

Tribhuvan University

Multiculturalism as an Antidote to East-West Despair in *The White Castle*

A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Masters in Arts

By

Mina Gyawali

Central Department of English

Tribhuvan University, Kiritpur

November 2008

Tribhuvan University
Central Department of English
Letter of Recommendation

Ms. Mina Gyawali has completed her thesis entitled “Multiculturalism as an Antidote to East-West Despair in *The White Castle*” under my supervision. She carried out her research from 27th June 2008 AD to..... I hereby recommended her thesis be submitted for viva voce.

.....
Mr. Chitra Kumar Karki

Tribhuvan University

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

This thesis entitled "**Multiculturalism as an *Antidote to East-West Despair***" by **Mina Gyawali** submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of Research Committee

.....

.....

.....

Internal Examiner

.....

.....

.....

External Examiner

.....

.....

.....

Head

Central Department of English,

Tribhuvan

University, Kathmandu

November, 2008

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis supervisor Mr. Chitra Kumar Karki, without whose sincere and cooperative guidance, this thesis would not have seen the light of the day in its present form. I would also like to record my indebtedness to my honorable teacher and the Head of the Department, Dr. Krishna Chandra Sharma, who kept me encouraged in the course of my thesis writing. Similarly, I deeply appreciate the help extended to me by Dr. Birendra Pandey, Saroj Ghimire, Badri Acharya, Dr. Shiva Rijal, Shankar Subedi, Sharad Chandra Thakur and by all respected teachers.

I would like to remember my parents, my lord, as source of my every success. Parbati (paru) K.C, my best friend, I am proud to have such a friend in need. I will be indebted to Yuba Raj brother and Bidur brother for their brotherly encouragement. At this point, completing my thesis work, I want to express my gratitude to my brothers and sisters for all their co-operation and every sort of back-up they provided to me while I was engaged in writing this thesis. I would like to remember my friends Sita Bishnu, Gauri, Sashi, Suvash and Dataram for helping me every way.

Definitely, I will always be grateful towards my heavenly father for blessing me with all these supports.

Mina Gyawali

November 2008

Abstract

Ferit Orhan Pamuk's third novel *The White Castle* is characterized by a confusion or loss of identity brought on in part by the conflicts between European and Islamic values. The deep-rooted tension between East and West, traditional communalism and modern secularism often get elaborate treatment in Pamukian literature. They are often startling, disturbing and unsettling or even mysteriously exhilarating, as is the novel undertaken in this thesis.

The present dissertation has the message that the survival of people from the different cultural and geographical domains is made possible by the ability in accepting differences as given which we need not try to obliterate. In the novel itself, a Turkish scientist successfully settles in Italy whereas a Venetian enjoys his life and post of power as a royal astrologer at the court in Istanbul. Actually the difference of cast, colour and creed are all man-made, therefore not essential to defining human life and existence. This is the liberal and reconciliatory message of the novel studied in this thesis.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	I
Abstract	II
I: Multicultural Perspectives on <i>The White Castle</i>	1-6
II: Cultural Studies	7-21
Multicultural Ethos	10
Discourse	14
Power of Discourse: Creating and Dismantling Truth	16
Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Reading	19
III: Multiculturalism: An Antidote to East-West Despair	22-40
Eastern Longing for Western Science: An Orientalist Theme	25
Exchanging Identities: Crossing the Cultural Barrier	28
Binary Opposition between Occidental and Oriental	32
IV: Conclusion	41-42
Works Cited	

I. Multicultural Perspectives on *The White Castle*

Orhan Pamuk established himself with a massive realistic novel along the lines of "Buddenbrooks" that tracks the fortunes of a wealthy Istanbul family over three generations in this century. His second novel was a slim modernist tale told from several viewpoints that prompted comparisons with the work of modern writers. *The White Castle* — Mr. Pamuk's third novel — is the first to be translated into English.

Pamuk novels and other writings are characterized by a confusion or loss of identity brought on in part by the conflicts between European and Islamic values. The deep-rooted tension between East and West, traditional communalism and modern secularism and such binary concepts often get elaborate treatment in Pamukian literature. They are often startling, disturbing and unsettling or even mysteriously exhilarating, as is the novel undertaken in this thesis. His novels include complex, intriguing plots and characters of great depths.

On October 12, 2006 the Swedish Academy announced that Orhan Pamuk had been awarded the Nobel Prize of the year in literature for Istanbul, an autobiographical work. In its citation the Academy said: "In the quest for the melancholic soul of his native city, Pamuk has discovered new symbols for the clash and interlacing of cultures." He held his Nobel Lecture on December 7, 2006, at the Swedish Academy, Stockholm. The lecture, delivered in Turkish, reviewed the relations between Eastern and Western civilizations in an allegorical upper text:

What literature needs most to tell and investigate today are humanity's basic fears: the fear of being left outside, and the fear of coming to nothing, and the feelings of worthlessness that come with such fears: the collective humiliations, vulnerabilities slights, grievances, sensitivities, and imagined insults, and the nationalist boasts and inflations that are their next of kind. .

.we have often witnessed people, societies and nations outside the Western world – and identify with them easily – succumbing to fears that sometimes lead them to commit stupidities, all because of their fears of humiliation and their sensitivities. (Pamuk, Noble Lectures 6)

Thus, as the Nobel lecture of Pamuk reveals, his subjects are the perennial themes of human weaknesses and stupidities, and superiority complex.

His historical third novel *The White Castle*, published in Turkish in 1985, won the 1990 Independent Award for Foreign Fiction and extended his reputation abroad. It is a short narrative fiction with no dialogue, about modernization and its ironies. It is a role-reversal tale, having affinities with some of the established works of the Western writers such as Louis Borges, Gustav Flaubert and William Makepeace Thackeray. The story begins as a straightforward first-person narrative about the misfortunes of a young Italian scholar who, reroute from his native pirates. After a Turkish scholar named Hoja tried to exchange his culture and knowledge with him. For the exchange of identities, the mutual introduction to a new life, a new way of thinking, a new language this is, at least it can be, a kind of love. Faruk, in introducing the book, “A man who can be adjusted in the new country to speak new language and happy there, then he exchanges his culture to there’s people” (3). One loses own something and gets something new of others. Not everything in Hoja’s exploitation of his slave fails so utterly. There is the psychological exploration of the West. Hoja conceives the notion that Western difference from the East .A different sense of identity, as species of self knowledge that is unknown in the East cause of the negligence so he obliges his slave to reveal his every dream and memory, and while the slave dutifully recalls his childhood and youth in Italy. The two men sit at a table like two bachelors telling each other’s fortunes to pass the time on endless winter nights, writing memoirs called “Why I Am What I Am” and sharing them with one another. But identity is memory in Pamuk’s notion. They live together

become a sort of mutual depiction, tearing the constructed of the East and the West.

The story of self-hatred and love of someone different from other makes the novel readable document for those who appreciate the importance of tolerant and liberal world view. Since its publication, the novel has been reviewed from different perspectives by many critics and scholars as a literary work is open and amenable to many interpretations and appertaining criticisms.

The criticisms on the issues, as such multiculturalism encounter of the Eastern and the Western cultures, cultural grappling and displacement, Diaspora, assimilation, existential dilemma and identity crisis are given the central focus in this dissertation. Tension between the Eastern Turkey and the Western Italy, and between family tradition, culture and individual freedom are the focused ideas of the novel.

The narrator finds himself thinking, thought of love, the cerebral complexities of memory and queer of identity:

“The White Castle begins and modern age disappears and the novel battles of the seventeenth century are upon us. The Turkish obsession with Western knowledge turns out to antedate the present. Hoja wants to learn everything the Italian has ever studied on the information that might lead to military advantage for the Ottoman empire and even on the deeper psychology of the West.” (Pamuk, 187)

The theme of impersonation is reflected in the fragility Turkey feels when face with Western culture, one feels jealousy, anxiety about being influenced by someone else, resembles Turkey’s position when it looks West.

In the space of two months, I learned more about his life than I’d been able to learn in eleven years, I encouraged him perhaps because I already sensed then that I later adopt his life-story as my own. (17)

Slowly, the narrator also involves with the Eastern culture and he feels very surprise

because he gives up something and takes something from Hoja. He feels Hoja's life story also resembles as his own, both are exchanging their's culture, knowledge, and experience each other. Culture can certainly fall into hatred, but where there is hatred, might not there be also love, mixed in a little here and little there. The mutual fascination between the Christian dominated West and the Islamic dominated East is no small or simple thing. It is so powerful that people, sometimes who want to abandon their own identity in the feet of self-loathing or desire for the other. A contact between two societies with different cultural patterns affects both societies. In this process element of culture spread wildly sometimes losing its return. The phenomena, like, colonization, ethnic movement, conquest, commerce and revolution are the mechanisms of cultural diffusion. These elements sometimes become completely responsible for cultural displacement. Cultural degeneration in a society or a community produces imbalance in the acts of people, specifically in the individuals in relation to culture. If the cultural mechanism is imbalanced, certainly the predicament and fall is inevitable by which the concerned peoples ultimately become victims and lose their identity. Cultural diversity is a phenomenon that refers to the process of cultural exchange in the contact zone. So it also can be termed as multiculturalism or cultural hybridity. Cultural diversity promotes the cultural globalization by maintaining the diversity of human experience that is recollected in course of accepting and exchanging variety of cultures and their different values in a given society.

Commenting on the story of a seventeenth century Italian captured by pirates who ultimately ends up with being an assistant of the Turkish Sultan in designing a war machine, the critic Savkar Altinel writes that human being have no fixed or essential identity. Identity is a matter of contingency and coincidence, not an essence at all. To quote him:

What lies behind all this is the idea that one can become Italian or Turkish or anything else, because in the innermost core of one's being one is neither

Italian nor Turkish nor anything else. Whatever one is in the world, one is also outside the world, merely looking on. Just as at a crucial point in the story the war engine fails, preventing the Turkish army from taking a gleaming white fortress, pointedly named Dippo, this duality remains unresolved and redundant "I" lives on. It is indeed clearly this "I" that turns its owner and the world into what they apprehend as being, with the result that what appears to be merely given is always in fact deliberately constructed. (160)

It generates somehow a quiet ecstasy. For the exchange of identities, the mutual introduction to a new life, a new way of thinking and the new language immersed. Faruk, in introducing the book, offers what he calls a mistranslation of thought, to this effect: "To imagine that a person who intrigues us has access to a way of life unknown and all the more attractive for its mystery, to believe that we will begin to live only through the role of that person-what else is this but the birth of great passion?"(168) the novel rises to a sort of love area of open confession-peculiar, narcissistic, confused between self-loathing and love of the other. 'I loved Him," the slave says of Hoja.

The critic Jay Parini appreciates Pamuk as a new star in the east, who has earned the right to comparisons with Jorge Luis Borges and Italo Calvino, whose influence on him is apparent. He writes:

The White Castle is a fable of identity; a postmodern tale that explores the murky and recessive byways of Cartesian self-consciousness. At this point, many readers of this review will yawn: not another second-rate philosopher pretending to be a novelist. You can relax. Mr. Pamuk is a storyteller with as much gumption and narrative zip as Scheherazade.(2)

Pamuk succeeded all too well in evoking the miasma of frustration, delay, claustrophobia, irrelevance and futility in which his characters live and move and have their being. It is,

indeed, extremely good at what it sets out to do, and simply ignores what is beside its task. Hence one gets absolutely no feel at all for Istanbul, despite its being one of the most temptation locales in the world for a writer of fiction to exploit. Hoja and the narrator spends a lot of their time trying to get inside each others heads and drive each other crazy and exchange places, which is supposed to complement the East-meets-West theme, but the mind-games are so much more vivid than the latter that completely overpower it. This is perhaps just as well, since the whole ironies of modernization business is much too facile, and leaves out the fact that, in the long run, Hoja was absolutely right: the Ottomans lost first superiority over and then equality to the Europeans because they did not master or match the Europeans in their new sciences and practical techniques. Pamuk would have had a very different story had the narrator been the pupil of Prof. Galilei of Padua. Thus, the cultural associations determine what one becomes.

II. Cultural Studies

Culture, originally derived from a Latin word 'Cultura' meaning cultivation, term culture in the early usage meant both 'to end' and 'to cherish'. Culture, then referred to the human lifestyle and their world, basically to the human acts of cultivating soil and growing crops. Gradually; it has been used to define the creative works and intellectual practices that took place in the changing platform of human history. The term culture, latter happened to place together with different customs, social institutions, art, literature and musical revolution that were cultivated in the human society. The historical background of 'culture' with a meaning has been found from the medieval period.

During the medieval period the term 'culture' has been found to be used first with the clear meaning 'cultivation' which was often associated with the development of religious, faith but in Roman period, it was refined to the cultivation of farming and for Renaissance humanists, culture was the mental cultivation. By the seventieth century, 'culture' had been extended to the point of superior cultivation and refinement. Theories of superior culture in the western thought emerged in the late Eighteenth century.

It was during the late nineteenth century that the argument on culture as 'the whole way of life' was first made. Mathew Arnold, one of the intellectual of cultural studies, defines culture. In *Culture and Anarchy*, "as the best that has been known and thought in the world" (qtd. in Said 'culture' XIII). As such, culture for Arnold deals with the various phenomena like beauty, art and intelligence. But 'culture' is summed up within human world with specific traditional features in anthropology. Culture is the high point of civilization and concern of an educated people. Culture also plays an important role in the field of 'art and literature. For Tylor "culture or civilization taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge , belief , art, moral, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society"(1).

But in the twentieth century, the concept of culture has totally changed. It has become an issue of literary writing basically in English literature, Postcolonial Criticism, and the Postcolonial Theory of Discourse, made culture a most contested space. Culture borrowed the terminologies of other fields of criticism often cited terminologies of other fields of criticism. Often cited terminologies, these days in the study of culture are Foucauldian notion of 'Power' and 'Discourse' and Gramsci's concept of 'Hegemony'. Postcolonial perspectives emerged from the colonial testimony of 'Third World' countries, and the discourses of 'minorities' within the geopolitical divisions of east and west, north and south. Since culture is linked to the human world, it varies according to the variation in the human history that took place with the changing time, different geography and transformation in social political scenario and lifestyles accordingly. Thus, the cultural field, now, covers not merely intellectual and artistic products of a particular group of people. It avoids any exclusive concern with higher culture and rather embraces all the aspects of life food taste, habits and attitude, dress up, sports music and entertainment, religious sites and rituals and institutional celebrations, notion of beauty as well as practices that determines ideas of good and evil. Culture, thus is the accumulated knowledge of all social literary, artistic and collective activity that is passed on from generation to generation. The study of art and literature forms parts of an analysis of cultural production.

It is difficult to define cultural studies because it has no referent to which we can point. It is a set of practices constituted by the 'language game' of cultural studies. It is not a tightly coherent unified movement with a fixed agenda but a loosely connected group of tendencies, issues and questions. The study of culture has taken place in a variety of academic disciplines like sociology anthropology, literature etc. in a range of geographical and institutional spaces which do not fall under cultural study. But Hall observes:

By culture, here I mean the actual rounded terrain of practices, representation,

languages and customs of any specific society. I mean the actual rounded terrain of practices, representation, languages and customs of any specific society. I also mean the contradictory forms of common sense which have taken root in and helped to shape popular life. (110-21)

So, cultural studies are a language game. It hasn't specific meaning but it is related with the different issues like ideas, images, and practices of the intellectual elements of Marxism, new historicism, feminism gender studies, anthropological studies of race and ethnicity, popular cultural studies, centralism, structuralism, post structuralism, psychoanalysis, politics and post colonial studies.

British cultural Critic Raymond Williams takes culture as "the whole way of life of a social group or whole society ... it is a signifying system through which necessarily a social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored"(Williams, 55). Williams here focuses on the need of some kind of common culture as a unifying force in society. He basically seems to be interested in working class culture. Culture with the emergence and dissemination of postcolonial criticism has become the most contested space. It is extended and mostly dealt in association with various concepts like discourse, power and representation .Chris Barker defines, " Cultural studies is a body of theory generated by thinkers who regard the production of theatrical knowledge as a political practice"(5). It means cultural studies are the representation of different intellectuals and their concepts in the present moment. In this sense, cultural study is a 'discursive formation' which provides way of talking about the forms of knowledge and conduct associated with a particular topic, social activities in the society. In the present, modernism and postmodernism are cultural and epistemological concepts. As cultural concepts, they concern the experience of day to day living and artistic movements of human beings. Cultural Studies explores the concept of gender, race, class, colonialism etc. and it sows the connections between these concepts of power to develop ways of further thinking that can be utilize by agents in the pursuit of change. Cultural Studies has been

centered on questions of power, knowledge, ideology and hegemony as well the different cultural stages including ethos.

Multicultural Ethos

Since in the 1970s, the movement known as multiculturalism has taken two distinct directions. On the one hand, Multiculturalism celebrates the diversity of cultural groups. Sometimes called ethnic revitalization, this multiculturalism seeks to preserve the cultural practices of specific groups to resist the homogeneity of assimilation. While on the other hand, it sees the identities of individuals as primarily cultural determined by their membership in a group, and not as the expression of a unique self consciousness. Oriented by identity politics, this multiculturalism rejects the individualistic model of personhood but instead stresses the analysis of communal expressive traditions. Hall writes:

For Allon, there are many different kinds of metaphors in which are thinking about cultural change takes place. These metaphors themselves change. Those which grip our imagination for a time, govern our thinking about these difficult questions in new terms. (287)

Multiculturalism celebrates differences between the cultures, race, caste, rituals and in other social activities. The multicultural or cross cultural ethos shows a distinct and a deep awareness of the social, economic and cultural realities. It forms the multiplicity in thematic patterns and represents the multicultural ethos. A multicultural perspective that widens and enlarges the frontiers' thought, and which is therefore considered a very important literary characteristic by most critics and thinkers, 'Multicultural' forces reconsideration of many issues that were presumed to be settled under enlightenment or post enlightenment auspicious. In important ways, this consideration inserts itself in to the contemporary

questioning of the 'modernity'.

Multiculturalism is the tension between liberal western universalism and cultural loyalties in a world evident in many of the developing societies with the tradition and cultural beliefs. Thus, one common factor that emerges here is that of the multicultural ethos. The main thematic concerns are the questions of a distinct identity.

All societies today are culturally heterogeneous in different degrees. The influence on their language, aspirations, and patterns of consumption, life styles, self understanding and innermost fears is often so subtle and systematic that they do not even notice. Culturally homogeneous society whose members share and mechanically follow an identical body of beliefs and practices is today no more than an anthropological fiction. In some societies cultural heterogeneity is not a result of contingent external influences but communally grounded. These societies include several more or less well organized cultural communities, each held together by a distinct body of ideas concerning the best ways to organize significant social relations and lead individual and collective lives. Such societies are called multicultural ranging "from domestic contacts to global interactions", and "between hegemonic western culture and developing non western societies"(Dallmayr, 14).

Cultures derive their authority from different sources, of which two are currently the most important. Some cultures are based on and derive their authority from religion, and demanded respect deemed to be due to religion. Some others are ethnically based, and demand respect because they are bound up with the life and history of specific ethnic groups. In yet others ethnicity and religion are integrally connected and provide a complex source of legitimacy. This means that multicultural societies could be multi ethnic or multi religious of both. Since ethnicity and religion are different in nature, multi ethnically constituted multicultural societies raise different kinds of problems to those raised by multi religiously constituted multicultural societies.

Multiculturalism is not new to this age, for so-called pre-modern societies such as the Roman Empire, medieval India and Europe, and the Ottoman Empire included several different cultural communities and coped with the diversity in their own different ways. Contemporary multiculturalism is wider and deeper because cultural diversity covers a much larger area of human existence than before, and deeper because it is grounded in profound differences about the conceptions of the good life. Whatever their differences, most pre-modern societies were religious, and shared in common many of their important moral beliefs and social practices.

Multiculturalism begins in identity politics in the conflation of personal and cultural identity. Taking multiculturalism personally is a way to move in, through, and beyond identity politics, while respecting the conditions that make those politics a recurrent necessity. We may want to challenge the centrality of "identity" itself in arguments about culture (Dallmayr, 198-99), by considering the difference between "having" an identity and living by an ethos. Living by an ethos implies an important degree of agency, freedom, and responsibility in the way a person responds to the various claims of multiple and contradictory identities. While the notion of having an identity tends to reinforce deterministic scenarios, in which persons become prescribed categories, the notion of ethos holds open the future of persons. In this way, the relationship between person and cultural identity becomes more effective in the future.

Celebration of hybridity, exposition of the dangers of an orthodox faith in one's religion, and a jeer at the complacency of the devout who put their faith on the almighty—these characterize Pamukian literature. Impurity or the loss of purity and roots does not seem to trouble Pamuk. As he playfully writes in the essay "*The White Castle*" being culturally borne across or translated one will lose something but one will get something too.

Celebration of impurity, partial knowledge, hybridity, bastardization and rootlessness characterize Pamukian literature. If the Islamic fanatics accept what Pamuk has proposed—

that he be left alone with his freedom not to believe in any religion, and not to bow down to any sort of tyranny whether it be human or divine--then the world could hopefully be rid of the menace be precipitated by religious intolerance.

Rushdie writes in his essay "Gunter Grass", collected in *Imaginary Homelands*, migration trains people in the virtue of tolerance: "To experience any form of migration is to get a lesson in the importance of tolerating other's points of view. One might almost say that migration ought to be essential training for all would be democrats" (280).

Apart from the theoretical claims Rushdie makes about his being non-aligned with any particular country, code, or creed but not without losing his/her freedom as a self-guided, self-trusting person. . The concept of multiculturalism, threat of communalism and the need to rid the world of the dangers there are amply evidenced in the novel, as the analysis would expose the text to scrutiny.

Discourse:

Simply put, discourse is a unit of language which is used in specific domain for specific purpose whether spoken, written or gesticulated. Formerly, it also would mean a long writing or a dissertation on a subject. This notion of discourse in general and also in linguistic parlance was drastically reformulated and given a new import only recently by the French poststructuralist theorist/thinker Michael Foucault .The Foucauldian concept of discourse has nothing to do with the traditional theory of discourse. For him, it is a system of statements which makes the world (material reality) known to us. Discourse informs us of the state of affairs, so it is informative or misinformative. Discourse also tells us of the propriety or impropriety, right or wrong of something and consequently influences our attitude, opinion and behavior. Therefore it is directive too. In his treatises *The order of Discourse* (1971) *The Archeology of Knowledge* (1972) and *Discipline and Punish* (1972) Foucault gives currency to the terms 'discourse practices' and 'discursive formation' by which he means the kind of statements associated with particular institutions and their ways of establishing truths or

reality in a given society.

Discourse is seen as a present and operative everywhere, in any field of human activity, interaction, and knowledge. As we have the notorious example of the theory of the Nazi propagandist doctor Joseph Goebbels, even falsities come to occupy the position of truth by the mere virtue of repetition. This unmistakably indicates: truth is nothing in itself; it does not exist outside human interest. What we call truth is an effect of language; it is a discursive formation, a truth-effect produced, sustained, and propagated by language.

Discourse theory is greatly shaped by the Whorfian notion of language. As Benjamin Lee Whorf famously puts, "we dissect nature along lines laid down by our language"(13). What he argues that our understanding of the world is helped, obstructed, or affected by our language, the range of vocabulary we have. The modern theory of language as 'constitutive' also underlines this creative and distorting power of language. The world is not simply there; it is brought into existence by language (which, by extension, is discourse here in our context). As Foucault writes in *History of Sexuality*, "it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together" (100). To see how statements can generate realities or at least truth affects which ultimately get metamorphosed into a tradition of knowledge, Expressing the views, Thomas Babington Macaulay wrote in his (now notoriously) famous minute of 1835 on Indian education:

I have no knowledge of either Sanskrit or Arabic. But I have done what I could to form a correct estimate of their value. I have read translations of the most celebrated Arabic and Sanskrit works. I have conversed, both here and at home, with men distinguished by their proficiency in the eastern tongues. (12)

Speaking as recently as 1945 at the University of Chicago, delivering his Haskell Lectures on "Modern Trends in Islam", he argues with the following comment, emphasizing the point how the Arab mind is intrinsically opposed to, alien to, and abhorrent to rationality and clear

thinking:

The student of Arabic civilization is constantly brought up against the striking contrast between the imaginative power displayed, for example, in certain branches of Arabic literature and the literalism, the pedantry, displayed in reasoning and exposition, even when it is devoted to these same productions. It is true that there have been great philosophers among the Muslim peoples and that some of them were Arabs, but they were rare exceptions. (qtd. in Said 438)

In his classic text *orientalism*, which traces origin and development of the discursive practice of describing the east from the westerners' viewpoint, Said cites Anwar Abdel Malek who has aptly pointed out how the orient had been orientalized by the orientalists:

The orient and oriental (are considered by orientalism) as an 'object' of study stamped with an otherness as all that is different, whether be it 'subject' or 'object' - but of constitutive otherness of an essentialist character....This object of study will be...passive, nonparticipating endowed with a 'historical' subjectivity above all, non active, non-autonomous, non-sovereign with regard to itself. (qtd. in Said 298)

As this reference to Malek clarifies, the discourse of orientalism divests the easterners of all humanity: they lack the volition to express themselves and cannot understand the world and themselves. Therefore they are to be described by somebody else. Such a concept, in effect, treats the Orientals as mere objects, objects of study. The subject, of course, is the west armed with rationality and intellect.

Power of Discourse: Creating and Dismantling Truth(s)

Discourse, as we have seen, creates truths, negates the existing ones, or modifies them as and when it befits the interest of the dominant stakeholder in the power-politics of the times of its production and circulation. Herein lies the power and importance of discourse. It

can easily mislead the people under its reach into believing as true what in reality may be a whopper; or, conversely, it may effectively falsify what is true. Creating concrete realities out of imagination or deliberate and purposeful manipulation of language and information has always been at the heart of the task of discourse. The colonialist or the Eurocentric discourse—Eurocentric, for all the colonial powers were from Europe—which Edward Said designates as ‘orientalism’ in his book of the same title, has always tried to create an inferior image of the orient or the East in comparison to that of the west. A brief concept of orientalism along with its history and function is therefore due here.

One of the definitions of orientalism provided by Said maintains that it is a “western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the orient”(3). For Said, orientalism is a style of thought, a corporate project, a system of texts—of history, sociology, anthropology—that differentiates between the West (us) and the orient (them). It was not an act of imaginative significance only; it had (and still has) an immersed political significance, as Said contends that “European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self”(3). Said also makes it clear that orientalism is not just a pack of lies or fantasies. Had it been so, it would not have endured from the ancient times to the present. What accounts for the durability of orientalism is the fact that there has been a “considerable material investment” in the theory and practice of orientalism which has now been consolidated as knowledge. Moreover, Said’s division of orientalism into latent and manifest makes it clear how this knowledge has been absorbed even into the unconscious or deeper psychic level. Without being conscious that we are upholding the western superiority over the eastern barbarity, even we, the orientals, will be doing so --this all because of the constant imbibing of the oriental notions. The same is its effect on the western mind. Consequently, even people with a wide and informed state of intellect can hardly escape from being somehow indoctrinated into the divisive politics of orientalism. Some sort of fear, grudge or distrust is always present in the westerners’ psyche though they may not have come across

any such experience of treachery or savagery at the hands of orientals.

Orientalism has always been a distinction between the west and the rest (which is the east, mostly). The ontological difference is based on their geographical location: the orient lying in the east for the west. This ontological difference then leads to an epistemological difference whereby the orient becomes the object of knowledge –it is to be understood, captured, and dominated while the knower and the controller is the west, occupying the subject position. Seen thus, the relations between the east and the west are "a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony"(5). The Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci first used the term hegemony to mean "rule by the orientalist (mis)knowledge; it is the easterners too who uncritically accept as true whatever is consigned as the status of truth by the discourse of orientalism. "consent". Now, it is not only the orientals or the westerners who are informed by The orientals or Easterners feel proud in following western style of thought, language, literature – lifestyle, in short –because they feel that in doing so their status their own society is uplifted"(5). Orientalism then is a sort of hegemony: the orientals agree to follow as superior the ways of the westerners, thereby hoping to appear more civilized than their own kinds who are not so receptive of the western influences.

The detrimental impact of orientalism in the psyche of both the easterners and westerners is massive. What is really irritating is the fact that now, more acutely than ever before owing to quick and exaggerating machinery of information technology, news and information bits are pre-selected and annotated so as to suit the material or cultural interest of those involved in circulating the information. This premeditated dissemination of information prepares a mass ready to accept as the given and true what they are accustomed to being fed as the same. The centuries of literary and political representations of the east as incapable of rationality, logic and restraint have actually gone bone deep in acquiring the consent of the so designated people.

Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Reading

The justifiability and necessity of the practice of colonialism is always at the heart of colonial discourse, central to which is the assumption that European values—such as rationality, science, civilization, high seriousness of literature—are superior to the values espoused by the non-European peoples. In literature, this takes the form of exaggeration where the unbearability of nonwestern climate (heat and dust of India, a flagrant instance!) presence of fatal insects; and dark, uninhabited or only-beast-inhabited lands are presented as posing threat to the westerners who go there from cool, lenient climates.

As mentioned in the earlier sections, colonial discourse rests upon a dichotomy: the West versus the East. The West (us) is always possessed of all the human virtues that are extolled universally, whereas the colonized (them) is irrational and uncivilized. Hence, the colonizers had to take up their burden to civilize the other. They had to go to the colonial outposts to teach the natives the decent way of life, of government of religion. And in doing so, the colonizer had to become rude at times. Of course, colonial discourse never ever questions the motives behind colonial expansion for gaining control over the global market. The fact is that, the resources – both human and natural – were exploited to the extent irrevocable by the colonizing powers is never mentioned in colonial discourse.

Postcolonial criticism, licensed with the awareness of the insights imparted by the cultural discourse suspicion on the part of colonized people, seeks to undermine imperial subjects and themes. It has forcefully produced parallel discourses which have questioned and even subverted the long cherished stereotypes and myths about the other. By this, westerners have become, as Said puts it, “aware that what they have to say about the history and the cultures of 'subordinate' people is challengeable by the people themselves who a few years back were aptly incorporated, culture, and, history and all into the great western empires and their disciplinary discourses” (Culture 195). What he argues here is that the power and

authority of western colonial representations have been questioned and challenged by the discourses produced by the supposed-to-be-subordinate people. These postcolonial writers and critics have turned the table and presented the colonial history from the perspective of colonized people's experience. By doing this, they reveal what the colonial authority did to them in the name of progress, science and civilization. As a result, westerners, for the first time, according to Said, "have been required to confront themselves not simply as representatives of a culture and even of races accused of crimes, crimes of violence and crimes of suppression" (Culture 195). Such a subversion of and onset on colonial perspective by the postcolonial critics like Said and Fanon, has given birth to many other postcolonial critics.

Frantz Fanon, one of the eminent postcolonial writers and critics, seems to be more radical on this issue as Said in his *Culture and Imperialism* writes that Fanon "reverses the hitherto accepted paradigm by which Europe gave the colonies their modernity and argues instead that only we are 'the well being and the progress Europe built up with the sweat and the dead bodies of Negros, Arabs, Indians and the yellow races' but Europe is literally the creation of the third world" (197). Elleke Boehmer, too, in *Colonial and Postcolonial Literatures* writes on Fanon that, "In his book *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon called for the entire structure of colonial society to be changed from the bottom up violently. For him, to decolonize meant that the indigenous be forcefully substituted for the alien, in literature as in life" (183).

The term 'Postcolonial' is more useful as an awakened state of consciousness of the colonized people rather than as a strict periodization. Thus, a text written in the then historical colonial time can be called postcolonial in so far as it goes against the prevalent colonial discursive practices of demeaning and dehumanizing the colonized subject. Here, if a text opposes the inhuman practices of colonialism, it exposes its vices and dangers; it is

postcolonial.

To understand the significance and need of postcolonial criticism in its full import, one may refer to Chinua Achebe's much debated, appreciated and talked of essay "Colonialist Criticism" (1975). As Achebe has fairly successfully shown in this provocative analysis, what the West/Europe conceives and celebrates as universal is merely European and nothing more, and therefore quite unacceptable to other cultures:

Does it ever occur to these universalists to try out their game of changing names of characters and places in an American novel, say, a Philip Roth or an Updike, and slotting in African names just to see how it works? But of course it would not occur to them. It would never occur to them. It would never occur to them to doubt the universality of their own literature. (193-94)

A postcolonial reading of the texts colonial --whether they are written in the colonial era or merely in the colonial tradition --subverts all such colonial institutions. What was formerly seen and lauded as classic now becomes merely Eurocentric and ethnocentric; whatever was valorized as having been informed of universalism is now brought to its real status as parochial and blinded by the supremacist illusion of racism. But it is pleasant thing to note that Pamuk's novel is free of all such valorizations and dichotomies. Instead it rests upon the premise that the western versus eastern agenda is given mythical proportion causelessly. In fact, people all over the world have same kind of plight and nature; they are not essentially different. The Venetian scientist finds the same with his resemblance of Turkish teacher Hoja.

III. Multicultural: An Antidote to East-West Despair in *The White Castle*

The Venetian narrator of the novel is a scholar and an engineer, is brought to Istanbul, and is imprisoned there. Having convinced his captors that he was trained in Italy as a doctor, he finds himself called upon to heal everyone from fellow prisoners to a pasha. A man of high intelligence and common sense, he manages in most cases to affect a cure. Slowly, he wins the favor of the pasha, who presents him as a slave to his friend, Hoja by name. The captive makes a declaration of his knowledge of western science which makes Hoja curious in him. Hoja takes him as a companion, and as the plot progresses, a strange and often sadomasochistic relationship unfolds between the two characters. Hoja, as his name suggests, is a master, a scientist. He is obsessed with restoring the superiority of the Ottoman Empire over the Europeans by mastering their science. He is also the unnamed narrator's exact physical double. Hoja forces his captive to teach him science, which the narrator does, starting with the true, the Ptolemaic astronomy.

The two proceed to the construction of Pamuk, musings on weapons of mass destruction, fireworks for the infant Sultan, and the head games and the mutual oral abuse which occupy the core of the novel. But now he is determined to discover what makes people different and what constitutes the Self, "how is this Westerner different from myself, or how are the Christians different from the Ottomans?" (16) Despite this he wants to trace how the people in the Sultan's court "fool", as he terms them, different from himself and the Venetian who are interested in science. One of the most striking points in the novel is that Hoja and the narrator resemble each other, in appearance, like twin brothers. Thus at the end of the book, as the Ottomans are in war with the Poles, a switch takes place: Hoja escapes to Italy where he assumes the identity of the Venetian and Venetian stays back assuming the identity of Hoja.

The two are fully immersed their new roles: the Venetian becomes the Imperial Astrologer and a well-known Ottoman scholar, and Hoja lectures in Italian Universities about the Ottoman Empire, at a time as the author tells us satirizingly, when it was fashionable to do so. Since to a sort of love area of open confession—peculiar, narcissistic, confused between self-loathing and love of the other. “I loved Him,” the slave says of Hoja (178). Beyond all messages and ironies lies the substance of the novel, the narrator’s relation to Hoja, which begins in subservience, proceeds through a rivalry demanding the most painful introspection and ends in brotherly love.

Another critic and a famed story writer Robert Carver write in his article “Let Constantinople in Tiber Melt” writes how the eastern scientist and astrologer Hoja comes to like the Western science. To cite him:

By mastering Western science the Hoja gains favor with the young Sultan, predicting the end of a terrible plague by interpreting statistics and enforcing quarantine. The Sultan, playful and credulous, is fascinated by the stories, inventions, and the wisdom of the West. (68)

Thus, the novel suggests that there is no essential left to be discussed. The two parties exchanged their identities and thus speak for the universal peace and harmony.

Huntingtonian definitions of the East and West, as Edward Said sarcastically remarked, “The West is the West, and Islam is Islam.” In *The White Castle*, the divisive lines are blurred, stereotypes are challenged and identity emerges as a complex network of exchanges, cross cultural influences, and personal experiences. The narrator says, “I loved him the way I loved that helpless, wretched ghost of my own self saw in my dreams. . . Most of all I loved him with the stupid revulsion and stupid joy of knowing myself.”(12)

Since the hypothesis of this work maintains that the novel recounts the attempts of reconciliation between the East and the West, it is pertinent here to show how the two worlds

and people hailing from them come together in the first place. One aspect of post-colonial and multicultural studies is to see the world as a village or at least globalized village according to which each village or particular space is a local as well as a global space, having free access to whoever wants to enter there. Though they do it, in the case of the narrators by being captive and in the case of Hoja by assuming the identity of his Italian friend, the two central characters of the novel under study live a life of a modern, cross-cultural times. And when there is the act of two worlds coming together, there is the high risk factor collision between them. The antidote, the panacea to all such possibly fatal clashes of civilizations, which Samuel Huntington so much emphasizes in this postmodern, post-cold war period in world history, is to develop an attitude of tolerance, multiplicity and flexibility. Acceptance of mutual co-existence is the golden path to a peaceful world. Many literary outputs are centered upon this theme. One of them is briefly touched upon here to reveal the message of the novel is not unique but is commonly shared and much pertinent to these troubled times.

This coming together of the two persons in the novel can be enlarged in our context to include the coming together of the East and the West, of the different geographical and cultural spaces so as to create a vibrant multicultural world, truly defined by tolerant and co-existence.

The same is the thematic message of the novel *The White Castle* too. Only a liberal, latitudinarian outlook of life can create free spaces for the transfer, flow and coming together of people to crest a multicultural society. And it is only in a multicultural society that differences and varieties are celebrated, respected. Therefore peace is ensured and mutual understanding is made possible.

Eastern Longing for Western Science: An orientalist Theme

The East, as it has been portrayed in oriental literature, produced by Westerners for the Easterners, is somehow or other subordinate to the West in all of its aspects, whether

civilizational and cultural, or technological. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that a writer from a country that divides itself into the East Asia and West – Turkey lies in some part in Asia as well – must have thought about the coverage of his readership. He must have aimed at the Western as well as the native and the Easterners as his readers after decades of writing and gaining feedback. This sure enough has affected the very production of the novel, as Edward W. Said so succinctly spell it out in the critical essay “The World, the Text and the Critic” any work of art as an artifact occupies certain space in the world, therefore it is there with some consequence. It generates impression and results in the world, as it had been the result of some or other worldly affairs.

This observation now enables us to look closely at the textual or novelistic detail which bear proof to the hypothesis of this thesis that the novel concerns the east west dichotomy and in the end tries to ameliorate the relation between the two. That is the only way for a co-existent and peaceful world for humanity.

The stories of how ruthlessly the social unfits and rebels were executed in the barbaric societies of the east, especially in the Muslim countries, is touched upon here. Whether it be the Persian and Arabian region or the supposedly more advanced and familiar to the west Ottoman or Turkish region, the Muslim are basically the same in their die-hard approach to discontents and foreigners, or even to those who do not match with their fundamental religious beliefs, particularly that branch of Post colonialism which seeks to expose the hidden messages in the literary texts which are symptomatic of orientalist views. It is relevant to expose how this concept of orientalism has been referred to in the citation below:

The historian Naima described in similar fashion the Imperial Astrologer Huseyn Efendi's execution and Mehmet iv's rabbit hunt at Mirahor Palace. It occurred to me that the author, who clearly enjoyed reading and fantasizing, may have been familiar with such sources and a great many other books-such as the memoirs of European travelers or emancipated slaves-and gleaned material for his story from them.(2)

A historian has recorded the execution of the scientist who happened to displease the Sultan of Turkey in the seventeenth century. This knowledge, as the writer playfully makes the narrator, a Venetian scientist and scholar, guess, might have come to the historian via the memoirs of the European traveler. Other possible sources are the tales as told by the emancipated slaves. The irony operating lies in the fact that even to know about the Turkish history, one could easily turn to the sketches, books and memoirs as they were left by the Europeans. That would be a reliable source. It is like saying the musk runs hither and thither in search of the musk that is continuously giving off fragrance from its own navel. The Turkish writer writes a novel in which a Western narrator and character surmises about the source of history and story. One of the possible and reliable sources might have been the memoir of some Westerners.

This observation takes us back to what as Foucault says about power, knowledge and truth. It is in and by discourse that any knowledge is generated and conveyed, ultimately catapulting it to the status of a truth. Only by writing – since that is the permanent mode of discourse creation and circulation, speech being not so permanent – meaning, by creating discourses, can we create histories and stories that would be recorded in the annals of history proper.

This fact is remember worthy as a frame novel, which is supposed to have been written by a seventeenth century Venetian scientist while he was captive in Turkey, and manuscript was found by one named Faruk who did nothing more than the sequel-like few pages at the end of the novel. But despite all this frame narrative technique, the real writer is the learned, postmodern scholar Ferit Orhan Pamuk who even risked his life by openly berating the Turkish government for inflicting torture, causing death to millions of non-Turks such as the Serbs and Pamuk is doing here is to reveal the hypocrisy that the Westerners show towards the Easterners:

My fascination with the story increased even more perhaps for this reason. I even thought of resigning in protest, but I loved my work and my friends. For a time I told my story to everyone I met, as passionately as though I had written it myself rather than discovered it. To make it seem more interesting I

talked about its symbolic value, etc. (Faruk, 3)

Erasure of the separating and bounding lines between or among people from different, even opposing geographic and cultural domains are the fundament trait of the postmodern, Postcolonial mind. The master/slave, freeman/bondman, eastern/westerners, white/black, tall/short, Christain/non-Christain themes have to be abandoned if we want to live friendly and peaceful life in a world already overmuch threatened by development in the weapon of mass massacre lacking the true spiritual or intellectual development. He is the attitude as it is adopted by the narrator of the novel. As he tells us, he notices a shocking similarity between his master and himself:

With the ravaged eyes of a man who'd spent a day standing side by side with death, I could not help but notice the unnerving likeness between us again as Hoja gradually ceased to use the word 'teach': were going to search together, discover together, progress together. (23)

It was in the seventeenth century that the two scientists addicted, searching spirits felt like becoming co-mingled as the right way to discovery and progress. The purpose of literature is as assented by the majority of critics and writes themselves to teach and to please. The didactic aspect of a work of art lies in the fact that it sensitivizes us in our never-ending passion for truth, beauty and compassion. As it has already been noted, the writer is an easterner, but one who is in close contact with the westerner. Turkey, the country he lives in, Turkey is presently an imminent member of the European Community. Only the fact that it is a predominantly Muslim inhabited country has checked its entrance into the organization. Then, it is interesting to how Pamuk makes the western narrator comment union the care taken by Hoja in calculating the prayer time for those Muslims living in the northern hemisphere.

In those first months, while we sat facing one another at the table, Hoja tried to work out how to calculate the times of prayer and fasting in northern

countries where there was a great variation in the duration of day and night and a man went for years without seeing the face of the sun. Another problem was whether or not there was a place on earth where people could face Mecca whichever way they turned. (25)

Representing the Muslims as always fanatic – guided by the religious motive whatever their standing, position, or profession – is an orientalist characteristic. Perhaps, Hoja is not so much worried about how to ease up the problem of locating the direction of Mecca and Medina, the most sacred Islamic pilgrimage sites. But it seems so, at least in the eyes of the Westerner.

Exchanging Identities: Crossing the Cultural Barrier

Hoja and the Venetian scientist are so much in concord with each other that soon after their being together they start feeling the presence of the other as a requisite for their smooth existence. They start exchanging their real as well as imaginary identities. Physically alike, once the Venetian has a dream that his counterpart had visited his home in his guise, and the family was well deceived. He tells the dream story, and then realizes the folly he has committed in letting the Turkish teacher have the idea: if ever he should be there in Venice, he could easily disguise himself as the Venetian and commingle with the family of the Venetian young man. Nobody would have had any suspicion, since they had exchanged, especially the Venetian had already revealed almost everything there is worth mentioning to be revealed to his master and disciple.

Apart from serving as a movement creator in the plot of the novel as well as an element of the exciting future possibility, this dream scene is important in the sense that actually there is no rigid identity divide between the East and the West. The Westerner could be an Easterner, staying and working in Turk, while as Hoja's dream proposes, the Easterner could easily slip off into Venice, the west to settle there. And this happens by the end of the

novel too. The Venetian assumes the identity of Hoja and remains at Istanbul. And Hoja stays at Rome as a lecturer on the history of the Byzantine Empire. This role and life situation exchange is a powerful symbolic act: crossing the cultural and geographical barrier has first to take place in their mentality. Then the physical outward activities will take care of themselves. Mental widening and intellectual freedom is the important thing. But despite that, the Venetian has a fear that the Muslim fellow might take advantage of him in his guise.

Later, by the help of this knowledge divulged by the Venetian regarding his upbringing, acquaintances and every conceivable thing of importance, the Turkish scholar escapes into Venice and takes important posts there as a professor on Turkey's literature. On the other hand, the narrator assumes the identity of Hoja and stays back in Turkey lecturing on Italian history. This exchange saves the life of both, and also successfully confers honour and recognition, though their true identity is not recognized by the people they live among. This is largely made possible by their intimate knowledge of each other plus their look-alikeness.

The resemblance between the Eastern and Western scholars is striking. This fact can justifiably be used to maintain the logic that there is some deeper significance in it than mere physical similarity and possible sodomy or homosexuality between Hoja and the narrator. They actually cross the geographical and cultural, more importantly communal barrier: One is a committed Muslim and another Christian who, though he does not brandish his believer's identity, stubbornly denies proselytizing himself into Islam.

To prepare the ground I spoke of certain experiences I'd had in childhood: I told him about the terrors of an endless, sleepless night following the death of my closest-friend with whom I'd got into the habit of thinking the same thing at the same time, how I feared that I might be presumed dead and be buried alive with him. I didn't expect he would be so taken by this! Soon after I dared

to tell him a dream I'd had my body separated itself from me. (53)

The importance of creating history by writing stories, by creating discourses, is underlined by the joint venture of the two scientists. The narrator is the first person to suggest that they write in order to leave something substantial behind them even if their project of making artillery or inventing some explosive machinery of destructive capacity may remain incomplete. For this, they sit together, facing each other. One goes through the manuscript of the other and the vice versa. Though it is a traumatizing experience to have oneself read by and exposed to the other, they undergo the trial. Their writing on animals and such imagined stories, mixed with a touch of science and what not, greatly impresses the Sultans and consequently leads to Hoja's appointment as the royal astrologer. The narrator gets no less recognition by this. In fact it is he in whom the Sultan is more interested than in Hoja, the official scientist. The Sultan comes to guess that the knowledge Hoja has acquired comes from the European scholar.

Again this attitude expressed and espoused by the Sultan is a typical mindset of the Orientals or easterners: they cannot rely upon their own knowledge and capacity. Until a westerner comes to endorse as true what they have done, they are in a flagging stage as to the veracity of their findings. Of course, here the knowledge is chiefly imparted by the Venetian scholar, and Hoja has just learned from him. But as a general indicator, the Sultan's belief that everything Hoja did must have come from the European speaks volume about the deep-rooted Westphalia or Euromaniac psyche every oriental is portrayed to have possessed. This is the writer's strategy to please the western reader: of course they would be pleased to read that the easterners are dependent upon the westerners for scientific knowledge and development.

But what interests the narrator, not our novelist, the frame narrator, but the real, narrator-in-action since he is a character too in the novel, is the fact that the two scholars are

verging upon each other, experimenting exchange of identities and as hinted often making sodomy as a way of realizing each other more intimately. They thus cross the debarring line of nature: both male but behave with each other at times as if they were of opposite sex, and of culture: the relationship they had forgotten was of a master and a prisoner, of Muslim versus Christian. In this context it is suggestive to note the observation made by the narrator. The indication is to the experiment of writing with each other in the front so as to come up with a sort of confessional to rinse away their past. But Hoja gets disturbed profoundly, and tears up all that he has written and becomes depressed. The narrator tries to persuade Hoja that it was no crime to confide their innermost secrets to each other. “Wasn’t the prospect of really knowing one another fascinating enough? A man would be as spellbound by someone knowing the smallest details of his soul as he would by a nightmare” (58). Only through such an intimate dialogue and revealing of oneself can a true understanding and friendship between the east and the west be achieved.

As the preface to the novel makes it clear by a certain Faruk Darvinoglu that “to see everything as connected to everything else is the addiction of our time” (4). This leads one to interpret those writers and novelists, as intellectuals, cannot remain aloof from the affairs of the world. They exist in and fight in the world, fight for the freedom of expression, freedom of faith or distrust. So, they are often in conflict with the power or state mechanisms. In this respect it is relevant to cite from another post-modern writer who also comes from the east and has settled in the west. In his essay “Outside the Whale”, collected in *Imaginary Homelands*, which parodies George Orwell’s “Inside the Whale”, Rushdie maintains that writers have always been at a continual conflict with the politicians who are given to misleading the general public with a misleading and falsified version of history. Orwell concludes that the writers are inside the whale, and meaning they are and should be free from world affairs. True art, he argues, has nothing to do with politics and that “a writer does well

to keep out of politics” (94).

Binary between Occidental and Oriental

In the novel under this study too there are moments of mutual mistrust and antagonism, of attempts at forced conversion as once Hoja tries to do with his counterpart. Such references speak volume as how much tenuous such cross-cultural relations can at times be. The incident takes place after their joint venture at writing about their childhood memories. Hoja is accusative of the narrator and the later is vindictive too. He seems to emphasize the fact that Hoja went out immediately after realizing that it was an hour of prayer, not of trying to save an infidel soul by bringing him to accepting the faith of Islam.

He said I was scared, he could see it in my face, I was scared because I remained faithful to Christianity! He scolded me; a man must be a Muslim to be happy here, but he neglected to press my hand before he retreated into the dank darkness of his own house, didn't touch me at all. It was the hour of prayer, and when I saw the crowds in the courtyards of the mosques, I was seized with fear and started for home. (61)

It is dogmatic on the part of the Turkish scholar to insist that the narrator must convert into Islam to be happy there in Turkey. It is an intolerant perspective that cannot be appreciated and acceptable to any one liberal minded whether to believe in some creed or not.

Hoja is a scientist but also an obscurantist: he accepts Muhammad marrying a widow but when a well-meaning neighbor comes with the offer of his cousin on his uncle side. Hoja declares he would not marry a widow. The novel reports his reaction:

Hoja reacted more brutally than I'd expected: he said he did not want to marry, but even if he had he wouldn't take a widow. Upon this our visitor reminded us that the Prophet Muhammad had not minded Hadije's widowhood and even taken her as his first wife. (65)

After this harangue, the visitor does not spare the opportunity of slandering the stargazer either. He is termed as an infidel, worse than a crazy guy always gazing at stars at night and

at the dirty ceiling during day time. Such accusation aptly portrays the plight of a scientist in the seventeenth century Islamic country: they were supposed to be infidel and queer bad people because they thought more over invention and gave more time on star gazing than on prayer and paying homage to Prophet Muhammad:

With the spleen of a merchant criticizing the goods he intends to buy, our visitor added that the neighbours were saying that Hoja ate his food at a table like an infidel instead of sitting down cross-legged; that after paying purse upon purse of money for books, he threw them on the floor and trod on the pages in which the Prophet's name was written; that, unable to placate the devil within him. (65-66)

This is an acrid criticism posed by any Islamic society on open-minded experimental people who give time for exploration and research. Such portrayal sure enough satisfies the longing of the western readership to read about the essentially different other, the backward oriental people in an exotic light.

Sharing each other's experiences and stories is one of the best ways to grow an intimacy worth its name. It is only after we have emptied our innermost guilt, thoughts and secrets that we can be sure of our friendship. The scene goes between Hoja and the narrator. They tell secrets to each other and come to familiar terms with each other. So much they are infatuated with each other that they need each other's presence to be in a calm and serene bent of minds. The report of their intimacy goes like this:

Like two bachelors telling each other's fortunes to pass the time on endless winter nights, we sat at the table face to face, scratching out something or other on the empty pages before us. The absurdity of it! In the morning when I read what Hoja had written as his dream I found him even more ridiculous than I did myself. (66)

The narrator may not have been much pleased to listen to the scientific lectures of Hoja. It is an anomaly commonly used for an Easterner to lecture on science to a Westerner. But the credit of creating such an episode in which Hoja is in a position to exhort his Venetian friend

on science goes to Pamuk the novelist who, as it has already been noted in the foregoing chapter, made it clear that the West is in no better position to boast of being enlightened and civilized. It is as barbaric as the East, if they can be called barbaric at all.

The narrator and his mentor or rather master share so much with each other, biologically, that it is easy for them to exchange their identities and take up the roles of each other. This prospect is not without significance in either way; in the political and worldly perspective of the novel, it takes us to look at the possibility of east-west reconciliation; at the personal level of the characters in the novel, it can be a possible way of defending themselves with false and disguised identities if need be:

He spoke for a while about how he wanted to pick up from where I had left off.

We were still standing half-naked in front of the mirror. He was going to take my place, I his, and to accomplish this it would be enough for us to exchange clothes and for him to cut his beard while I left mine to grow. (72-73)

And rightly, when the courtiers become inimical to the Venetian, he assumes the identity of Hoja whereas Hoja himself flees to Italy to take up a safe and respected job of a historian on Turkey. Thus, both of them survive successfully, though some persons went so far as to suggest that it was Hoja but not the Venetian who had disappeared. And the infidel was still there in Istanbul enjoying his time as the favored astrologer of the Sultan.

The person is held at ridicule and despise. There, he hides in concealment fearing Hoja would send his men to arrest and harm him. But Hoja does nothing of the sort to harm his escaped convict and fellow scientist and a close friend. He follows and finds where his friend is settled, and then he comes back. After some time Hoja comes with his men to take his friend back. This gesture is a token of love and care, not of possession or master's greed to capture his slave. Such moments of fine and soft treatments make one ready to believe that the fabled enmity between the east and west is just the result

of discourse formation, of making horror stories in which the both sides exercise brutality upon each other:

I'd first heard of Heybeli island from a young monk who'd come to Istanbul from there; when we met in the European quarter of Galata he had enthusiastically described the beauty of the islands. It must have made an impression on me, for as I left our district I knew it was there I would go. The ferrymen and fishermen I spoke with wanted incredible amounts of money to take me to the island; and I became depressed thinking they knew I was a runaway- they'll betray me to the men Hoja will send after me! Later I decided this was how they intimidated the Christians they looked down on for being afraid of the plague. (75)

The narrator is not able to resist the temptation to his native country. It is not surprising: a young man captivated and taken into another country always is eager to return home. But he is also equally attracted by the care and concern expressed by Hoja towards him. He cannot easily forget and spurn how much Hoja depends upon him for writing, expressing himself, as well as for carrying out the experimentations both scientific and sadomasochistic. To cite a rather long excerpt would clarify the nature and intensity of relation between the two scientists:

I tried to convince myself that sooner or later I would be able to escape to my own country. I only had to steal from the open doors on the island, but before that it was essential that I forget Hoja. For I had fallen unawares under the spell of what had happened to me, of the temptation of memory; I could almost blame myself for abandoning a man who looked so much like me. Just as I do now, I longed for him passionately; did he actually resemble me as much as he did in memory. (76-77)

The urgency of the narrator to return to Hoja is not spurious or short-lived, as emotional attachments generally tend to be. It was not for some material profit from the inventions or the royal recognition from the Sultan either. He feels a genuine need to be altogether with Hoja, who is very searching within self, as he admits. And the Sultan enjoys their company, like an attentive father who separates two brothers arguing over their marbles, he disentangled them with his observation about their speech and behavior. After those observations, the narrator tells us, sometimes, he is found to be childish and sometimes clever, and that started to make him worried. He began to believe that his personality had split itself off from him and united with that of Hoja's, and vice versa, without their perceiving it, and that the Sultan, by evaluating this imaginary creature, had come to know them better than they knew themselves. The candid statement follows here below about the narrator's desire to be one with his master and colleague:

It wasn't that I wished to seize a share in the triumph or to receive a reward for what I had done; the feeling I had was quite different: I should be by his side, I was Hoja's very self! I had become separated from the outside, just as in the nightmares I often had. I didn't even want to learn the identity of this other person I was inside of; I only wanted, while I fearfully watched my self pass by without recognizing me, to rejoin him as soon as I could. (86)

Later with failure of their war machine in completing its job of demolishing the White Castle at a [place called Doppio, Hoja has the premonition that he would suffer the same fate that his preceding astrologer had suffered; death by the decree of the Sultan. So, he is meditating upon how to flee to Italy since he knows every detail of his friend's life there. He would assume a false identity and nobody would recognize him there. On the other hand the Venetian scholar could stay back, assuming the identity of Hoja. But they are not able to deceive the Sultan whose uncanny eyes pierce the secret of the disguise they are planning.

Perhaps to ease up their qualm of conscience, the Sultan deliberately speaks such things and asks such questions which could be answered only by the Italian. Once the Sultan has shown interest in the scientist from Italy who could read minds of people. The irony here is that he is already able to read the mind of the identity changing scientists:

He let slip only once or twice that he wanted to establish relations with their men of science; perhaps they would understand the truths he'd discovered about the insides of our heads; he wanted to correspond with men of science in Venice, Flanders, whatever faraway land occurred to him at the moment. Who were the very best among them, where did they live, how could one correspond with them. (108)

The Sultan seems as if he is a toy and play with the idea of exchanging identities as he declares that, basically, all are the same. He speaks these words in the company of the narrator only, so as to ease up his thought of staying back if Hoja escapes to Venice. This is an entirely unexpected and daring statement made by such an official persona as the Sultan in the direction of allowing outsiders stay back in his empire with dignity and comfort of a royalty-favored personage:

He had said to me once that basically every life was like another. This frightened me for some reason: there was a devilish expression on the sultan's face I'd never seen before, and I wanted to ask what he meant by this. While I looked apprehensively into his face, I felt an impulse say 'I am I', it was as if, had I been able to find the courage to speak this nonsensical phrase, I would obliterate all those games played by those gossips scheming to turn me into someone else, played by Hoja and the Sultan, and live at peace again within my own being. (109)

The premonition of Hoja's escape into Italy and his joining the family of the narrator is

foreseen by the narrator himself, in their talks and in dreams even one particular dream gives the detail how Hoja would adjust himself in the Italian milieu by assuming a perfect figure of his friend back in Istanbul:

Latter, up until the time we learned the Sultan had summoned us and our weapon to Edmire for the campaign, I had a recurring dream: we were at a masked ball in Venice reminiscent in its confusion of the feasts of Istanbul: when the ‘courtesans’ took off their masks I recognized my mother and fiancée in the crowd, and I took off my own mask full of hope that they would recognize me too, but somehow they didn’t know it was me, they were pointing with their masks to someone behind me; when I turned to look, I saw that this person who would know that I was me was Hoja.(111)

Thus every thing seems to point to the direction that they exchange their places and relations and start a new life. The final scene towards preparing themselves, especially by Hoja’s side occurs after the failure of the artillery in bringing down the White Castle at Doppio.

It was the day he had me tell of the bridges of Venice, of the lacework on the tablecloth on which He had eaten breakfast as a child, of the view through the window overlooking the garden at the back of His house that He recalled when he was about to be beheaded for his refusal to convert to Islam- it was when the sultan ordered me to write down all of these stories in a book, as if they were my own record of what had happened to me, that I decided to escape from Istanbul as soon as possible.(136)

It is not the narrator meditating upon an escape who acts; it is the Muslim astrologer who escapes into Christian Italy. But the rumor is spread that the infidel astrologer has escaped and there is news of him writing books based on his experience in Istanbul.

After returning to His country He had written a stack of books describing His

unbelievable adventures among the Turks, about their last sovereign who so loved animals and his dreams, about the plague and the Turkish people, our customs at court and at war. With curiosity about the exotic Orient just beginning to spread among aristocrats and especially well-bred ladies. His former fiancée, swept up in the romanticism of His writings, married him without giving a thought to his age or her husband's recent death. (142)

They settle permanently in each other's country and with family. Having exchanged their location and only a few people privy to their secret their life goes on unhindered. Rather it becomes a source for their writing, as they can write so astonishingly about seemingly the other people and country but actually they are their own.

V. Conclusion

An impossibly sensitive discussion that touches on such crucial and topical issues as hybridity, western-eastern relation and the myth or implausibility of an essential cultural identity Orhan Pamuk's *The White Castle*, a novel written around the turn of the century, is a saga of two scientists who are fortuitously brought together and experiment on armaments for years. Meanwhile they come to like each other so much that they become each other's alter ego.

The novel studied in this paper is worth pondering for its immediacy, relevance, and appeal, for it touches upon some of the most compelling issues such as the predicament of the people from minority culture.

The White Castle is a great postmodern Turkish novel that emphasizes on the arbitrary character of national and personal identity. There is nothing, the novel contends effectively, what can be called an essential or unalterable identity. As the case of changeability of the narrator and Hoja's identity indicates, such identities are in way essential and unalterable. This open ended quality is found in the present novel too, as the closure leaves it as a guess work to the reader whether the two scientists really exchange their countries or not, whether they meet each other or not, and whether their society recognizes them as false identity-assuming people or not.

It is noteworthy for its deployment of postmodern themes of multiculturalism, fluidity and ambiguity. The central and unifying idea of the novel is that one can become Italian or Turkish or anything else, because in the innermost core of one's being is neither an Italian or Turkish nor anything else. All identities are constructed, result of contingencies. Actually, there is no reality or fact, but fictions prevail for the novel deals with the often discussed issue of the west-east divide, but with a new insight that suggests it is more important and edifying to work for amelioration than to go on perpetuating the myth of differences and enmities. If the story of

the seventeenth century revolves around the reconciliation of two young men from different hemispheres and cultural spheres of the world, how much more multicultural this century should have been the spirit of the novel which suspects the rationality of ethnic and communal purity, versus one world one race theory of the postmodern and the progressive parties. The solution lies not either in approving and disapproving any particular culture or religion, but in accepting all as they come along. And may be people in the long run will develop the capacity to live together in peace, if not in love with each other. The reconciliatory tone of the novel cannot be missed as Hoja, the Turkish teacher and the narrator, a Venetian scholar, unwittingly to themselves find each other to be their most wanted self. This is the spirit of the novel celebration of a multicultural and hybrid world, even if the possibility of such a world may appear too bleak at first sight.

The characters of Orhan Pamuk are mostly haunted by the echoes as such, “Who are we?” “Where do we belong?” and “What is our identity?” These are all of the problems of cultural Identity in which Pamuk’s people get confused while identifying themselves very often arriving to the feelings of dislocated and alienated. The problem with them begins with the confusion of cultural belonging. They find difficulty to get into other’s culture at their sense of root keeps them in-between the new land. Pamuk captures the emotions, pains, anxieties and challenges of the different people in new culture. He attempts his best to bridge two very dissimilar cultures and create the absolute best of both at the diasporic meditation through the depiction of the protagonist who feels a need for belonging and a sense of identity. The Venetian Scientist lives in a new world but emotionally longing for his lost culture and he finally becomes nostalgic for his roots. Pamuk uses this quest ‘origin’, the repercussions between the familiar and the strange and the ‘we’ versus ‘they’ to shape a pattern of Diaspora in *The White Castle*.

Works Cited

- Achebe, Chinua. "Colonialist Criticism." *Critical Theory since Plato*. Ed. Hazard Adams. USA: Harcourt, 1992: 1-260
- Altinel, Savkar. "Putting a Tangible Shape on time." *The New Republic*. 9 October, 1991.
- Barker, Chris. *Cultural studies: Theory and Practice*. London: Sage Publications, 2000.
- Boehmer, Ellek. *Colonial and Post Colonial Literature: Migrant Metaphors*, New York: 1995.
- Cowly, Jason. "From Here to Kashmir." *The Guardian digital edition* 11 sep.2005.
- Charles Ron. "Love under Siege." *Washington Post on the web* 11. Sep.2005.
- Dallmayr, Fred. *Beyond Orientalism: Essays on cross-cultural Encounter*. New Delhi: Rawat Publications, 2001.
- Dougary, Ginny. "The Incredible Lightness of Salman." *The Times on the web* 20 August 2005.
- Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. 3rd ed. Trans. Constance Farrington Harmondsworth Penguin: 1990.
- Foucault, Michael. *History and Sexuality*. New York Cambridge University Press. 1997: 1-100
- Huntington, Samuel, P. *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York: Viking, 1996.
- Hall, Stuart "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory*. Ed. Padmini Mongia. Delhi: OUP, 1997: 110-21
- - -. "For Allon White Metaphors of Transformation." *Stuart Hall*. Ed. D Morley and D.K. Chen. London: Routledge, 1996.
- - -. "Gramscis's Relevance for the study of Race and Ethnicity." *Stuart Hall*. Ed. D. Morely

- and D.K. Chen. London: Routledge, 1996.
- - -. *Representations*. London: Sage, 1997.
- Lee, Siegel. "This is Real Life." *The Nation on the web* 5 November 2004.
- Macaulay, Thomas, Babington. *Famous minute of 1835*. "The Eastern- Western Diaspora: 1945.
- Orwell, George. *The Order of Discourse*. 1972
- Paul, Berman. "The Silent Mansion." *The New Republic*. 9 September 1991.
- Pamuk, Orhan. *The White Castle*. Trans. Victoria Holbrook Manchester Carcanet Press, Limited: 1991.
- - -. *Clash and Interlacing of Culture*. Nobel Lectures 7 December, 2006
- Parini, Jay. "Pirates, Pashas and Imperial Astrologer." *Article on the Nation*, 22 October 2006.
- Rushdie, Salman. *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism*. 1981: 1-290
- Said, E. W. *The World , The Text and The Critic*. London: Faber and Faber, 1984.
- - -. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage, 1994.
- - -. "The Clash of Ignorance." *The Nation*, 22 October 2001.
- Tylor, Edward B. *Primitive Culture*. London: J. Murray, 1871.
- Williams, Raymond. *Culture* London: OUP, 1981: 1-70
- Whorf, Benjamin, Lee. "Language is the Game of Thought." *The New Republic* 5 Oct. 2002.