

A PASSAGE TO INDIA: THE COLONIAL DISCOURSE AND THE REPRESENTATION OF INDIA AND INDIANS AS STEREOTYPES

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ABSTRACT

The representation of the colonized cultures and societies by the colonialists has been a subject of immense importance, both to colonialist and postcolonial critics and writers. The colonialist discourses and writings tend to project the Europeans and the European cultures as normative standards. The colonized alterity is presented as a lack or an abnormality. The British writers and critics, fed upon the Orientalist discourses, have been projecting their own race and culture as superior, and portraying the Indians as lesser Other. E.M. Forster has portrayed the colonialist ideology of the superiority of white race and its culture and the constructed inferiority of India and the Indians in *A Passage to India*. The present study aimed to examine the operations of the colonialist ideology in *A Passage to India*, to show that Forster meant to reinforce the colonialist ideology of superiority, along with the representation of India and Indians as stereotypes and marginalized people and culture in his novel. The study also wanted to examine the link between imperialism and culture and the resultant mimicry and hybridity among the Indians and the development of the identity of the Indians. The study was based upon the analysis of the text of the novel in the light of Postcolonial theories. The study found that *A Passage to India* like any imperial discourse privileged the Europe and the European codes, and ideologies while the Indians and their culture were presented as lesser and inferior stereotypes.

Keywords: Mimicry, ideology, assimilation, oppression, cruelty, lesser, stereotype, superiority.

INTRODUCTION

Edward Said (1993) rightly contends that literature cannot be politically innocent. Martin Green (1980) also holds a similar opinion about literature. The thrust of the present study is to prove that E. M. Forster's novel *A Passage to India* is loaded with colonialist ideology of superiority and presents India, Indians and their culture as lesser and inferior. This was meant to justify and perpetuate the presence of the British Raj in India.

The present study, based upon the exhaustive analysis of the novel in the light of postcolonial theory, has shown that the British officials in India invariably considered and treated Indians as stereotypes. The study has exposed their inherent biases and prejudices toward Indians. The study has also highlighted the impact of the colonist

ideology and culture upon the indigenous culture and identity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A Passage to India has been commented upon by a host of critics from a number of perspectives and angles. These include Ralph J. Crane (1992), Richard Cronin (1989), Bhopal Singh (1975), Sara Suleri (2005), Brenda R. Silver (1991) and Penelope Pether (1991). Pether has read the novel mainly from the biographical perspective, while Brenda R Silver has viewed the novel from the feminist perspective. Benita Parry (1985) has touched upon the issue of colonialist representation of natives, but has left many serious gaps in the study, which need to be addressed to. Suleri has mainly viewed the novel from a perspective of sexual orientation and its reflection in the novel.

Some of the above mentioned critics have not examined the novel from the perspective of the representation of Indians, while some have not fully focused their attention on the representation of India and Indians as stereotypes by Forster. Bhupal Singh has come up with a commendable critique of the novel. But even then there are certain points that need to be taken account of. He incorrectly maintains that Forster is scrupulously fair. Fair towards whom, towards Indians or the British. Singh contends that Forster has no didactic objective (1975). The present study intends to pay attention to these issues and to fill the research gap. Richard Cronin, has devoted a full chapter to *A Passage to India*, but has not focused upon the portrayal of Indians as stereotypes by Forster. Rather his emphasis is upon the fashioning of a new rhetoric by Forster (Cronin). Crane tends to buy the idea of Forster that the novel avoids politics. Actually it deals with the politics, again from the perspective of the empire. Crane fails to see the absence of Indian political figures from the novel in the right perspective (1992). Similarly Crane's handling of the issue of the absence of Amritsar massacre is far fetched, to say the least. Crane has not focused upon the portrayal of Indians as stereotypes. This shows the significance and the relevance of the present study, not only for the people of the subcontinent, but also for the one time colonial rulers of India. Even then, Jerney Tambling in the introduction to a volume of essays (1995) seems unhappy that so much re-reading of Foster has not been undertaken in the light of critical theory. The above given brief literature review not only provides the context for the present study, it justifies its need as well.

The present study intends to undertake a fresh reading of the novel in the light of postcolonial critical theory.

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current study is based upon the exhaustive analysis of *A Passage to India* in the light of postcolonial critical theories. The major proposition of this study is that Forster has represented India and Indians from the colonialist perspective and has used the stereotypes constructed by Western Orientalists about Indians to contain them and to perpetuate the empire, and to establish the superiority of the British and the inferiority of the Indians. The study intends to prove that Forster is a colonialist writer, who has written from the colonialist perspective of superiority and the novel is a colonialist representation of India. It reinforces the colonialist ideology of superiority in *A Passage to India*.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Portrayal of India and Indians as Lesser and Inferior Other:

The opening chapter of the novel prepares the reader towards the portrayal of India and Indians as lesser and inferior Other. The choice of words to describe the imaginary Indian town, Chandrapore, and its climate, its landscape and its people, is derogatory and humiliating. This conveys the idea that the writer belongs to the colonialists, who look down upon India and its people and have no love or sympathy for them. The narrative is not characterized by empathy. It is loaded with antipathy for India and Indians. The river Ganges deposits rubbish freely in the vicinity of the town. The streets of the town are "mean", the temples are

ineffective. The writer acknowledges the existence of a few fine houses at Chandrapore, but they are hidden by the filth of the alleys, to deter the visitors. The town is devoid of any work of art, in the form of painting or carving. The narrator further tells that every thing Indian, like its landscape and city is "abased" and "monotonous". The town is summed up as an embodiment of excrescence. The Anglo-Indian city station, inhabited by the British colonizers, has nothing in common with the native town. Surprisingly, Crane (1992) claims, that Forster has opened the narrative of his novel with his most sympathetic characters. He unjustly claims that Forster deliberately gives a positive impression of the Indians. Further, Crane incorrectly claims that *A Passage to India* offers a remarkable picture from the Indian point of view. It is a very serious misreading of the novel. Forster's portrayal of Aziz and the Indians is from the perspective of a colonialist, synecdochal and reductive. The Indians are mere stereotypes, slightly moderate, when compared to John Masters' portrayal of the Indians in *Bhowani Junction* and *The Deceivers*. Forster does not say anything about the spicy Indian cuisine or the celebrated hospitality of the East. The hooka gives out the smell of cow dung, as does the Indian bazaar, which Aziz passes through. At the house of Hamidullah, the Indians are shown like slaves and subjects, fondly recalling the empty, formal words of politeness and occasional common courtesy expressed by the white people towards them. The narrator confirms the subject and the reductive status of the Indians. Forster, instead of sympathetically illustrating the Indian values and culture, celebrating the spirit of sacrifice and devotion for

the family, shown by the Indian women, shows the fate of Indian women worse than men. The wife of Hamidullah is in purdha. She cannot take her dinner before it is taken by men. She believes that women have no possible life and existence without marriage and men. The narrator describes the fate of the Indian women as mere wedlock and motherhood.

The Indians are portrayed as lazy, with parasitic tendencies. Latif has never done a stroke of work; he lives off the generosity of Hamidullah. His wife lives somewhere else in similar circumstances. Latif hardly visits her. He is shown worrying about political and philosophical issues. This is a negative comment on the Indian character. The Indians are shown obsessed with the past, "their departed greatness". Major Callender is in the habit of degrading and humiliating Dr. Aziz, Mrs. Callender and her friend take the tonga of Aziz without even bothering to talk to him. Aziz is described only as a little Indian. The Indian soil is "horrible". It is unpredictable, unreliable and treacherous. The gate of the Muslim mosque is ruined. Its courtyard is paved with broken slabs. The Indians are portrayed as suffering from the habit of exaggeration. Aziz has no access to Heaslop but he is shown telling Mrs. Moor that he knows the city magistrate intimately. Aziz is presented as a typical Asiatic, as invented by Western Orientalists, a mimic man. He believes that his social link with a white sahib can make him a complete man, as pointed out by Fanon (2008). Chapter two ends with the declaration that Indians are not allowed into Chandrapore club, even the educated ones, in spite of their mimicry and complete assimilation of imperial culture.

The distance and division between Anglo-India and the India of the Indians is emphasized by the fact that windows are shut to prevent the Indian servants from looking at their mem-sahibs, while they act in the musical *Cousin Kate*. The objective behind this narrative is to contain India and Indians. Contrary to the assertions of Singh (1975), Forster almost becomes a propagandist, who is propagating the British ideology of superiority. Ronny is quite ruffled that his mother did not indicate by the tone of her voice that she was talking about an Indian. The reader is told that Miss Quested is "queer" for his desire to see the real India. She is only an exception and not the norm. However, Cronin calls her "a very honest young lady" (1989). Mrs. Turton calls her ungracious and cranky for the same reason. The cruelty of the British towards Indians is revealed by the remarks of an ex-British nurse, "the kindest thing one can do to a native is to let him die".

Turton arranges a Bridge Party to "amuse" Miss Quested. The Raj is represented by the Turtons and they are the "little gods" in India. Ronny's description of the Indians is reductive and synecdochal, as discussed by Said, a repetition of Orientalist construction of stereotype. Ronny is unhappy that the educated Indians no more cringe in front of the Raj officials. Said particularly refers to this aspect of Ronny (1993). Said describes British officials like Ronny as a young English man sent to India who would belong to a class whose national dominance over each and every Indian, was absolute. Even the kind Mrs. Moor cannot help but describe Dr. Aziz as unreliable, vain and inquisitive. The narrator in the novel describes India as an eternal jungle infested with rats, bats, wasps and jackals without any

discrimination of home or forest. The Indians are portrayed as very anxious to attend the party thrown by Turton, and they turn up even before the host or the guest of honour. Ronny, the younger representative of the Raj is full of suspicion for the Indian guests at the party. He passes his judgment on the Indian guests at the party as, "seditious at heart".

Ronny points out the mimicry among the Indians, a direct result of imperialism. Said (1993) and Fanon (2008) have endorsed this aspect of imperialism in an exhaustive way. The Indians have mimicked the manners, the life style and the dress code to the extent, that Ronny does not regard them as Indians. They flash their pince-nez, European shoes and costumes. "European costumes had lighted like leprosy. Few had yielded entirely, but none are untouched". Mrs. Turton is angry that Indians are allowed into the club. For Mrs. Turton, Urdu is merely a lingo, the language of lesser people. During the ritual of introduction, Mrs. Turton describes the Indian ladies as if they were commodities. Some Indian lady is described only as a "shorter lady" and the other one is called the "taller lady". She hardly treats them like living individuals, with their respective personalities and identities, "All the Indian ladies, were uncertain, cowering, recovering, giggling, making tiny gestures of atonement or despair". It is only a stereotype portrayal, meant to reinforce the imperial ideology of superiority and to contain India and Indians.

Mrs. Bhattacharya is presented as an imbecile child, who does not know what she is talking about. Mr. Turton, the collector, the host of the bridge party describes the Indians in the most

reductive way, “when they had not cheated, it was bhang, women, or worse, and the desirables wanted to get some thing out of him”. This is what is called the construction of the East by the Western narratives as discussed by Said. The same is ratified by Cronin, who maintains that his India existed for him even before he visited it in 1920. His India was given to him and created by Forster in *A Passage to India* (1989).

While the Indian foods are conspicuous by their absence, the English food and the menu of Anglo-India is provided. “Julienne soup, full of bulletry bottled peas, pseudo-cottage bread, fish full of branching bones, pretending to plaice, more bottled peas with the cutlets, trifle, sardines on toast”. Singh does not say anything about the privileging of the British culture, and the marginalization of India and Indian culture (1975). For Ronny India is a wretched country, held by force. He is trying to do justice while surrounded by lies and flattery. However, Mrs. Moor, who like Fielding, is a symbolic reflection of the on going debate about how the colonies are to be ruled, reminds Ronny that God has put them (the white Christian ruling class) on earth to love their neighbors. Major Callendar, inspite of the fact that he knows Dr. Aziz to be a better professional, describes him as a man with, “no grit, no guts”. He even reprimands him for not doing his duty and wandering around, “now do some thing for a change”. On top of it, he shows his temper to Aziz. The Indians are portrayed by Forster as a race who seek or invent grievance. Aziz is shown as savouring his unhappiness. “He had breathed for an instant the mortal air that surrounds Orientals and all men”. The racial prejudice of the English against Indians would not leave them even at the

sports grounds, and nationality would exert its poison where ever possible. The Indians are portrayed as cringing towards the British and living with constant fear. Dr. Pana Lal has creeping fear for his possible offence to the British collector, for his failure to attend the reception. He is shown as extremely excited at the prospects of meeting the British at the party.

The Indians, even the educated ones are shown as desperate to please their British masters. Dr. Aziz wrenches off his golden collar stud to supply the same to Fielding. In spite of the mimicry and imitation on the part of educated Indians; they are still not accepted as fit and suitable to dine at an English man’s table. The British are shown especially hating the Indians with modern ideas. Said calls this attitude on the part of West as manifestation of moral power (2001).

The Indians, as a community, are represented by Forster, as the people, who don’t care about their commitments, another stereotype. Mrs. Moor and Miss Quested were invited by Bhattacharyas. Everything was settled. The Bhattacharyas were to send their carriage to collect Mrs. Moor and Miss Quested on the appointed day and time. It never happened. Mr. Heaslop passes his judgment against the Indians. Hindus are described as slack, unpunctual and without any notion of sanitation. Said refers to the use of this stereotype for the Hindus in the imperial narratives, “the Hindu is inherently untruthful and lacks moral courage” (1993).

The Indians are portrayed as ashamed of themselves and of their culture. This reflects the impact of imperial culture upon the native culture and identity. Dr. Aziz is also portrayed as ashamed of his

house, which he regards as a shanty. It is infested with black flies. Dr. Aziz is constructed as a man, who has assimilated the Western culture to the extent, that he has developed an Orientalist vision, leading to self-pity and self-hatred. To escape from the possible embarrassment, he invites Miss Quested and Mrs. Moor at the Marabar caves. Dr. Aziz is presented as an immature person who invites his guests to the Marabar caves, without having ever seen or visited himself that place before hand. Ronny calls Dr. Aziz as the spoilt westernized type, in other words, a mimic man.

Ronny treats the Indians present at the place of Fielding contemptuously and rudely ignores them. He further calls Aziz as a "bounder". Ronny never tires of his attack against Indians. From individuals he drifts towards the community or the race, "Inattention to detail, the fundamental slackness that reveals the race". Ronny dismisses the invitation by Aziz as, "just their way of being pleasant". These are all the examples of the construction of the stereotypes to describe the Indians as inferior, and their frequent use for the Indians with the objective to perpetuate the British culture and empire.

The Portrayal of a Comparison between the British and the Indians:

The Indian landscape is described as poor, trees are said to have a poor quality. The English people are presented as calm at the time of crisis, while the Indians are shown raving about impotently. British India is portrayed as an example of reason and orderliness, while the native India is irrational and superstitious. The conduct of an Indian nawab at the time of a minor accident to his car is meant to reveal the childish

nature of the nawab. He loses his head, abuses his chauffeur, behaves badly towards Miss Derek, while the white men are presented as men of grace and poise. The narrator paints the Indians as indifferent to morals and individual responsibility. The bedroom of Aziz is squalid, the people there are busy in intrigues and gossip and their discontentment as shallow. The minds of the Indians are said to be inferior and rough. Dr. Aziz, an educated Indian, instead of cleaning his house, like Gandhi does in R.K. Narayan's novel (2000), is shown only grumbling. His house is a place of squalor and ugly talk. The floors are strewn with fragments of cane and nuts, spotted with ink, the pictures crooked upon the dirty walls without a punkah. His friends are described as third-rate people.

Forster shows that educated Indians like Dr. Aziz would avoid politics at all costs. This is what the empire wanted. Forster also wanted to cultivate the politics of the empire. Fielding represents his point of view, "England holds India for her good", an echo of the construction of Kipling, "White man's burden". Haq, Aziz and others admit their inadequacy and inferiority at all levels. This is meant to justify the presence of the British in India forever and forever.

Every thing associated with India is bad and ugly; April is a month of horrors. Indian sun, instead of having any beauty and glory, is sinister. Aziz, under the influence of colonial ideology, has assimilated the western notions of beauty as well and does not regard his late wife as beautiful. Compared to him, Sri Ram (Narayan, 2000) finds an Indian girl from the South more beautiful than the British Queen. The Indian children are shown like monkeys. The Indians

are represented as dirty, ugly people, who are associated with smell, tobacco and the sound of spitting. Their lack of etiquette is frightful. They put their melons in their fez, guavas in their towels. The description is ironically summed up as, "the celebrated Oriental confusion". The Raj officials invariably describe Indians as incapable of responsibility. The picnic arrangements are described as "odd", the purdha carriage is made fun of as "comic", the Indians are shown not familiar with the idea of traveling light, a pet word with Fielding. On top of this confusion, the Indian cook is shown making tea in the lavatory. Mrs. Moor makes her comment, "a strange place to make tea. The Indian hot weather is never forgotten. By May, a barrier of fire falls across India and the sea. Whereas the British novelists and poets celebrate the beauty of their countryside, here, the narrator laments that India is the country of "fields, fields, then hills, jungle, hills and more fields". This proves the point of Homi K. Bhabha.

The towns of "blasted" India are the malaise of men, who cannot find their way home. India in the eyes of Forster is not a promise but only an appeal, indirectly justifying the Raj. There is only a half sentence reference to the world celebrated Taj. The Mogul heritage in the form of gardens, mosques, forts, palaces is mere "Mogul stuff". The dawn of India brings in its wake no miracles, but failure and disappointment. It is more than that. It is described as failure of the virtue in the celestial fount. The sun rises devoid of any splendor. India is only a horrid, stuffy place. The sun of India is treacherous; the month of April spreads lust like canker. The beauty of the sunrise is only associated with, and

reserved for, the English Grasmere. "Ah, dearest Grasmere! Its little lakes and mountains were beloved by them all. Romantic yet manageable, it sprang from a kindlier planet". While Gandhi (Narayan, 2000) declares the flowing rivers of India as beautiful and finds the sunrise full of colours and the air so fresh. In Forster's India, the plane is untidy. A Pakistani writer Zulfikar Ghose in preface to *The Murder of Aziz* declares the Indian landscape to be the most beautiful landscape in the world. At the sight of picnic, the presence of elephant attracts villagers and "naked babies".

The ability of the Indians to fabricate and invent stories, which do not exist, is another construction of the Orientalists. It is maintained that the Indians don't bother to verify the fact and can invent a snake out of a stick to create a sensation. The Oriental fool Aziz, cannot see the difference between hospitality and intimacy.

The Marabar caves are bland and bald, even the sky which connects the precipices is bland and glutinous. Mrs. Moor, who is portrayed as a compassionate figure, and is regarded by some critics as sympathetic towards India and Indians, but actually is neo-assimilative imperial mode to perpetuate the empire, finds the caves as "horrid". The presence of so many Indians in the caves only fills them smell. She experiences the crush and the stench. Something vile and naked strikes her face, which actually turns out to be only the soft hand of an infant. Through the metaphor of echo, India is portrayed as a body which lacks discrimination and discernment. What ever you shower India with, hope, politeness, anything, the outcome (echo) is the same monotonous noise. The images, Indian

caves produce, are of snakes and worms. Mrs. Moor is sunk in apathy and cynicism. Her romance with India is over.

On their return from picnic, Aziz behaves like a child in the face of the Raj officials, who intend to arrest him on charge of an attempted crime. Only Fielding, a British, can keep him calm and sane. Fielding is portrayed as a superior human being who is in control of everything. The Indians, including Aziz, wail and weep at this misfortune. McBryde, the British police officer, has an Orientalist doctrine about the Indians. All natives who live south of latitude 30 are criminals at heart. The psychology of the people, McBryde tells Fielding, is different in India. The collector declares India to be a "poisonous country" and its people as jackals. The Indians are bad starters, occasionally jib and are possibly cowards. The Indians always do something disappointing. Even Fielding concludes that Indians can be unbearable on occasions. Almost all the British characters believe in the eccentricity, backwardness and supine malleability of the Indians. India is portrayed as a place isolated from the mainstream of European progress in the sciences, arts and commerce. Only the English are really unequalled, especially at the time of crisis. Godbole, though, steeped in Indian and Hindu mythology and philosophy, is not free from the influence of imperial culture and the resultant mimicry. He plans to name his school after King Emperor George the Fifth. The Indians are called as niggers and nothing is too bad for them. For one alleged crime against a white woman, the ruling white community wants the whole of India to crawl up to the caves. The Indians ought to be spat at, they need to be ground into dust.

McBryde comes up with yet another thesis on Oriental pathology, "the darker races are physically attracted by the fairer, but not the vice versa". Fowzia Afzal (1993) rightly describes McBryde's stance as a perpetuation of an ideology of containment. However, Fowzia does make a controversial statement when she contends that McBryde does not represent Foster's own views. Muhammad Ali, the pleader, at the trial scene, is portrayed as a typical Indian, in spite of his education. He is portrayed as an immature and childish person who behaves in an extremely irrational way during the trial. McBryde describes it as the natural gesture of "an inferior race". The Indians are portrayed a community of people, who invariably seek a grievance, if not available, they can invent one, like they do in the case of the departure of Mrs. Moor.

Orientalists are shown preferring hysteria and the public display of emotions. Adela's gesture at the trial scene is based upon cold justice and honesty. Orientalists exist on this side of Suez. The narrator repeats the phrase of that great defender of Empire, Kipling as said by George Orwell and quoted by Said (1993). They can fabricate stories which are totally removed from reality or truth. The legends or what is called subsequently, as rubbish, spring up about Mrs. Moor. Every Indian is a spy and every Indian is blessed with the licentious imagination, another European construction of the East. The frustration of reason and form, a muddle, is presented as the "approaching triumph of India". Forster is particularly hostile towards the Hindus.

Portrayal of the Neo-Assimilative mode of Imperialism:

Mrs. Moor is portrayed as a kind, God fearing Christian, who is meant to be extremely sympathetic towards the Indians and is very unhappy at the cruel treatment of the Indians by the Raj and its functionaries. She reminds her son Ronny that as Christians, they are duty bound to love Indians as well. Fielding, the principal of Government College, is presented as the new face of empire. He is not satisfied with the cosmic changes brought about by a few transfers and postings. It is for Kincaid(1988) to reveal the true reality of the British love for knowledge, and their enthusiasm to impart the same to the natives. Raj can continue only if its officials are compassionate and genuinely friendly towards the Indians. In the changing circumstances, the nineteenth century attitude and mode of administration cannot continue, "Ah, that won't take us far. Indians know whether they are liked or not—they cannot be fooled here. Justice never satisfies them, and that is why the British Empire rests on sand". The Lieutenant-Governor Sir Gilbert also belongs to the new school of thought, regarding the administration of the colonies. Forster is not an opponent of empire, he only knows like Sir Gilbert that the hands of the clock move forward and not back. In a sense Forster intends to disarm the possible nationalistic uprising against the colonizers. The British need to come up with a solid new strategy to maintain their hold over India. Fielding believes, "we all build upon sand; and the more modern the country gets, the worse will be the crash". Forster through Fielding makes his new philosophy crystal clear. "In the old eighteenth century, when cruelty and injustice raged, an invisible power repaired their ravages. Every thing echoes now; there is no stopping the

echo. The original sound may be harmless, but the echo is always evil".

Portrayal of the Growth of the Indian identity:

Though, India is shown slowly and gradually moving towards its roots and identity, but it has not resulted in the development of national identity and resistance against colonialism. It is very difficult to agree with Cronin, that Aziz becomes "a nationalist hero", after his acquittal (1989). He never becomes one. He is nowhere seen challenging the British and asking them to quit India, in the spirit of a nationalist hero. Singh (1975) is right when he claims that Aziz is not a hero. However, his claim that Forster's knowledge of Anglo- India shows insight and penetration is an exaggeration. It is the repetition of the same old Orientalist construction. Forster has portrayed the Indians, even the educated ones as living in the past, immersed in pathos. The poetry of Aziz is full of references to Cordova and Samarkand. Aziz is portrayed as an escapist and not as a fighter. Instead of fighting against the Raj, against its oppression and injustice, he retires to a native state, which is described as "jungle state". Aziz displays only the 1st stage of colonial encounter (Fanon,2001). A period of unqualified assimilation. He does experience the 2nd stage of disturbance, but never moves on to the third phase, the fighting phase . Aziz is shown again reverting to a non-scientific and non-professional attitude. The distorted impact of imperial culture can be seen even in the temple. God is Love becomes God si Love. The Hindu music at the temple and religious festivals is complemented by British music and bands. Europeanized bands play Nights of Gladness while the Hindu

choir of Godbole repeats Takram, Takram. Even in the midst of his meditation the image of Mrs. Moor appears in Godbole's mind and never leaves him. This is the portrayal of the impact of imperial culture and the resultant hybridity. India is throughout described as a land where everything is unpunctual. The divisions in the Hindu community are highlighted. Indian soil is a land of fissures (indirectly suggesting the relevance of the British as a force which can handle these fissures). The Indian freedom fighters and nationalists are portrayed as people who kick and scream on committees. Dr. Aziz is Forster's version of an Indian, who in reality lives in the past and retires to a native state and composes poems about bulbuls and roses. At the end he makes his peace with the English. Godbole, cannot even build the school he wants to build. Aziz is a memento, a trophy of the illegitimate embrace between India and the English. Aziz is so different from Sri Ram (Narayan, 2001), who totally rejects imperial culture. The final message of the narrative is that so long as, there are people like Godbole and Aziz, Raj is not threatened and will continue to exert its influence even if Raj is formally withdrawn. Crane on the basis of the "progress" towards the relationship between the Indians and the British calls *A Passage to India* "an optimistic novel" (1992). This reveals the limitation of Crane. He associates himself with the British, a model for the neo-assimilative mode of hegemony.

CONCLUSION

The study has shown that E. M. Forster's novel, *A Passage to India*, reinforces the colonialist ideology of superiority and its narrative strengthens the stereotypes,

and the East –West division, invented by the West about India and the Indians. The study has proved its basic proposition that *A Passage to India* is a colonialist discourse and as one form of Orientalism has strengthened and reinforced the stereotype image of India and Indians. The study has shown that Forster has not made even a passing reference to the oppression and the pandemic brutalities of the natives by the colonizers. He has not mentioned any Indian leader or the struggle put up by the Indians to get rid of their oppressors. The study has also shown the deep link between culture and imperialism. The Indians are shown to have assimilated the culture of their masters. The Indians are portrayed as ashamed of themselves, of their culture and of their identity. Throughout the novel, the Indians are presented as lesser people, who cannot manage their affairs like mature, responsible individuals. This is the projection of the European hegemonic assumptions, which have been exposed by the present study. The analysis also has highlighted the portrayal of the internal divisions and infighting among the Indians, on social and religious grounds. This was meant to justify the presence of the British in India.

The British characters occupy the center stage, while all Indian characters exist on the margins. The study has shown that Forster has reservations about the old style conduct of some Raj officials. He believes that such policies and conduct are not in the interest of the empire. He disapproves the nineteenth century attitude of the Raj, represented by the club, towards the Indians. He offers an alternative approach through the characters of Mrs. Moor, Fielding and Sir Gilbert. The study has shown that *A Passage to India* is an instance of

literature in the service of Empire, as envisioned by Martin Green (1980). Forster's concern is that if and when the empire comes to its end, even then there should be some understanding between the British and the Indians. The study has shown that Forster has portrayed the Indians and the Indian landscape as lesser, with the objective to contain India and Indians along with their culture. He has presented the English as superior human beings, better administrators and responsible individuals. The Indians are presented as superstitious, diffident, irrational and excitable. Forster believes that this relationship between empire and India can continue. It might not be, strictly speaking, a master-slave relationship, but it will sustain the empire in the changed environment. The study has proved its assumptions regarding the portrayal of the Indians as stereotypes by Forster.

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