POSTORIENTALISM:
ORIENTALISM SINCE ORIENTALISM

by

Maria Degabriele BA(Hons) Murdoch University

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
at Murdoch University

May 1997
Copyright Licence/Restriction

(Honours and Coursework Master Theses)

Permission to copy all or parts of this thesis for study and research purposes is hereby:

Granted ☑ Not Granted ☐

(please tick one)

1. Signed: __________________________ Date: 17/2/98...

2. Title of Thesis: __________________________
ABSTRACT

POSTORIENTALISM, OR ORIENTALISM SINCE ORIENTALISM

This dissertation examines a range of popular contemporary texts in a post-Saidian context. It begins with an analysis of Orientalism, as that text influences almost any discussion of representations of East/West relations. Now, almost twenty years after Orientalism was first published in 1978 it is still a crucial text, and it still needs to be understood and argued with. The other texts looked at in this dissertation include novels, drama, films, opera, a musical, and the print and electronic mass media. They are texts that either represent or comment on East/West relations. The main texts I examine fall roughly into two categories: ones that are clearly orientalist and ones that are postorientalist. Those that are orientalist repeat the same myths of Orient Said describes in Orientalism. Those that are postorientalist challenge those myths by repeating and elaborating them, reversing and displacing the orientalist gaze.

The methodological approach is an eclectic blend of cultural studies and literary criticism. Such an approach enables analysis of a variety of texts, from classical nineteenth century books and myths through to contemporary postmodern representations, that deal with identity politics.

My thesis is that contemporary postcolonial representations that deal with East and West and that use and displace the very terms such categories rest upon, can be called “postoriental”.

PhD Thesis 1997

Maria Degabriele
CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ABSTRACT

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION ................................................................................. 1
   Prelude
   Outline
   From Orientalism to Postorientalism
   Popular Culture and Desire
   Hybridity in English
   At Home in Diaspora
   Conclusion

2. ORIENTALISM SINCE ORIENTALISM ........................................... 36
   Introduction
   Orientalism
   Power / Knowledge
   Orientalism as Fetish
   Postorientalism: Theory
   Conclusion

3. ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF MADAME BUTTERFLY .................... 76
   Introduction
   Photographs
   Myths And Fetishes
   Chaos
   Dangerous Liaisons
   Postorientalism: Praxis
   Conclusion
4. DREAM ANGEL: A BACKWARD READING  
   OF SALMAN RUSHDIE'S THE SATANIC VERSES .......................... 140

   Introduction
   The Rushdie Affair: A Postmodern Myth
   A Secular Author/God; One of Us or One of Them?
   The Postmodern
   A Reading of The Satanic Verses
   Conclusion

5. HANIF KUREISHI'S POSTORIENTAL  
   METROPOLITAN CULTURES: MORE SATANIC VERSES .............. 198

   Introduction
   Popular Culture
   More Satanic Verses
   Coupledom
   Collective Representations
   ... While London Burns
   English Suburbia
   Conclusion

6. BHARATI MUKHERJEE'S JASMINE: NEO-ORIENTALISM......... 243

   Introduction
   Mock Subalternity
   English
   God Is Not English
   Naming And Identity
   Inside/Outside
   Death / Rebirth
   Conclusion

7. CONCLUSION .............................................................................. 279

REFERENCES .................................................................................. 288

   Books and Articles
   Films, Plays, Operas, Musicals, Ephemera
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For the assistance given to me throughout the whole process of researching and producing this dissertation, much appreciation is due to Vijay Mishra. There have been others whose support has kept me going: Anne Marie Medcalf, Gary Gillard, and Alec McHoul for their collegial and friendly support.

My profound gratitude goes to the one person who has had to live with the entire project, Fabian, and the other person whose loving support made completion a pleasure, Bob. My thanks and love to Vittoria and Carmeno for their life-long support for all my endeavours.