to ask! That's the beauty-don't you see? They don't have to say yes. It's perfect for a guy like you, really.¹²³

The conversation between Marc and Gallimard confirms that Marc encourage him to bad treat women because they want to be dominated by male power. Edward Said argues that the Occident views the female Oriental with "sexist blinders."¹²⁴ Also, Gallimard meets Renee, a Western friend at an embassy party, she asks him to fool around with him, he holds on the opportunity because she is pictured as he says a perfect body

GALLIMARD *(To us)*: And so, I embarked on my first extra extramarital affair. Renee was picture perfect. With a body like those girls in the magazines. I put a tissue paper over my eyes; I wouldn't have been able to tell the difference. And it was exciting to be with someone who wasn't afraid to be seen completely naked. But is it possible for a woman to be *too* uninhibited, *too* willing, so as to seem almost too ... masculine?¹²⁵

We can say that Song is pictured as being shy and modest feminine who confirms Gallimard's virility. In contrast the Western girl, not afraid, denies his masculinity. Like Edward Said affirmation, the West creates a binary opposition between 'Their' inferiority against the 'Us' superiority. The Western male character, Marc argues in his statement that: "the same way you do. It's an old story. It's in our blood. They fear us, Rene. Their women fear us. And their men-their men hate us. And, you know something? They are all correct."¹²⁶ this mentality emphasizes Western stereotypical images.

Moreover, the female character Song is also oppressed by the Chinese norms. In the play she speaks about the abnormal rule made by her society. She claims that: "In Imperial China, when a man found that one wife was inadequate, he turned to another-to give him his son."¹²⁷. That is to say, the woman is considered as a symbol of family and motherhood if she cannot do so, she will be forsaken. Again, she tells Gallimard, how Chinese men act with women "the Chinese men-they keep us down."¹²⁸. Thus, she is doubly oppressed for being a woman and an Oriental.

We may relate this issue to the feminist Simone de Beauvoir in her book *The Second Sex*. She claims that, women have been reduced to objects for men's supreme authority. The patriarchal cultures define man as the norm, absolute and transcendence. However, woman is defined as deviation, sentiment, and immanence in society¹²⁹. The male characters in *M. Butterfly* fetishize the Oriental woman as an exotic, submissive, and obedient these

elucidate Western believe about the Orient similar to what Said affirms, the women are usually viewed as creatures to please male.

Similarly, Monica Ali's female characters in *Brick Lane* are holding double oppression too, from patriarchal authority and Western prejudice. They are accompanied with violent behavior, inequalities, and discrimination. Besides, they are exposed to sexual exploitation. The novel recounts the experiences of women in home country and local diaspora. Nazneen the central character, living in Bangladesh village, is given by her father Hamid in an arranged marriage to Chanu Ahmed, a man twice her age, who lives in London, she says: "Abba, it is good that you have chosen my husband. I hope I can be a good wife, like Amma.' But as she turned to go she noticed, without meaning to, where her father put the photograph".¹³⁰

We learn that woman are voiceless and submissive to the willing of her parents. Nazneen never discusses the decision of her father and tries to impress him by accepting the one he chooses. When infant, Nazneen survives in miracle of being two months premature. Her father would have preferred a boy "A girl", said Rupban. "I know. Never mind," said Hamid. "what can you do?" and he went away again."¹³¹. Thus, the inequalities between man and woman are exercised by Bengali people. Chanu, her husband, takes Nazneen to London; she confronts a new society, culture, and language; she could say only two things in English "sorry and thank you"¹³² The character Nazneen is represented as a traditional woman occupying domestic spheres. The later keeps home, cleaning and cooking "Nazneen had

finished the housework. Soon she would start preparing the evening meal, but for a while she would let the time pass. It was hot and the sun fell flat on the metal window frames and glared off the glass.”¹³³. Besides, she wishes to learn English and make new friends but Chanu warns her and never encourages her to do so. Chanu gives his opinion when Nazneen tells him that she can get a job “Will that not keep you busy enough? And you can't take a baby to college. Babies have to be fed; they have to have their bottoms cleaned. It's not so simple as that. Just to go to college, like that.”Yes,' said Nazneen. 'I see that it is not.’”¹³⁴he even treats her of being inferior to him maybe because he is afraid that, Nazneen will be a strong person who does not depends on him.

In addition, Chanu carries on his patriarchal authority he obliges Shahana and Bibi, his two daughters, to wear sari, traditional Indian clothes, as well as, he do not allow his wife to go out alone. He tells Nazneen that: “I get everything for you that you need from the shops. Anything you want, you only have to ask”¹³⁵. According to Chanu a woman appearing in public alone is considered as a shame and humiliation to his masculinity.

Women in *Brick Lane* are not allowed to do many things. In addition to going out and wearing traditional dress, work is another issue prejudiced by Bangladeshi people. The conversation between Mrs Islam and Razia, Nazneen’s neighbors, she says:

‘Going out to work?’ Razia said to Mrs Islam. ‘What has happened to Jorina’s husband?’

‘Nothing has happened to Jorina’s husband,’ said Mrs Islam. ...

‘Her husband is still working,’ said Razia, as if she were the provider of the information. ‘The husband is working but still she cannot fill her stomach. In Bangladesh one salary can feed twelve, but Jorina cannot fill her stomach.’¹³⁶

The discrimination towards women is emphasized through the prejudices of Bangladeshi belief Jorina, Nazneen's neighbor in Tower Hamlets, is criticized as a bad house wife not satisfied from staying at home.

Another female character in the novel Hasina, Nazneen's sister, is depicted as a prostitute and unfaithful woman. When she runs away with Malek, her beloved Bangladeshi man, her father denies having a second daughter because what she did is seen as a threat to Bangladeshi values and traditions. Thus, Hamid, her father, spends sixteen days at the edge of the village, with an axe to chop Hasina's head because she is not allowed to choose her husband. In contrast, after living with her husband the struggles springs in her life. Malek, her husband, beats her seeing that she is an outspoken woman. She tells her sister Nazneen "just because man is kind do not mean she can say what she like?." ¹³⁷. That means she endures troubles in her marriage, so she decides to give up him away. After that Mr. Chowdhury, who finds her a job in factory, rapes her. She tells Nazneen in one of her letters that:

He tell me 'You are my daughter. I like to bring you to my house. But what people will say? We are not related. I have no wife.' Then he sigh and I rub his feet and when I look up there is water in the eyes. 'If a girl comes to a mans house as servant there is no trouble. She must come as servant. Or as wife. Then all is well.' ¹³⁸

Furthermore, she speaks about the troubles in the factory to separate women and men "day and night they playing religious message with loudspeaker. They say it sinful for men and women working together. But they the ones sinning take Gods name give insult to us and tell lie" ¹³⁹ she argues that in name of religion they spread lies to justify their discrimination.

Moreover, Edward Said points out that Occident represents the Orient as a “subject race”¹⁴⁰. In *Brick lane* physical and moral violence towards women is seen also through Aleya, Hasina’s friend in the garment factory, is forced by her husband to wear burkha, a warped clothes, in order to let her works; he even beats her when, she received a sari as a reward named best worker. Hasina recounts the events and Renu, her friend, comments that this behavior is normal

Aleya’s husband gives beating. Last month gone she best worker in factory and get bonus. They give a sari and for this sari she take beating. Foot come all big like marrow and little finger broken. Bending over her stomach give trouble. Renu say at least you have husband to give good beating at least you not alone. The husband say he will beat twice each day until she tell name of the man. I thread Aleya’s machine and I spend lunch time help to catch up.¹⁴¹

The women in Bangladesh considered as inferior to men and they try to negotiate a world dominated by males because they are subjected due to their gender.

To sum up, one can deduce that David Henry Hwang’s *M.Butterfly* and Monica Ali’s *Brick Lane* refer to some patterns of Edward Said’s *Orientalism* through the representation of the conflict about the Oriental women as an inferior Other, and a submissive traditional Oriental woman. Said notes about *Orientalism* “as a form of thought for dealing with the foreign,”¹⁴¹ it can be applied to examine the male and the female relationship in order to describe the process of constructing the Other in society and the stereotypical images about the East. All over the world, women fight for their rights and they still fight for equality among society. As a result the female characters in both works are suffering in their life

because they have been seen as an inferior, inessential gender and typical Oriental woman
they still trying to find their recognition.

End notes

⁸² Said, *Orientalism*, 21

⁸³ Monica, *Brick Lane*, 17

⁸⁴ Ibid., 10

⁸⁵ Ibid., 91

⁸⁶ Ibid., 46

⁸⁷ Ibid., 6

⁸⁸ Ibid., 46

⁸⁹ Ibid., 32

⁹⁰ Ibid., 36

⁹¹ Ibid., 39

⁹² Said, *Orientalism*, 207

⁹³ David, *M.Butterfly an Afterword*, 56

⁹⁴ Ibid., 8

⁹⁵ Ibid., 31

⁹⁶ Ibid., 45

⁹⁷ Ibid., 4

⁹⁸ Monica, *Brick Lane*, 18

⁹⁹ Ibid., 17

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 17

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 31

¹⁰² Ibid., 57

¹⁰³ Said, *Orientalism*, 207

¹⁰⁴ Monica, *Brick Lane*, 287

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 37

- ¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 16
- ¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 203
- ¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 207
- ¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 22 23
- ¹¹⁰ Ibid., 20
- ¹¹¹ Ibid., 20
- ¹¹² Ibid., 307
- ¹¹³ Ibid., 125
- ¹¹⁴ Said, *Orientalism*, 207
- ¹¹⁵ Shu, C. Wang, *Brick Lane: Women's Stimulating Journey to Self consciousness*, p 1-9, Pdf
- ¹¹⁶ Said, *Orientalism*, 6
- ¹¹⁷ David, *M. Butterfly an Afterword*, 32
- ¹¹⁸ Ibid., 43
- ¹¹⁹ Ibid., 8
- ¹²⁰ Ibid., 49
- ¹²¹ Henderson Sawyer, Dr. Tayna Bennett. *Exploring Sexuality: An Analysis on Hwang's M. Butterfly*, Honor Gender and Literature, 31 OctobeNr. 2013. 5 _Pdf
- ¹²² David, *M. Butterfly an Afterword*, 4
- ¹²³ Ibid., 207
- ¹²⁴ Said, *Orientalism*, 207
- ¹²⁵ Ibid., 54
- ¹²⁶ Ibid., 25
- ¹²⁷ Ibid., 51
- ¹²⁸ Ibid., 43
- ¹²⁹ Simone de, Beauvoir. *The Second Sex*. Ed. and trans. H. M. Parshley. New York : Vintage books, 1989, p 19
- ¹³⁰ Monica, *Brick Lane*, 17
- ¹³¹ Ibid., 15
- ¹³² Ibid., 18
- ¹³³ Ibid., 17

¹³⁴ Ibid., 61

¹³⁵ Ibid., 37

¹³⁶ Monica, *Brick Lane*, 25

¹³⁷ Ibid., 22

¹³⁸ Ibid., 123

¹³⁹ Ibid., 116

¹⁴⁰ Said, *Orientalism*, 207

¹⁴¹ Monica, *Brick Lane*, 119

Conclusion

Throughout this dissertation, we have attempted to achieve an Orientalist reading of David Henry Hwang's *M.Butterfly* (1988) and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003). We have explored how Hwang and Ali deal with the issue of Self against Other, relying on Edward Said's theory *Orientalism* (1978). This theory permitted us to inspect the way characters in the two cited works, illustrate Said's main contrast between the West and the East.

In the first chapter, we have focused on the way David Henry Hwang and Monica Ali have depicted the Orient in their works *M.Butterfly* and *Brick Lane* provide tension between the Occident superiority towards the Orient inferiority. Regardless of being from different cultural backgrounds also geographical areas, both Hwang Asian American playwrights and Monica Ali Indian British novelists tackles the same issues of the representation of the Oriental characters and their hatred experiences in contact with the Westerners.

In the second chapter attempted to deal with the representation of the Oriental woman as submissive, exotic and irrational ones. These representations are stereotypical images made by the Occident to justify their negative behaviors against women. At the same time we have intended to demonstrate how the Oriental women are misrepresented by Occident.

This research has come to the point that both David Henry Hwang and Monica Ali reflect the essential elements of Edward Said's *Orientalism* through their representations of the Oriental. On the one hand, the Asian Oriental undertaken by France and US are exploited

also misrepresented. On the other hand, how Bangladeshi immigrants have beared discrimination and clichés in London. Besides, the way the Oriental women, are doubly oppressed in home country and foreign land.

Consequently, the subject matter of this dissertation did not permit us to examine other issues in relation to the works under study. We desired more to include theme of feminism, cultural clash or racism. We think that both mentioned works contain fascinating and achievable themes that can be studied and explored by other students. Therefore, we encourage and invite students to elucidate a feminist reading of David Henry Hwang's *M. Butterfly* and Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*. Since both female characters hold, resist, and then succeed in their adventures against all forms of oppression.

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