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Postcolonial Counter Discourse in Ahdaf Soueif's *The Map of Love*

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Abstract

This research work reveals the Ahdaf Soueif's efforts to erase the binary and the stereotypical perspective of the West, white, English and Christian authorities towards the Islam and other Oriental religions and traditions in 'The Map of Love.' The term Oriental is related to the Eastern people and traditions. However, Westerners think that they are Occidental. It means modern, developed, and more civilized than Oriental. Thus the West creates the binary and stereotype between Oriental and Occidental. Orientals are taken negatively and Occidental is taken positively. The West discriminates over the East by the construction of differences between the Orientals and Occidental. The West and English create the discourse to justify; they are as superior, rich and more civilized to the Easterners. The Westerners define themselves more civilized to the Orientals. On the basis of such contradictory discourse they dominate over Orientals through colonization. Soueif, in 'The Map of Love' emphasizes on the peace, humanitarian values, social justice freedom and mutual understanding among the people who are from different races, religions and the good cultures. The English widow, Anna transforms herself into the Islam tradition and likewise the Islam Sharif Basha shows his love and respect towards the English people like Anna. They celebrate each other's rituals. Sharif urges Anna to celebrate the Christmas and she also prefers to involve in Islam cultural rituals without hesitation. She follows the Islam ritual in her marriage with Sharif. They celebrate the English New Years Day in the family.

Keywords: Stereotype, Islam, West, Empire, colonial discourse, Oriental

This research work explores the issue of the Postcolonial Counter Discourse in Ahdof Soueif's *The Map of Love*. Soueif illustrates the colonial domination of Egypt

constructing the characters from Britain. She does her best to challenge the colonial discourse of British superiority by highlighting the other side of colonial Egypt. She also does it by foregrounding the power of Egyptian culture and tradition. While doing so she undermines the civilized discourses of Britain. British rulers are found indulging in greedy, untidy, and inhuman activities in Egypt. To make her ideas credible, she selects British characters and sends them to Egypt to see what British are in reality. Likewise single and universal perspective of Britain to see Egypt does not function anymore in the novel. The Western discourse privileges only their values, beliefs, culture, and customs significantly and subordinates Eastern values. Most of the people take the discourse as an assumption. So the ideas and beliefs are taken as truth in the society. In this way the ideas and knowledge of rich and powerful get the space and that is accepted as truth.

The West spreads their colonial rule over the Asian and African countries by producing discourse which privileges the West and subordinates the Oriental race, culture and people. The English and Christian see Islam from the stereotypical perspective. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines the term stereotype “a fixed idea or image that many people have of a particular type of person or thing, but which is often not true in reality: culture/ gender/ and racial stereotype” (1504). Stereotype is an ideology to show one good and positive to other. Other is shown negatively. It can not be true. The questions rise over its reality. Such ideology may be accepted as the proposition, not assumption. The Westerners claim that they are civilized, superior, rich, powerful and rational, but the Easterners are savage, inferior, and irrational.

The colonial ruling system brings discrimination on the basis of culture, race religion and class between the West and non-West. During the British colonial rule,

their exploitation and injustice takes place everywhere in the Middle Eastern society. This leads human life towards the difficulties. In *The Map of Love*, Soueif illustrates the violence, discrimination and inequality the British colonial hegemony causes in Egypt. Novel shows that even English people oppose the colonial rule of British over Egypt. Anna Winterbourne, an English widow, her arrival in Egypt begins the anticolonial action. She and her former father-in-law Sir Charles stand against the British colonization over the Oriental nations. Even Anna assimilates herself into Islam tradition by marrying with Islam and Egyptian nationalist, Sharif Basha. She avoids the Western discourse. Soueif's *The Map of Love*, concerns on Postcolonial counter discourse. Promad K. Nayar, In *Postcolonial Literature: An Introduction*, writes "One way of re-claiming their cultural past is to re-envision European discourses about their formerly colonized culture. Postcolonial literature functions as a counter-discourse, providing alternative representation to Europeans ones" (83). The postcolonial literary writing gives significance on the pre-existed culture and the past of colonized country. He urges to re-envision of European discourse towards their formerly colonized culture. The Western discourse undermines oriental people. During the British colonial phase, the existence of Egyptian culture falls in crisis and intrusively English exposes their interests to spread Christian culture and values. The West represents the Oriental culture negatively. They misuse their superiority to exploit other through colonial rule. The writer does not accept such discourse of British superiority. Therefore she represents the voice of the marginalized people of Egypt. Anna explores the real problems and the troubles of the people that the colonial authority and corrupt administrators causes to them.

English woman Anna blends herself into Islam culture and learns Arabic language. She confronts Western attempts to establish English rule and their culture.

They force people follow them. But the English woman Anna violates that assumption. Likewise Isabel Parkman, U.S. girl transforms herself into Islam and comes to Egypt for the sake of her love with Omar. The Islam people easily and happily accept people from different religious and cultural background in their society. But the Islam are not respected and accepted positively in Western cultural society. Edward Said in *Orientalism* writes how the Islam is represented in non-Western societies, “These contemporary Orientalist attitudes flood the press and the popular mind. Arabs, for example, are thought of as camel-riding, terroristic, hook-nosed, venal lechers whose underserved wealth is an affront to real civilization” (108). According to Said the West sees the oriental people, culture, race, religion, civilization and especially Islam from their negative perspectives. The West takes Islam as venal lechers. The Islam is accused of affront to real civilization and Islam is taken as the part of destruction of peace and real civilization. Such false judgment causes injustice to the Oriental society and people who have respect and love to their society and culture, history and heritages and they have no intention to harm the British and entire world.

This research contributes to proclaim the Western colonial impact in Middle Eastern nation Egypt in *The Map of Love*. The West tries to impose their culture, language and religion in the Middle Eastern countries. While doing so they also create the conflict between Middle Eastern nations, Israel and Palestine. In the novel, the central character Anna assimilates herself with Egyptian culture despite she belongs to the British culture and Christian religious values. It means she is not forced by the Islam to follow the Islam culture. The strength and positive aspects of Islam and oriental peoples’ attitudes attract her. She finds Egyptian Islam people good, kind and helpful. Islam girl Layla and Egyptian people becomes her good and honest friend.

They show respect, love and civilized behavior towards her. Islamic society accepts the marriage between Anna and Sharif, who are from different religious societies. Therefore Western perception to see the oriental people is wrong. Sharif, her husband equally respects the Christianity. This research attempts to carry out the colonial history and alternative representation of Egypt through the English woman Anna. Hence, to carry out this research the theoretical perspective of Edward Said's "Islam as News" and Ziauddin Sardar's "Surviving Postmodernism" has been applied here.

The Map of Love tells the story of an artistic and articulate English woman, Anna. She visits Egypt as a balm for the wounds of widowhood. Egypt is a land she has heard much about and whose sights she has admired in museum paintings. Anna is too adventurous to be content with the staid tourism of the late nineteenth century and dresses in men's clothing to see the Pyramids and Mt. Sinai. On the latter trip, allies of a political protester recently jailed kidnap her. The wife of protester, Layla and Layla's attorney brother, Sharif vows to help Anna to reach her original goal.

In desert of Sinai, where Anna dresses as an Arab man and particularly in the garden at St. Catehrine's Monastery, where Anna is an Arab woman, she and Sharif develop deep feelings for each other. He is silent upon their return, and Anna resolves to return to England. Layla points out her brother's mistake and he proposes for marriage. They set aside problems that the marriage between Anna Winterbourne and Sharif-al-Baroudi create for each other. Anna will be shunned by fellow Britons in Egypt, and Sharif will be suspected of British bias by his numerous political enemies. They get married and move into the old house with Sharif's mother Zeinab and hermitic father al- Baroudi.

Anna assimilates to the Egyptian culture, learns Arabic, and is drawn into the nationalist movement as translator, intermediary with anti- colonialists in London, and

finally spokesperson with foreign visitors. Sharif works hard to fight the British Occupation legally. They have a daughter, Nur al- Hayyah- literally the light of their lives- and, ten years after their marriage, Sharif begins thinking about retiring to private life. He is thinking of this when unknown assailants open fire on his carriage. Sharif dies and Anna keeps her promise to take Nur to England. Contact is lost with Egyptian in – laws.

This novel emerges from research performed by Amal from a trunk load of journals and letters discovered in New York City by an American, Isabel Parkman. At a party, she mentions about the finding to a prominent older musician, which is sent to his sister, Amal, in Cairo. Amal becomes engrossed in the characters, and Isabel falls in love with Amal's brother Omar. The anti- terrorist, anti- Islamist politics of Egypt's president Mubarak cause problems on the family lands, and revive Amal's late- 1960s radicalism. Omar is involves deeply in Palestinian politics.

The Map of Love is widely read and it has been analyzed from the different perspectives in its influence in the audience. It includes social, cultural, economic, political religious and colonial issues of Middle Eastern nation Egypt. *New York Times* appeals the readers to be attentive and active while reading the novel because it is heart- touching and the characters in the novel can move the readers with their realistic approach. The readers get the opportunity to observe the Egyptian people who live in colonial phase. The peasants, children, women and simple people really live their life with trouble. *The New York Times* has published an article entitled, "Out of the Trunk", in which it states:

In *The Map of Love* stories and histories and mysteries are encountered piecemeal by the reader, just as they are by the characters themselves. In a way, these discoveries are like the objects that are gradually unpacked from

the old trunk that is at the heart of the book. We fit together the intersecting stories at the same pace as the characters, except that we can get a head start by consulting the family tree that precedes the text. With this, Soueif alerts us to the fact that her novel requires and deserves an active, attentive audience.

(11)

The above review, states that this novel includes history and mystery of Egypt. These are encountered by the readers. Other historical discourses are separated from old trunk. The old trunk stands for the stories of how an English woman Anna assimilates her into Egyptian culture. In this way Soueif alerts readers to be active and attentive.

Likewise, Annette Kobak, the journalist in *Publisher's Daily* praises the novel for weaving the stories of different women from different countries into a single tale. Anna, a woman represents as English from England. She is anti-colonialist activist in the story. She wants the end of British colonial rule in the Egypt. Another woman is Isabel from America. She collects the letters, diaries and journals about Anna's involvement and history in regard with Egypt. Here Kobak praises the quality of the writer in bringing such a story that beautifully demonstrates the psychology and attitudes of women. Kobak shows:

Coincidence- personal, political and cultural- rules in this burnished, ultra-romantic Booker Prize finalist, Soueif (*In the Eye of Sun*) writes simply and, on occasion, beautifully. Anna's Journal entries are particularly evocative. Stickler for narrative detail might chafe at the number of incredible coincidences, including a bizarre twist involving Isabel's mother and Omar, and forsaken plot devices (Isabel's millennium project is never mentioned after her arrival in Egypt). On balance, however, Soueif weaves the stories of

three formidable women from vastly different times and countries into a single observing tale. (17)

Kobak analyzes that Soueif presents her ideas and experience about politics and culture of Middle East in the novel. Further Soueif waves the stories of women from vastly different times and countries into a single observing tale. The women are represented from British, U.S and Egypt in different time. They play the strong role to change corrupt political system in Egypt.

In *The Booklist Daily*, Danise Hoover analyzes the novel in a subtle way by jotting plot of the novel shortly. He is convinced as Soueif combines politics and the romance in a logical way and he praises the technique of bringing together two separate cultures. As an Islam writer, Soueif has respect towards the Christianity equally. She gives equal justice to all religious culture, belief and values. The issues of the education, freedom as well as human rights get the space in Soueif's writing. He writes:

In parallel love stories set nearly 100 years apart, Soueif combines politics and romance in something of an eternal spiral connecting two families and two cultures. Isabel travels from New York to Cairo with a trunk containing diaries and possessions of her great-grand- mother, Anna Winterbourne. Omar, a conductor of international fame (and the man Isabel loves), refers her to his sister Amal for help in understanding the contents. What she fails to tell her is that they are distant cousins: Sharif, the man who becomes Anna's husband, is Amal and Omar's great uncle. (32)

Mostly, the political, historical and cultural issues, Soueif portrays in the novel. The parallel love and romance between English widow woman, Anna and Egyptian nationalist Sharif and, between U.S girl Isabel and Arab man Omar get space along

with the politics. It shows the mutual relationship and religious harmony among the people from different religions and races in Egypt. Along with the Middle Eastern politics Soueif interestingly includes romance in the novel. She admires the mutual relationship and humanity among the people in Egypt.

The Sunday Telegraph views that novel is outstanding in bringing together Arabic and English language. She finds this novel succeeds pleasing the readers. She admires:

The book was shortlisted for the 1999 Booker Prize, and of its best features is the language. I was impressed by the way the author blended Arabic and English in a way that infused her language with a sense of Egypt while avoiding the trite or merely quaint colorful. The dreamy tone of the book overlays and joins together *Amal's* clean and pieces sentences, Anna's journal musing and Isabel's dynamic Americanisms. A love story/ history/travelogue, *The Map of Love* is a rich and flowing narrative with an intriguing and touching tale to tell. (Mirsky 21)

Soueif combines the Arabic language while writing the novel. Although the novel is written in English and we can find the Arabic words and phrases in the novel. It means the author wants the existence of the Arabic language and the culture.

Issues of The Middle Eastern cultural history, Palestine politics and the economic condition of the Islam people reflects in the novel. Bruce King, in *World Literature Today* mentions:

Here is the real Middle East which the west can only know by accepting it on its own terms and recognizing that present problems derive from colonial and recent neocolonial history. Possible criticisms are dismissed as typically

Western prejudices. Soueif is a self – conscious, sophisticated writer, and her book is at times both modeled after and a critique of the “Oriental tale”. (453)

As King mentions above the West has the stereotypical perspective towards the Middle East and Islam culture as well as people. They have to understand oriental values positively. The western colonial ruling system creates the problem in regard with history, politics, language and education. The main root of the problem comes through the neocolonial history.

Catherine Winne, in “Navigating the Mezzaterra. Home, Herem, and the Hybrid Family in Soueif’s *The Map of Love*” considers the novel as a shift of the Victorian woman into the Islamic nation and tradition of Middle Eastern country Egypt. Winne praises the women’s involvement in politics for social reform:

The Map of Love opens in Egypt and America in the late twentieth century, but shifts in time to explore and imaginatively reclaim the terrain of a Victorian woman’s travel in Egypt. The novel explores the link between a contemporary American –Egyptian family and a nineteenth century Anglo-Egyptian one. By focusing on the hybrid family and by drawing on historical figures such as Gordon and the English Orientalist painter John Frederick Lewis, Soueif seeks to explore the complex dynamics of intercultural discourse. (56)

Anna transforms her national and cultural identity into Islamic nation and culture. She shifts to explore the diversity and positive aspects of oriental culture. The Western people want the non-Western follow their culture and tradition. The British rulers do everything to establish their influence and rule over the Middle Eastern nation for the purpose of exploitation. But in this regard, English woman Anna and her father –in – law Sir Charles begin the anti-colonial activities. During the colonial phase the

condition of the Egyptian people becomes very miserable. But the agents of colonizer and corrupt government do not see it. There appears problem in education, health, agricultural fields and economic condition of people. In the novel Soueif explores link between Egyptian and English people and their culture. Mainly John Fredrick Lewis's painting attracts English woman Anna to Egypt.

Another, in *Feminist Review*, Clarissa Burt expresses her view about this novel:

In this fascination novel, which was shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 1999, Adhaf Soueif has produced a post-colonial counter discourse which recasts the nature of orientalism, colonial legacies in colonizer and colonized, and cycles of repletion in human histories, framed by century recently closed by celebration of the new Millennium. (153)

This novel successfully raises the social, political, racial religious, historical issues of the Middle Eastern countries including conflict between Israel and Palestine. The novel tells the story about how the Egyptian people and the Islam cultural and religious society have been suffered by the British colonial domination and violence. The West continues their domination and spreads the intrusive politics to rule over the Middle Eastern country Egypt. They create false discourse that Middle Eastern and Islam people are uncivilized, back warded, aggressive and so on. On the basis of these aspects they play intrusive role. Then the British captures the whole politics, economics, and education and create history according their own will. Through the means of this novel Soueif challenges the western colonial discourse which creates stereotype between West and non-West. It seems that the writer presents alternative history and actual reality of the Middle Eastern people and societies as it is.

Wali S Hasan, in *Agency and Translational literature: Soueif's The Map of Love* writes “*The Map of Love* undermines colonial discourse by repeatedly confounding the expectation it creates for readers accustomed to several genres of Orientalist writing: fiction, romance, tourist guide and imperial historiography” (759). The colonization of the wealthy, powerful and so called superior nation, race, and culture, takes place in sovereign nation Egypt. Especially the West creates the discourse and binary to show Orient and Islam culture, language and people lower than the West. They disclose the West civilized, progressive, educated, superior and powerful whereas non-Western people are weak, regressive, uncivilized, inferior, and weak. Such misconception spreads through the means of their genres of Orientalist writings. In this novel Soueif undermines the Western colonial discourse.

Soueif expresses her experience of writing the novel, *The Map of Love* to Joseph Massad that it raises the social, political and historical issues of Egyptian Islamic society and nation. Soueif expresses her opinions of writing novel:

The impulse behind *The Map of Love* was different. It was more overtly historical and political, to do with cross-cultural relationships, with history, with the relationship of the Western world to Egypt and to our area. So there the history and politics are much more in the forefront, much more central to the novel and the plot. The part of what *The Map of Love* is about how much room personal relationship has in a context of politics and history. (83)

The Map of Love the represents the alternative history of the repressed and colonized nation Egypt and Egyptian people. It includes the political issues related to human rights, freedom, equality and justice in the plot of novel. The novel reveals the real troubles and sufferings of Egyptian people during the British colonization. In one part Anna Winterbourne and Sharif Basha represent the cross cultural relationship among

the people in Egypt. In another plot Isabel and Omar also raises the political and historical issues in the novel.

Further, Edward Said in “Islam as News” writes that the west creates negative image of Islam. He writes that “for most of the middle Ages and during the early part of the Renaissance in Europe, Islam was believed to be a demonic religion of apostasy, blasphemy, and obscurity” (188). In this sense Said wants to erase the misconception about the negative image of Islam that the West and agent of Christian spread. He mentions how the West accuses Oriental countries and Islam as religion of apostasy, blasphemy and so on. West insults the Islam God and rejects its religious beliefs. In the novel *English Woman Anna* follows Islam cultural traditions and customs. She also transforms her into Islam by marrying with Islam man, Sharif. She has mutual relationship with Layla and ordinary Islam people. Likewise American girl Isabel also falls in love with Egyptian Islam boy Omar. Anna and her former father – in- law are anti-imperialist of British and they favor the equality justice and freedom of people.

Ziauddin Sardar in “Surviving Postmodernism” signifies the Islam cultural and traditional values. He emphasizes on continuation of non-Western, non-postmodern traditions. He makes clear about strengths of oriental culture and Islam traditions:

The non-Western experience has been quite different. Genuine heterogeneity of culture, within communities and system of governance, has been an integral part, for example, of Islamic, Indian and Southeast Asian history and experience. Recovery of tradition should focus on the rediscovery of the means of stable plurality within communities and states. Today Asia is

virtually the only place where the desperately needed human resources can be championed. (231)

In the East cultural heterogeneity can be seen as an ornament of the society. He sees the tradition as something much more dynamic and flexible. It is true that the different cultural tradition and religious ideologies are easily accepted and respected in Islamic religious society in Egypt and respected. . Despite her Christian and Western identity Anna gets respect and she is accepted in Islamic religious society positively. Her husband Sharif and his family celebrate English New Year's Day with her. Cultural harmony helps establish the peace among the people from the various cultural and religious societies. But the West perceives Islam and orient only from narrow and colonial perspective. In this way Sardar gives message to West to see East with positive and inner eyes to know Islam correctly.

Said in the “Islam as News” mentions that the West takes Islam the negatively as future problem. They take the Islam as the military threat of West. He suggests the Westerners to explore the virtues of Islam:

True, Islam had been a dire military threat to Europe for centuries before; and true also that during the middle Ages and early Renaissance, Islam was a problem for Christian thinkers, who continued for hundreds of years to see it and its prophet Mohammed as the rankest variety of apostasy. But at last Islam existed for many Europeans as a kind of standing religiocultural challenge, which did not prevent European imperialism from building its institution on Islamic territory. (191)

West develops the stereotypical perspective towards Islam and Oriental people. They have misunderstanding about Islam and Islamic culture. Islam is accused of the military threat to West. On the basic of power and media West spreads

misunderstanding and false beliefs about Islam all over the world. It is the injustice towards the Islamic religious society and people. Therefore, in the novel English woman Anna stands against the British colonial legacy and imperial rule over the Middle Eastern nations.

The Map of Love has been reviewed and analyzed from the various perspectives by various critics. While examining them precisely the reviews are generally found to be focused on the love story of English woman and Egyptian man and the political movement of the then period. Also they focus on the nationalist movements of Egypt against British which gives enough space in the novel. But the analysis of anticolonial activities and movement of English woman, Anna and her transformation into Islam religious culture and society is represented in the novel. The transformation of English woman into Islam and Oriental culture and society challenges the British colonial discourse which subordinates the non-West world. Soueif through the character, Anna, a British woman represents the voice of the marginalized Egyptian people living in rural area. The English woman, Anna visits the Egypt to know the reality about how the people are facing the troubles by British colonial rule. Soueif praises the respects and love of good and honest British people towards the Egyptian culture, religion, language and political rights of people. Therefore the Islam and Egyptian language, culture, and religion are highlighted in her novel.

The Map of Love explains an American nationalist's dedication and anticolonial act against English rulers in Egypt searching to know virtue of Egyptian culture, history of human civilization, and Middle Eastern politics during colonial era and also shows strength of Egyptian culture. The Journal of English woman Anna attracts English people Isabel Parkman towards Egypt and arouses her curiosity to

study Anna's experiences in colonial Egypt. The English character Anna, explores the Egyptian history, culture, language, religion to know the beautiful aspects of the Islamic tradition significantly. The writer Soueif applies the British character to criticize the British intrusion over the Egypt and Islamic culture and tradition. In this way, Soueif, shows the misdeeds of British in Egypt through an English woman Anna, wants to make her ideas reliable to show the misdeeds of British over Egypt. On the basis of their discourse British the colonization and their influence expands in Egypt.

Soueif is a recognized Anglo-Egyptian writer of fiction, essays, and articles. In 1999, she was shortlisted for the Booker Prize and in March 2010, she won The Mahmoud Darwish Award in recognition of her creative works in support of the Palestine cause. Furthermore, her writing is representative of topics and themes connected to her position as an Arab Diasporic writer in the postcolonial context. Soueif chooses to write in English, although there is the influence of Arabic language and culture upon her. Through the means of the English Soueif spreads the Arabic culture and tradition in the West to show the British domination, crime and injustice over the Egyptian people. The Christianity gets equal space to Islam in her writing. It means that as an Islam author her perspective towards other different religions and culture is positive. She shows the respects on such values in her writing of novel.

Soueif emphasizes on the peace and the humanitarian values including, equal rights, freedom, justice as well as happy and respectable life. But the West gazes the Oriental or non-West people and custom with stereotypical perspective. In the colonial era, the West enforces for the existence of their imperial influence over the oriental nations. In the novel Soueif writes that "Sir Charles was much incensed and ended the conversation by saying (somewhat strongly) that the British Empire had

done so much to so many people that it deserved to perish and then it would be too late to say or do anything” (13). Sir Charles former father-in-law of Anna, desires the end of British Empire in Egypt. He criticizes on shameful activities British does over Egypt, though he is English man. The colonial legacy and rule of British creates anger among the people of Egypt and British also. It is the voice of good and civilized people which give the essence to the sovereignty of neighboring country.

In *The Map of Love* Anna’s visit in Egypt explores what the British are doing there. Soueif writes “the first time in the history of modern Egypt that women went out and demonstrated on the street” (173). In the field of education, political awareness and economic development mostly the West and its English empirical diplomacy and irresponsible administrators cause obstacles. Their activities lead society towards conflict between haves and haves not also in Egypt. Anna works with Sharif Basha, an Egyptian nationalist and Deena, a university professor to enhance their living and her role assists to create the welfare society as well as the access of people in each and every sector of the state who are from marginalized society and have been victim by the ruling authority.

In the following extract Soueif criticizes British that, “The invention, the British Empire, will be the ruin of our position as an honest kingdom” (32). The Egyptian people have their own way of living life in the society. They have love, respect and faith with their own cultural tradition which has been followed and celebrated for long time. The people have enjoyment and satisfaction with own values and customs in their life. So everyone feels happy till the existence of national customs, language, history and religious faith. The crucial and corrupt Empirical ruling activities directly and indirectly affect everything in Egypt destructively. Sharif Basha runs the campaigns to end the British influence in the nation to establish peace

and harmony among the people. The people begin to criticize the government because there is no progress in the field of education, agricultural production and economy. The people have been victim of unstable political system and governing, due to the extended colonial legacy of British. The following lines show and tell the exploitation of West in Egypt:

Each week brings fresh news of land expropriations, of great national industries and service companies sold off to foreign investors, of Iraqi children dying and Palestinian homes demolished, fresh news of gun battles in upper Egypt, of the more urban intellectuals added to the Jama 'at's hit lists of defiant young men in cages holding open Qurans in their hands, or raids and torture and executions. (101)

The entrance of British Empire in Egyptian homeland brings the conflict and tension in the lives of people who are exploited, and fired out of the work. Because the industries are sold off to the foreign investors by the corrupt government and high class officers. As a result the native people lose their possession, rights, direct and indirect benefits from these industries. Anna hears the news of Iraqi children dying and Palestinian homes demolished. The gun battles create fear everywhere and defiant young men are kept in case. Actually the blame of violence and conflict goes to the British Empirical rulers, not to general people. The good British people love the peace and they want back of the British colonial authorities from sovereign nation Egypt. Anna and Sir Charles speak in the favor of sovereign Egypt. Western colonial legacy mainly plants the root of conflict and crisis in East. Edward Said in "Islam as News" writes, "Islam has never been welcome in Europe" (191). He shows the Western stereotype to see the East and Oriental nations. They also create the binary to show themselves superior and privileged in the comparison of Middle East. Such ideas and

thoughts cause possible conflicts among the people of different, races, religions, class and cultures.

Sharif Basha welcomes English widow, Anna in his country and Islamic religious society. It indicates the exercise of social harmony among the people of diverse culture and society. Anna is Christian woman whereas Sharif has Islamic religious identity. They love and respect each other. Layla, sister of Sharif helps Anna in her campaign in Egypt. Soueif writes “That Lady Anna had a daughter who had married a Frenchman named Chirol. That Chirol was not keen on his wife’s Egyptian connection and so, when Anna died and when Layla, my grandmother, died, the two branches of our family are served. I had not known that Isabel existed” (104). Amal narrates that the Frenchman Chirol is not keen on his wife’s Egyptian connection. In this way British has the indifference attitude towards the Oriental people. They only wish their own betterment and ignore Oriental cultural and religious values. The British performs the manner of discrimination that The Islam is not welcomed in European society and family. Such discrimination brings clash and sense of revenge among the human beings from different nations, races and cultures. The American girl Isabel dreams to break such binary and evil aspects of society and world. Her friendship with Islam man Omar challenges the western discourse that limits their knowledge and perspective to see and acknowledge other people from different culture, nation and religious background.

The people in Egypt begin to demonstrate to uproot the colonial rule and legacy. Soueif writes that “the problem is that we are allowing other people to make our history” (128). Therefore, Soueif presents the political activities and events of Sharif Basha, the leading character significantly contributes him to oppose the British intrusive role they which twist history of Egypt according to their will. In Egypt

Gradually his grandson Omar follows Basha's anti-colonial campaign in Egypt. Omar raises Israeli and Palestinian issues of conflict and domination which origins the troubles in society and threatens the peace. Israel creates conflict and difficulties in Palestine and in other Arab nation. As a journalist Omar spreads political awareness among the Arabian people.

English ruling government and politics inter in the Egypt and in other Middle Eastern countries to expand their influence over Islam and exploit the natural resources as well. So the West has to respect and give significant values to other and help to the integrated development of economy, education health and democracy. In Arab nation the Islam people have their long history of living including their language, culture, religion and customs to which they have great respect and belief. The Egyptian people have strong connection with these things. The people have faith love and honor with their language and cultural heritages. The way Islam live life is different from the people of West and other Eastern countries people.

The political conflict between ruling government and people leads them toward the destruction and worst condition. The prejudice takes place in the nation between rulers and ruled. The government only listens and support to elite and rich people of urban area of Egypt. The act of burning crops of farmers by the government officials in the name of destroying the terrorist hiding places shows anti-democratic and cruel rule in the nation. The teachers contribute themselves to enhance social, political and economic aspects of people along with educational development in the society. The government creates obstacles in Egypt to the ordinary people. Soueif says that "The teachers, the volunteers, they said they were terrorists and ruining the children's mind" (124). The government does not support the educational activities in the rural areas and they accuse the teachers promoting the children and youth against

the government. Likewise the New Land Law brings injustice to the ordinary people. Further Soueif writes “Land is not enough for fellaheen as it is. See how each one is flung out somewhere far! One in Cairo, one in Kuwait, one in Libya” (126). It seems as if there is no democracy, freedom, rights, equality and justice for the sovereign people of Egypt. The negative impact of Empirical ruling system lies in Egypt. The elite and imperial rulers exploit the fellaheen and ordinary poor people in each and every steps of their life. They have been refugee in other countries due to the corrupt Empirical ruling system.

Soueif's *The Map of Love* explicates the dislikes of Egyptian people towards the British Empire and their colonial rule in Middle East. The civilized English prefers to see the existence of others' cultural values, language, history and human rights. Anna and Isabel perform their activities against the British intrusive rule. They speak Arabic language without any hesitation. They enjoy learning Arabic and following and celebrating Islam traditional values. It symbolizes that even the good and actual civilized people of West want existence of Islamic values. They respect the Islam language, dress and people. The Islam and Egyptian people favors the religious and cultural harmony in the society. So they also give equal values to other religions and culture. There Isabel uses Arabic language in greeting. She says “Salamu ‘Sleikum’ (165). The people's desires for the social, political and economic freedom have been reflected in the novel. The following lines proclaims the people's desire for independency and free from British intrusion in sovereign Egypt :

What is it? Asked Isabel, standing beside her. Amal stroked out creases. It's the flag of national unity. I had forgotten I put it here. This dates from 1919. She looked up at Isabel. ‘Sa’dZaghoul's revolution. The first time in the history of modern Egypt that women went out and demonstrated on the streets.

And this was the flag the people carried. To tell the British that all of Egypt,
Christian and Muslim wanted them out; Just this one flag? (173)

In the above lines Soueif tries to explain how the multiple religious people act against British colonial rule. The term 'Just one flag' symbolizes the Egyptian Christian and Muslim people want the end of British colonial authority out from the sovereign nation Egypt. The issue of the nationhood is significance than other factors for the people of Egypt.

In the novel, Soueif, the novelist, introduces Arabic language issues along with the social and political issues. Mostly the novelist blends Arabic words in the narrative parts. She does so, to spread Arabic words and language. In the beginning part of the novel Soueif gives the details about the characters. This novel successfully raises the Egyptian people's voice including their actual and factual representation in the history, politics, and education for all. Soueif signifies on the humanitarian and social issues and the voice of very poor, Fellaheen, children, woman, Christian along with Islam. In the novel the novelist gives equal space, respect and love to Christians although she is from Islam religious background. This novel is not only against British colonial ruling system, but also against elite Islam people and political leaders of Egypt. They exploit the marginalized people. Challenging the Western discourse, Anna contributes herself in the social reform in Egypt. She demands for the salvation of people from the British domination. She is with Egyptian people demanding for the reform in the education, economic development and access of land for the fellaheen and poor people. In this following line Soueif praises the social leader's role and their contribution in educational development for the rural people:

Mustaf Bay al –Ghamrawi, my great-grandmother, was firm believer in
education. In 1906 he had been the first toe put up money for new National

University, and together with his nephew Sharif Basha al –Baroudi, he had set up a small school in village on the family land and put the revenue of ten faddans in trust for it. His son, my grandfather Husni al –Ghamrawi, had added on adult class to teach the fellaheen to read and write. My father, Ahmad al-Ghamrawi, had in turn added a small, basic clinic, staffed by a nurse and a midwife-and now by ‘Am Abu el-Ma’ati’s daughter. (123)

The educational institutions have been run and opened for the fellaheen and adults along with the children by community people. They are deprived away from the educational rights and opportunity. The corruption, cruelty, exploitation and domination become the obligatory factor for the social development and human progress in Egypt. Amal’s grandfather, Mustafa contributes him to enhance the educational access to the marginalized societies’ children, fellaheen and adult people. So it is connected with the basic needs and rights in the human life.

In many Asian and African countries marginalized people’s right to education has been affected by the western colonial rule and their intrusive politics. His nephew Sharif Basha establishes university for the youth. The worst circumstances create the obstacles to reach the access of education to the all people and girls. They are mostly away from right to education and equal rights to boys in Islamic society. Soueif further writes that “Closed it? Who closed it? I ask” (123). The agents of colonizers prevent the educational progress of the people in ruler areas. The progressing educational awareness program and activities threatens them. So the schools are closed by empirical agents in Egypt. The curiosity grows upon Amal about the people’s education which is established by Sharif. In the rural area to spread social awareness The American girl Isabel prefers to work for Egyptian people and she learns to speak Arabic.

Soueif mentions the Arabic word Anna speaks “Shwayya” (526). Anna offers something in Arabic. It means “a little” according to English translation. By speaking Arabic she challenges the discourse established by English society about the significance of English language that everyone has to communicate to English people with it. The establishment of government offices, camps and industries by removing away the farmer from their fertile land creates problems. Even the people are being thrown out of their country. She depicts the conflict and the peoples struggle against injustice “There have been clashes, he says, between the people and the police. This new law will tear the place apart. The land on the other sides of village. They tried to turn the people out but they won’t go. The men brought out their weapons and the world caught fire” (187). Amal asks to Am Abuel el-Ma’ati’ the cause of clash. The conflict starts due to the social injustice by the ruling government over the ordinary and poor people. There appears gap between rulers and ruled in Egypt. Amal narrates it to Isabel. Anna’s records reveals each and every event happened in Middle East during colonial phase. Her writing represents the history of voiceless, marginalized, repressed and working class fellaheen and people of remote villages who are ignored and deprived from their rights.

This novel also includes the issues of Palestinian people to some extent. They have also trapped with conflicts and political crisis caused by the establishment of Jews nation Israel. Soueif writes that “ Deena teaches mathematics at Cairo University and does a lot of volunteer work for the Teacher’s Union, the human rights organization, the Legal Aid Bureau and the Committee for the support of Palestinian people” (219). In the nation the gap between ruling and ruled becomes the main root of conflict and dissatisfaction among the marginalized people and elite as well as urban who are in the ruling position. The day to day problems and suffering of the

people are not addressed by the government. Character like Deena contributes her to raise the level of people's living, including their rights and freedom with the end of British injustice in the nation.

According to her the British colonial authority creates social injustice, and inequality in Egypt. The distribution of unequal salary and wages promote the discrimination between British and Egyptian officials. The budget has not used for the benefit of Egypt's educational, agricultural, industrial development and social progress. They spend national budget of Egypt in Sudan in unfair ways. Actually the British does not have right to spent it. Soueif criticizes the Western stereotype and such generalization, "British brain and Arab hands in Cromer's recipe for Egypt" (262). It means British gazes Arab from the perspective of low and laboring capacity whereas the British are in the master's level. Anna sees the cultural influence of Europe also in the Egyptian house's designs. "I have not seen his houses , but I understand it is in the European style as all new houses are –and I have grown to love the old house more with every hour I have spent there" (311). Anna gives significance to the ancient and traditional heritages of Egypt. She is not nostalgic towards her English culture and cultural heritages while living in Egypt for a long time.

According to Soueif, the women and girls are restricted to walk freely in the Islamic societies. So Soueif criticizes the negative aspects of Islam people "YaSidi, educate the boys first" (381). Most of social rules and regulations are created by men for the woman in patriarchal society of Egypt also. When they are educated the evil aspects are easily removed. The girls easily get equal rights and freedom in the society. Otherwise there remains the possibility of existing restriction over the female for longer time. So the uneducated males are taken as the obstacles of social progress and reform. The character Anna teaches girls to read and write in the Egyptian

societies. Deena and Anna are dedicated for the women rights and girls' education in Egypt. They criticize negative aspects of Islam tradition which restricts the girls only to live the life without freedom. They blame that the existing social evils which create prejudice between boys and girls. Only there is educational access to boys, not to girls.

Souef shows the Islam people only oppose the agent of British Empire as root of problem. But the corrupt people from their own nation are also the main cause of the problem in the nation. They respect and help for the existence of Christianity and others' culture as well as good English people in Egypt. Souef highlights the mutual understanding among the people, "My husband urges me to celebrate Christmas in Church this year, but I do not believe I shall" (403). In spite of being Islam Sharif Basha encourages his wife Anna, Christian woman to celebrate the Christmas festival in Christmas Day. The Egyptian people enjoy with the celebration of cultural diversity in their society. They even see more opportunity to learn better things and activities by loving and respecting each others' cultural diversity in the society. In this way this gives the lesson to the West and English people to establish social, cultural and religious harmony among the people who are from the different races, class, cultures and religions. Then it contributes to establish peace, humanity and mutual relationship among the people.

All the abstracts and ideas which are presented above try to depict the social, political, historical and religious issues of Middle Eastern nation Egypt. Sharif Basha, is revolutionary figure for the sake of political freedom, justice, human rights and education in Egypt. He marries Anna Winterbourne, who is an anti-colonialist English woman, from British. She runs her activities to end the British colonial rule and impact in Egypt. She finds the condition of the people's living very worst, low,

miserable and poor. She works with Sharif, and his sister Layla to rise up the level of education, economy, and the political awareness. She assimilates herself into Islam by marrying with Sharif. Likewise, Isabel falls in love with Omar, who is Muslim whereas she is Christian and U.S. girl. She goes to Egypt for the sake of her love with her husband Omar. In the novel the characters are represented from different religious, social and geographical backgrounds. The novel shows the mutual relationship and positive understanding to each other from multiple religious societies. The wedding of Anna, an English widow with Islam man challenges the social discourse which always creates problem among the people. Soueif, in *The Map of Love*, reflects Egyptian people's voice to get rid up from British colonial rule and establishment of independent nation.

After the close analysis of Soueif's *The Map of Love* the present researcher comes to the conclusion that the colonial discourse is challenged through the characters like Anna Winterbourne, Sharif Basha, Isabel Parkman and Omar. The theoretical perspective of Oriental Studies developed by Zauddin Sarddar, in his literary "Surviving the Post-Modernism," and "Islam as News" by Edward Said to erase the Western binary towards Islam and Orient.

This novel deconstructs western colonial discourse and stereotypical perspectives of Westerners towards the Middle Easterners and Orientals. Generally the West develops discourse to show superiority to other. Their discourse depicts west civilized, superior, modern, developed, and good and privileged. But the Orientals are taken as uncivilized, traditional, inferior, subordinated, worst and regressive. The non-Western world and society is shown in negative way. Therefore Western discourse has prejudice towards the Orientals. The colonial legacy and Western cultural values, identity, religious values are opposed and ignored by English woman Anna. She

transforms herself into Islam by marrying with Sharif and learns to speak Arabic language. In this way she is satisfied and happy to preserve the Oriental world and culture. She is not nostalgic towards her previous identity and society, culture and language. Similarly U.S. girl Isabel Parkman also enjoys in Egypt with Islam people, language and culture. On the one hand the Western rulers and politics attempt to establish Western values and language through the colonial process. On the other hand the Western people oppose and ignore it by preserving Oriental values. The English woman, Anna's support plays a vital role to fight for the sake of the Egyptian Islam and Christian people and to demonstrate against the British domination. This represents that the good British people favor the humanitarian values, freedom and justice in the life of Egyptian people. They oppose the existence of the British colonial authority in Egypt.

Soueif's *The Map of Love* explores the story of colonized Egypt by British. The novel represents the issues and the problems the Egypt face during colonial and post-colonial era. The British woman Anna's arrival to the Egypt assists Sharif Basha and people to demonstrate against British Empirical rule and cultural impact. She is loved and honored by people in Egypt. Therefore the Soueif focuses on the social harmony and end of discrimination and injustice in each and every society by avoiding the sense of hostility among the people who are from the different cultural and religious background. She describes the culture of Egypt and political situation during colonial era.

Soueif's concern attempts to erase the British stereotype towards the Easterners. The positive attitude and equal perspective to each other help to maintain peace and cultural harmony among the people who are different religious, cultural and geographical background. Therefore, Soueif concerns on to avoid the negative aspects

of the Western colonial discourse. Such discourse spreads the misconception about Oriental culture, language and people. Anna and Isabel know the Islam people and oriental cultural values well and find the Westerners' understanding towards Islam wrong in the novel. On the other hand she also shows the negative aspects of the Islamic tradition and society in the novel.

The Map of Love, attacks upon Western post-colonial discourse, through the depiction of Western women's transformation into the Egyptian culture and society. The arrival of Anna in Egypt depicts the beautiful aspects of East.

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