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SHADOWS OF WESTERN REPRESENTATION: A POSTCOLONIAL STUDY OF CHEVALIER'S NEW BOY

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ABSTRACT

The research is designed to probe the Western representation of the Orient in *New Boy* (2017) by Tracy Chevalier. The selected novel is analysed under the reflection of orientalism discussed by Edward Said in his famous book *Orientalism* (1978). Edward Said states that orientalism is a contrivance for colonial powers to vanquish and ameliorate the Orient to maintain control over it. It is a complicated series of representations of the Orient by the Occident. Said emphasises that it is the incessant practice of the West in which it constructs and represents the Orient in a completely new shape to achieve its vested interest. Orientalist writers have represented the Orient as inferior, different, lamentably alien, irrational, and depraved. However, Said criticises that these representations are not the 'natural' or the actual representation of the Orient. The study examined 'Western representations of the Orient' in the selected novel. In the selected novel, Osei, the story's protagonist is representative of the Orient culture. He is represented as inferior, different and uncivilised, so the administration keeps him under strict command and authority. The textual analysis method was employed to exemplify the text. Close reading has divulged the verity that the West represents the Orient as inferior and uncivilised to asseverate its superiority and ascendancy.

INTRODUCTION:

The postcolonial study is an academic research area that embraces intellectual discourses which appraise the rapport between the coloniser and the colonised. Postcolonial critique is procured from the founding anti-colonial moments, and the term postcolonialism has transpired to provide various critical

concepts developed in the struggle against colonialism. Postcolonialism as a theory is always related to the mixing of peoples and cultures and its positive or negative impacts. Young states that postcolonialism provides a theoretical and political platform that represents a notion of intervention within such domineering conditions; moreover, it “combines the epistemological cultural innovations of the postcolonial moment with a political critique of the conditions of postcoloniality.” (Young, 2016, p. 57). Orientalism is a constitutional hypothesis of postcolonial discourse. Edward Said theorises the dichotomy of East and the West in which the people of the East are represented as the Orient which is uncivilised and backwards on the other hand the Occident is civilised and modern.

The term ‘orientalism’, in essence, collates the East and the West when referring to the exegesis of culture and society, according to Edward Said. The influence of Said’s *Orientalism*(1978) has provided a new connotation to orientalism which now refers to a general denigrating Western attitude towards Middle Eastern, Asian, and North African societies. In Said’s view, the West essentialises the East as uncivilised, creating a representation of Oriental culture that can be employed in the service of the Western imperial powers, which are civilised and educated. The first representation of the Orient through the lens of the Occident can be dated to Middle English literature as *The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (1900) states, “That they conquered many regnes grete. In the orient, with many a fair citee”(Chaucer, 1900, p. 254).

In 1978, Edward Said penned his book *Orientalism*; in it, he contextualises the term ‘orientalism’ to describe a prevalent western attitude toward prejudiced representations of the eastern world, shaped by the cultural perspective of European imperialism in the 18th and 19th centuries. Orientalism is based on the binary oppositions between ‘the Orient’ and ‘the Occident’. Said argues that Orientalism is a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient. The Orientalist discourse fully embraces the concept of power and cultural domination in human societies. The essence of Orientalism is the power mechanism of discourse. In this regard, Foucault’s theory has a profound influence on Said, which summarises that discourse is an accumulation of knowledge which presents power relations as well as how it is talked about and perpetuated(Foucault, 1969). Said criticises contemporary scholars who perpetuate the tradition of orientalist representation of the East, which helps the West to maintain its authority and power over it.

The study will examine the western representations of the Orient in the selected novel *New Boy* (2017) by Tracy Chevalier. She is a part of the Hogarth Shakespeare project, which was initiated for the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s death; Alexandra Alter mentions that in this task, Shakespeare’s works are retold by some of the greatest writers, and “Ms Chevalier... is tackling ‘*Othello*’ ”as *New Boy*(Alter, 2015, p. 01). Özlem Özmen discusses that the re-writing of William Shakespeare has a significant purpose in terms of “creating alternative ideas to the ways in which critical issues are discussed in the canonical texts and their political and ideological foundations.”(Özmen,

2018, p. vii). The novel has been written against the contemporary backdrop of racism and the social struggles of the black community. It consists of five parts, and the story is set 1974 suburban elementary school. Osei, the novel's protagonist, is an African diplomat's son who transfers to a public school in Washington to complete his sixth grade. Now, he must face the challenges of carrying on his studies in an all-white school. There is the blatant presence of casual racism from the administration and the students of the school. The antagonist Ian, manipulative and jealous, is the chief ruler of the playground and has no intention of letting things stand as they are between the protagonist and the beautiful Dee.

DISCUSSION

The novel under analysis portrays how the West represents the Orient. The research will be executed while employing the qualitative approach. This approach will support designing a framework that achieves the objectives for the analysis of the select novel. Textual analysis is employed in the designed framework to accomplish the research goal. It gathers knowledge about the 'sense-making practices' in different cultures. It enables to learn the restrictions of multiple cultures and possible substitutes (Mckee, 2003, p. 14). In *An Overview of Textual Analysis as a Research Method for Cultural Studies* (2020), Aneri Arya argues that textual analysis, centred on interpretive approaches, not only provides a single hidden meaning of the text but rather a diversity of possible readings of the studied text. Its goal is to find the actual meaning message out of the text. It is done by reading the text and getting the meaning out of it by analysing it (Arya, 2020). In the research, textual analysis will be employed to comprehend the western representation of the Orient in the selected novel. A close reading of the selected novel exemplifies how Tracy Chevalier has presented the issue of Orientalist representation in her work.

It is essential to mention Malgorzata Grajter's claim about Edward Said and his *Orientalism* (1978) as the first part of my research, i.e. 'western representation of the Orient' is deeply connected with it. He emphasises in his *The Orient in Music-Music of the Orient* (2017) that the present study on orientalism leaves no space to overthrow the theory of Edward W. Said, as it has attained great attention from great scholars and critics to produce profuse literature. Grajter states that in his outstanding scholarly work, *Orientalism*, Edward W. Said "significantly expanded an ideologically charged notion of the title. He simply stated the following: 'By orientalism I mean several things, all of them, in my opinion, interdependent'." (Grajter, 2017, p. 02).

The term 'Orient' means 'sunrise' and refers to countries in the Middle East and Africa (Elliott, 2020). The term, however, is used for anything related to the East concerning the West or Occident and is usually employed for the continent of Asia and Africa. Laroussi also reflects the etymological root of the term 'Orient' from the two languages, i.e. in Latin, it is *oriri*, which means to arise. In the Greek *opos*, which connotes mountain. The shift of this term from Greek to Latin and then into western languages can also explain its meaning "which is discontinuous, as well as that of its counterpart term, 'Occident', which long ago came to suggest stability and progress" (Laroussi, 2016, p. 35).

After the mention of the basic definition of the Orient focusing on my research, I refer to the seminal work of Said as Robert Young thinks that, however, the postcolonial theory is traditionally multifaceted and wide-ranging, it is due to *Orientalism* (1978), a critique of the cultural politics of academic knowledge by Said that successfully maintained the postcolonial theory as an academic discipline “invested in the political commitment and the locational identification of its practitioners” (Young, 2016, p. 383). The Orient, according to *Post Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (2008), is not a dormant reality of nature but rather a phenomenon created by “generations of intellectuals, artists, commentators, writers, politicians, and, more importantly, constructed by the naturalizing of a wide range of Orientalist assumptions and stereotypes” (Ashcroft et al., 2008, p. 153). Lisa Lowa states that delving into our historical and cultural revolutions, we can easily understand that the Orient implies Turkey and the Middle East in manuscripts of the eighteenth century; furthermore, in the nineteenth-century writings, it denotes North Africa, and it refers to Central and Southeast Asia in the twentieth century, “heterogeneity is borne out most simply in the different meanings of the Orient over time” (Lowa, 2018, p. 06). Said discusses in detail the history of the confrontation of the East and the West in the form of the Orient and the Occident, which was due to the rise in Christianity, travellers who projected the new routes for trade, conquering movements from the east, pilgrims mainly crusaders “altogether an internally structured archive is built up from the literature that belongs to these experiences” (Said, 2003, pp. 58-59). These experiences provide a collection of “the journey, the history, the fable, the stereotype, the polemical confrontation” (ibid. 58), and the Orient is experienced through this lens which forms the perception, language, and encounter between the Orient and the Occident. The Orient “vacillates between the West's contempt for what is familiar and its shivers of delight in—or fear of—novelty” (ibid. 59).

The question of representation is the primary focus. In the first part of *Orientalism* (1978), Edward Said discusses the capacity of orientalism as a discourse that has been present for centuries and remains in our contemporary times. He remarks that orientalism may be defined in three different categories, all of which are inter-reliant. Firstly, it is an academic discipline “by which the Orient was (and is) approached systematically, as a topic of learning, discovery, and practice” (Said, 2003, p. 73) which has reinforced western representations. Secondly, it is “a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident’.” (ibid. 02). Thirdly, orientalism is a corporate foundation to deal with the Orient “dealing with it by making statements about it, authorising views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it” (ibid. 03). Said states that orientalism is a tool for colonial powers which enables them to dominate and reform the Orient to maintain their power over it. He discusses all these classifications in his *Orientalism* and explains that orientalism is a complicated series of representations of the Orient by the Occident, “the Oriental was always like some aspect of the West; to some German Romantics, for example, Indian religion was essentially an Oriental version of Germano-Christian pantheism” (ibid. 67). By giving such examples, Said emphasises that it is the continuous

practice of the West in which it constructs and represents the Orient in a completely new shape to achieve its vested interest. Moreover, in *Post Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (2008), it is stated that orientalism is a broad spectrum of an organised form of the colonial other “one example being the study, discussion and general representation of Africa in the West since the nineteenth century.” (Ashcroft et al., 2008, p. 154).

Robert Young claims that Said’s discussion of an orientalist discourse works at the level of representation as it is based on the misrepresentation of the actual where knowledge works as a tool in gaining power, “he then acknowledges that it may be impossible for anyone to represent other cultures accurately anyway.” (Young, 2016, p. 391). It is stated in *Representation of Africans as Degenerate People in Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness* (2021) that representation designates the process people or places are “defined, depicted and portrayed in various works of art as ‘Other’.” (Kazmi, Khan, & Khan, 2021, p. 401).

Said thinks that representations are formations and while quoting Roland Barthes he suggests that the operations of language are named as deformations, meaning that the Occident forms and deforms the representation of the Orient. He emphasises that the subject of representation is very critical as the representations are entrenched in the Occident's language, culture, and political atmosphere. Moreover, representation “is eo ipso implicated, intertwined, embedded, interwoven with a great many other things besides the ‘truth’, which is itself a representation” (Said, 2003, p. 272). In *The Orient in Music - Music of the Orient* (2017), Małgorzata Grajter mentions that the whole discourse regarding the Orient constructed by the Occident is fabricated as it has nothing to do with the real Orient and “is only an instrument of political exploitation and imperialist domination” (Grajter, 2017, p. 03) and according to Said, Orientalism “is not ‘truth’ but representations”. (Said, 2003, p. 21). Young, in this regard, highlights the issue that if ‘truth is a representation’, it is not easy to find any misrepresentation. If we believe that orientalism is a misrepresentation, then it is hard to find a way to represent other cultures, as Said has the same opinion (Young, 2016). Said also believes that “such texts can create not only knowledge but also the very reality they appear to describe” (Said, 2003, p. 94), which means that the Orient is created through the texts. Consequently, in Spivak’s phrase (1985) the Orient is not allowed to speak, that is why Young criticises Said that he failed to offer a method that “enabled a counter-representation... a task which he admits his study leaves embarrassingly incomplete” (Young, 2016, p. 391).

In *Orientalism* (2017), Said continues to formulate that Orientalism is based on ‘exteriority’, which means that “the Orientalist, poet or scholar, makes the Orient speak, describes the Orient, renders its mysteries plain for and to the West” (Said, 2003, pp. 20-21). In *The End of the West and Other Cautionary Tales* (2016), Sean Meighoo analyses that according to Said orientalist discourse maintains dominance over the Orient through its exteriority, and this relation is the source of creating a representation (Meighoo, 2016). Nicholas Harrison criticises Said on this notion as Said himself believes that all representations are misrepresentations which challenge the base of his

criticism. It also helps to “explain the whiff of disapproval around the very notion of representation in the perplexing remark, ‘The principal product of this exteriority is of course representation’.” (Harrison, 2019, p. 26). Bashir Abu-Manneh states that the West or the Occident was predestined as the hub of moral and scientific evolvment, and the outlandish and static East, which was an entity to be apprehended, but “always alien, was always distant”(Abu-Manneh, 2019, p. 39). Analysing Jean-Baptiste Tavernier’s *Nouvelle relation de l’intérieur du sérail*(1678), it is stated in *Orientalism and Literature* (2019) that the Orient is completely misrepresented as the exact opposite of the Occident and in the East, the metropolises are uncultivated and desolate; the land is arid, barren and dangerous; and the people are “inhospitable, lazy and violent”(Nash, 2019, p. 189).

Edward Said further states that“the Orientalan identity best described as lamentably alien ... analysed not as citizens or even people, but as problems to be solved or confined or ... taken over.” (Said, 2003, p. 207). Quinn analyses that for the people of the west, the Orient was developed into a ‘blank canvas’ for various identities. It was represented as backwards and immoral and implicitly connected with degenerate society. The West suggests that the Orient is a period of evolution that is not fully evolved because it seems to appear in an extraordinary place and time, “romantic descriptions of the East describe it as the source of the mystical or religious roots of civilization”(Quinn, 2017, p. 37).

Orient is represented as inferior to the Occident as Said opines, “the Oriental is irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, "different"; thus the European is rational, virtuous, mature” (Said, 2003, p. 40). In the same vein in *An Analysis of Chinua Achebe’s An Image of Africa, Racism in Conrad’s Heart of Darkness* (2017), when Achebe thinks that it is a psychological necessity of the Occident to believe that the Orient is a negative opposing force, Clare Clarke analyse it as the Orient is a place essentially uncivilized, savage, and bestial. These misrepresentations help the west to reiterate its status as civilized, refined, and humane. He remarks that Achebe emphasises that the West believes the Orient is intrinsically inhuman and degrading. To prove this, he ponders over the case of *Heart of Darkness* (1902) by Joseph Conrad, which represents the Orient as savage and brutal as they only exchanged short grumbling locutions even among themselves but habitually they were too busy with their frenzy “the cannibals’ ‘catch ’im ... eat ’im’.”(Clarke, 2017, p. 40).

Analysis: In *New Boy*, Tracy Chevalier represents the people of Africa as inferior and uncivilised. They are depicted as the inhabitants of another world out of time and space. The novelist has portrayed them as mysterious and strange people and has presented stereotypical images of Africans. This representation provides a platform for the people of the West to treat the Orient as an inferior race and legitimise their civilising mission.

The title of the selected novelsuggests the notion of prejudice and biases by exemplifying that the boy is not from the society. Instead, he is from another place, his traditions and culture are different, and he does not know the practices of our community. The title refers to Osei,the protagonist of the novel, the African boy, which underlies that the Orient is something new to

the culture of the Occident. He does not know the rules and regulations of the modern society of the Western powers. He is from a different land and has intruded into the culture of the Occident, which is advanced and civilised.

The racist ideology of the colonial powers becomes clear as dark things are assigned to the black colour which represents the Orient. The new boy has the opposite colour from the rest of the students, who are all white. Tracy Chevalier constructs binary oppositions where white is considered the insider and civilised and black is referred to as outsider and uncivilised. Black, the inferior, is set against its opposite binary of white, the superior as *Theory and Praxis: Indian and Western* (2015) states that these western representations of the Orient provide a platform for constructing a 'binary opposition' to represent each other (Rai, Pandey, & Singh, 2015). Osei, the protagonist, is black, and other students, especially Dee, the novel's heroine, are white and represent two different races. When school starts, the teacher tells the students that a new African boy will join the school. All the students are flabbergasted by this pronouncement. They start nattering with each other about this new boy, and they have different vistas about him; Mimi hollers "A black boy at our school—I can't believe it!"(Chevalier, 2017, p. 13). Ian, the novel's antagonist, is disheartened by the new boy. He is the leader and champion, especially in the playground where he walks toward the black boy for the first interaction. He notices that he is very black, with darker skin, and the sweat glistens in his hair. Moreover, when it is time for the challenged baseball match, Osei has to stand the mortification as he is not chosen among the students by the captains of the teams because he is "the weak, the sick, the friendless. The black"(Chevalier, 2017, p. 68).

The East is portrayed in a particular way. Western representations depict that the East or the Orient is different. It designates that he does not belong to the society of white. Instead, he is an outsider and different. The novel's setting demonstrates that all the students in the school are white. When Osei, the protagonist of the story and the representative of the Orient, enters the school, he is treated as different from all other students, "someone new and different has entered the territory" (Chevalier, 2017, pp. 09-10). As in colonial rule, the subjugated were treated as a different race by the colonial powers, "The Oriental person is portrayed as impenetrable, overly religious, and completely different from the Westerner"(Quinn, 2017, pp. 42-43). Osei's case is not different. Firstly, he is represented as different, secondly as an outsider or an intruder who threatens the society of the western people "Dee tried to stifle Blanca, embarrassed that the boy might hear"(Chevalier, 2017, p. 13).

Osei is represented as a mysterious character. As he enters the school, he stands stock-still in the corner and gapes at the students. He does not speak in class and the teachers have become disappointed with him. We can see how Dee is surprised when Osei utters for the first time in school. He remains an ambiguous character living alone in the class and the playground while the rest of the students stay together in pairs or groups. All the students are eager to know about him and his place, but he fails to provide a satisfactory answer. Chevalier represents him as a kind of enigmatic boy. He keeps a variety of things that can be compared to a school bag. He has a bag with big buckles which holds an ordinary dark green satchel. A pencil case is hidden in this

satchel “a pink plastic rectangle, studded with red knobbly strawberries that protruded from the smooth surface like giant braille”(Chevalier, 2017, p. 40). The pink strawberry pencil case is used by the young girls in the school, which is why all the students are excited about a black boy holding a pink case. Osei lost his case, so his mother provided him with his sister’s case, this pink case becomes an enigma and plays a role of a handkerchief in Shakespeare’s *Othello*.

The Orient is represented as inferior to the people of the West. On the other hand, the Occident is superior, “a strange, unchanging, and inferior ‘Orient’ is compared to a modern and superior ‘Occident’.”(Quinn, 2017, p. 31). The students and the teacher do not accept Osei and Dee’s friendship because they think Osei is inferior and cannot befriend the white. When he shares things in the classroom with Dee, all the students are “watching their transaction with fascination, unable to hide ...disgust”(Chevalier, 2017, p. 47). Mr. Brabant, one of the teachers at the school, is very stringent with Osei only because he is black or the Orient. He always stands with his white students against the black ones, and he has written Osei’s name at the end of the list only due to prejudice and animosity toward the Orient. He always chides him during school time, “Fixing his eyes on O, he stuck out his jaw. “Watch yourself, boy”.”(Chevalier, 2017, p. 85). On the occasion when Osei touched Dee’s face and especially when he lost his strawberry case, Mr Brabant becomes so angry with Osei only because he thinks that the black is uneducated and inferior and needs to be dealt with command and authority.

Orientalism is a corporate foundation to deal with the Orient by ruling over it moreover, it is a tool for colonial powers which enables them to dominate and reform the Orient to maintain their power over it(Said, 2003, p. 03). Mrs Duke, the principal, comes to class and looks at Osei well. Her attitude is very authoritative toward Osei, and she also deals with him as an inferior. She starts by making fun of his African name and utters his first name with a measured emphasis as it required a lot of effort. She does not even dare to look at his face because he is all black and her eyes land just above his head. Afterwards, she asked him to stand up and say something about his land; during this, her “voice rose at the end, this was a command rather than a question”(Chevalier, 2017, p. 64).

According to western claims, the Orient lacks morality. He is involved in criminal and vicious activities. When Osei gets excellent marks in the quiz competition, the teachers do not believe it as they have an impression that the black is not clever and intelligent, “They shot him looks that reveal suspicions he was cheating somehow”(Chevalier, 2017, p. 63). The students in the school do not befriend Osei, nor is he involved in the discussion programs. The white students arrange birthday parties but do not invite the Orient as they assume he is good at committing delinquencies.

In the colonial text, the Orient is deprived of its identity. The Western powers adopt different techniques to give a distinct identity to the people of the East; they are identified according to the phenomenon of the West. In *New Boy* (2017), Osei, the black African boy becomes the victim. He is not called by

his actual name. Instead, he is entitled to a new boy and a black boy. All the white students depict a racist attitude towards him and talk about him with different titles; for example, Ian, jealous of Osei, calls him a “new arrival hovering at the edge of the playground”(Chevalier, 2017, p. 29). Tracy Chevalier also portrays Oriental women in her *New Boy* (2017). In the eye of the coloniser, Oriental women are also uncivilised and backward like Oriental men. Osei's mother and his sister represent African women. When Osei is admitted to school, her mother, an African woman, goes to school to check how his son behaves in school, especially during break time in the playground. She is standing on the side of the fence around the playground with her hand “entwined in the wire mesh”(Chevalier, 2017, p. 16). She is wearing an old-fashioned dress like that of prehistoric times, a lofty turban of different colours, and a winter coat over a long dress. She is represented as an alien because it is early May and the weather is warm enough to wear half sleeves, but she has covered herself in a heavy winter overcoat. Even Dee is startled at her strange dress; however, Osei explains that this is a typical African dress made from the kente cloth, an African fabric.

The Oriental woman is compared with the woman of the West. Dee, the representative of the West, is portrayed as a beautiful girl, cute “a cat-like face shaped...her cheeks, her temple, her jaw—angular as origami....blond hair was French-braided into two plaits that ran down her back like ropes”(Chevalier, 2017, p. 38). On the other hand, Osei's sister is black with strange hair which needs a special shampoo that must contain a lot of oil, her hair is dry like animal fur. Sisi is an eighteen-year-old girl, but she is wearing the same dress as her mother “wearing bright tunics made of kente cloth”(Chevalier, 2017, p. 43). She has been to different schools and had tried to make friends with the white, but she failed because no white boy or girl wanted to be her friend due to her different race and colour.

Orient is represented as depraved and degenerated as Said emphasises, “the Oriental is irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike” (Said, 2003, p. 40). The students in the school hate Osei as he is dirty and even smells. Sometimes standing behind the African boy, the students touch his hair in wonder but then quickly wipe their fingers as if they had felt some dirty thing. A foul smell also disturbs Duncan sitting beside Osei, who “wrinkled his nose as if at a bad smell”(Chevalier, 2017, p. 113). He is treated as a degenerated person from a strange land of black people, and all the students avoid him as he is a critter and “the black bastard”(Chevalier, 2017, p. 159). In the last scene, Osei climbs the jungle gym. Mr, Brabant commanded him, “Get down from there, nigger!”(Chevalier, 2017, p. 202). All these representations depict that the Orient is degenerated and depraved; hence it needs to be subjugated and controlled by the western powers, who are, on the other hand, civilised, educated, and modern.

Chevalier has represented the Orient as a violent human being who gets angry quickly and is always ready to fight like the brutal animals of the jungle. Minor remarks about the black make Osei lose his temperament. When his girlfriend loses the particular strawberry pencil case, Osei becomes so angry that he behaves like a wild animal “the ugly fury in Osei's face”(Chevalier,

2017, p. 165) which the students and the teachers can easily perceive. He becomes mad with anger. The last scene of the novel describes his anger when in a fit of fury, he climbs the jungle gym in the playground with hands free and swaying above the playground “clenched his hand into a fist and held it high, all the while staring fiercely down at Mr. Brabant”(Chevalier, 2017, p. 203).

The study has examined ‘Western representations of the Orient’ in the selected novel *New Boy* (2017) by Tracy Chevalier. Edward Said states that orientalism is a tool for colonial powers to vanquish and ameliorate the Orient to maintain control over it. Orientalism is a complicated series of representations of the Orient by the Occident. Said emphasises that it is the continuous practice of the West in which it constructs and represents the Orient in a completely new shape to achieve its vested interest. Orientalist writers have represented the Orient as inferior, different, lamentably alien, irrational, and depraved. However, Said criticises that these representations are not the ‘natural’ or the actual representation of the Orient. The Orient seems to be a structure of representations constructed by the Western powers. Said’s *Orientalism* (1978) also proposes a suitable framework for evaluating colonial works. Thus Orientalism is employed as a theoretical framework in the research to comprehend Tracy Chevalier’s *New Boy* (2017). This framework has facilitated to substantiate that Orientalist writers used the ideology embodied in these discourses to construct the identity of the Orient. Moreover, these discourses endorse stereotypes representing the Orient as uncivilised, degenerate, and irrational. Consequently, it authenticates the right of the Occident to subjugate and civilise the Orient. In the selected novel, Osei, the story’s protagonist is representative of the Orient culture. He is represented as inferior, different and uncivilised, so the administration keeps him under strict command and authority.

The findings show that the West represents the Orient as inferior and uncivilised to assert its superiority and domination. The research has postulated a new framework for elucidation of ‘Western representations of the Orient’ in the contemporary novel. However, in *Orientalism* (1978) Said argues that the creation of the Orient in Orientalist discourse is not only restricted to a particular discourse; instead, diverse discourses are involved. Foucault’s ideas of power and discourse are further employed to evaluate the power-knowledge relationship. This aspect of orientalism can also be engaged to analyse *New Boy* (2017) by Tracy Chevalier. Moreover, further research could be carried out to highlight orientalist representation in other novels belonging to the contemporary world. Hence, the scope of future research regarding ‘Western representations of the Orient’ appears inestimable.

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