

Chapter I: Historiography and Problematics

History writing is a subject of contestation as it, sometimes, fascinates and frustrates. As a result one keeps on revisiting history writing to get much out of it. The written history by different people of the same period of time cannot be identical in many aspects. Even the history written by the traditional historians and the new ones are quite different. Conventionally history is the record of past events and time. It was the study of cultural, and political events from the beginning of human history until the early Middle Ages. A history begins with the earliest writing that began around 5000 years ago. In this regard to know the human civilization, its socio-political and religio-cultural aspects the study of history has been an important subject of our life. It is believed that if one learns about history, one may go over the path of progress by analyzing the past events of life. In the same way, people who have been responsible for ruling distant colonies have certainly been able to learn about the dos and don'ts by studying the history of colonialism during the early phases of colonialism.

The new historicists and cultural critics point out the need of the time in the study of historicity by associating history writing with the power structure. They believe that people in power by nature love to interpret and write history and art and literature in a manner that suits them best. Therefore, it is believed each text either history or interpretations of history cannot be completely objective.

Michael Foucault, one of the most influential thinkers of the twentieth century, whose idea the new historicists and culture critics borrow, points out that there is no such history that is pure and absolute. According to new historicists power does not circulate only from the top of the political and socio-economic structure. In Foucauldian sense, power circulates in all directions, to and from all social level at all times. Relating the text and history the central idea

on historicity he notes " 'historicisation' of text and textualisation of history" (18). Meaning that each text has a certain relationship with history and that history itself cannot be completely objective. The meanings of a text is relative in the sense that it can change its meaning with changes in time and its socio-political scenario. For him there is no such truth that is pure and absolute. His approach of history is effective history that deals with the truth, created out of the demand of time.

In prehistoric visions, as referred by K.K. Bhardwaj, everything grows very minutely like that of a growth of a coral reef in an ocean. The course has to go with innumerable creations and destructions. When a war begins, it sweeps away all the creations of history. The roads, houses, mansions, churches, the culture and civilization will be destroyed and the records of history will be blurred or blotted. The linear development collapses (27).

Before analyzing the spirit of the selected documentary and the movie on this research for the heuristic purpose, it is pertinent to observe how India had been viewed during, and after the colonial period and also how pre-colonizers, colonizers as well as post colonizers viewed the country. It is also worthy to know that the descriptions of history are variable at different times, as things do not remain the same all times and also the meanings, interpretations etc. keep on changing, which is an interesting part of history.

As one knows that history of India is very old, it seems that modern humans (tribal societies) have been in existence for about 50,000 years. In the words of V.D. Mahajan, India had been ruled by different Mughal kings. During their time Indian culture, customs and traditions had its distinct characteristics. Mughals were the descendants of Mangol invaders, who had settled in the highland to the north of western Himalayas. The first Mughal ruler of India was Babur (1527). The Mughal Empire was consolidated by Akbar, and it reached to great height

under Jahangir, Babur's grandson. He encouraged religious belief as his son Shah Jahan died (32).

But during the year 1750 A.D. one of the super power of Europe, England established its trading company in India, East India Company. According to Mahajan, during the colonial period, Europe exploited India in multiple ways. Though their external mission was to civilize Indian people and assist its culture and civilization, their implicit motive was to establish themselves for missionary purpose in order to spread Christianity and expand their business, take valuable resources from India such as gold, diamond, various types of spices to their own country. With this motive they ruled and exploited for around 200 years in the history of colonial period in India. During this period various incidents took place across the country. One of the incidents is mentioned in the documentary of Louis Tracy known as 'The Red Year', which describes about Indian Sepoy mutiny during 1857 to 1860 A.D. (34).

Although India got political independence with the end of colonial era in 1947 A.D., it was not independent in true sense as a lot of political and social complexities arose. Being a country of multiple communities, castes and creeds India Experienced the division among these diverse communities. Muslims community demanded their own separate state; as a result Pakistan emerged as an independent state. Similarly, people demanded another separate state, which rose into another new nation having the name Bangladesh.

Though Europe had physically left the country, its impressions, rules, cultural values, have deeply influenced Indian society, people and its culture. Even now India possesses various European cultural values in the country, such as English language has strong influence in different parts of the country and they use English as their official language too.

Considering the views of different colonial era regarding Indian cultural and political scenario, one can discover a number of facts. At first, one can see that the pre-colonizers viewed India as an adventurous, exotic, pure, sublime, mysterious, diverse in culture, customs, language, dress, food etc. They were attracted by its mystic beauty. They thought, if they could colonize the place it would be much beneficial. It is also a human nature that if one sees something wonderful, one wishes to possess it, and if one is powerful, one makes an effort to own it. So was the case of pre colonizers regarding India and its mystic culture, tradition and spellbinding natural beauty.

However, in the words of Tiffin, when the colonizers began to colonize, they began it by spreading the ideas that they were there to civilize Indian people, society and make it a prosperous and developed country. One of the things they began to bring the social change was to abolish the evil cultural practices such as sati system, which was a good tool for European to motivate Indian people. They thought if they were able to convince the people, they could easily make space there and gradually they began to colonize by assisting Hindus and sowing the seeds of quarrel between Hindus and Muslims for their own benefits (37).

Besides dividing the society religiously at larger, they project their "knowledge as power" to destroy the family bond which was regarded as a national culture in India.

The European criticism of Indian 'tradition' as barbaric was focused to a large extent on religious beliefs and practices, especially those relating to the treatment of women. The early phase of social reform through the agency of the colonial power had also concentrated on the same issues. In that early phase, therefore, this area had been identified as essential to 'Indian tradition'. The nationalist move as Tiffin refers, began by disputing the choice of agency. Unlike the early reformers, nationalists were not prepared to allow the colonial state to legislate the

reform of traditional society. They asserted that only the nation could have the right to intervene in such an essential aspect of its cultural identity (39).

In the former field, the hegemonic project of nationalism could hardly make the distinctions of language, religion, caste or class, a matter of indifference to itself. The project was that of cultural normalizations as Anderson suggests, bourgeois hegemony projects everywhere, but with all the important differences, that it had to choose its site of autonomy from a position of subordination to a colonial regime that had on its side the most universal justificatory resources produced by post-Enlightenment social thought (14).

Nevertheless, their hidden motive was something different. Actually, their ill intention on the one hand was to exploit the resources of the country, as it had abundance of precious mines such as diamond, gold, coal, minerals etc. on the one hand and valuable herbal plants, tea garden, spices of various tastes on the other. Their avarice look, focused over all their valuable resources of the country. Besides that they wanted to spread Christianity all over India with the help of their missionary schools, as they had been doing in many countries of Africa. They were also successful to persuade the innocent people of India about its economy and had been advancing to boom among other developed countries. The underlying motivation behind British colonialism in India was to exploit the country's valuable resources, in the name of "civilizing mission" that sought to establish British institutions and ideas in place of the local political culture, through the ideological hegemony inherent in such a mission. Consequently, in examining the British colonial legacy and "civilizing mission" in India as Mahajan refers that although colonialism significantly transformed the political culture in India, it did not establish ideological hegemony in the country (43).

In order to examine the political changes initiated in India, it is very important to understand the reasons behind the British “civilizing mission” in India. After the colonial power lost its space, they began to realize that it was impossible for them to rule over India forever. They realized that India had an indomitable power that cannot be unsurpassable to colonize forever. Its patriotic people had already begun to challenge the colonial power. They viewed India as capable, patriotic, and undefeatable country. Moreover, Britain had lost its power by the end of Second World War (1945) and the decline of Europe was certain, as Europe was not able to assist East India Company in India.

Thus, India has undergone three different stages of political, cultural and social changes and now it has been enjoying its independence for the last 69 years and it is rising as one of the super powers in South Asia and influencing stake holder in the global economy and has been advancing to boom among other developed countries.

Although the Indian sepoys in '*The Red Year*' are often lowered to the margins of the text, they are vitally important as they demonstrate the rebellion act against the British authority. Michael Edwards elaborates upon the Indian rebellion by the Bengal sepoys in his essay 'The legacy of the Mutiny' in this way:

The Indian rebellion of 1857 had a diverse political, economic, military, religious and social causes. The native Indian soldiers of the Bengal army had their own reservations against the British administration, mainly caused by the ethnic gap between the European officers and their troops. The allegation that the introduction of gun cartridges covered in pig fat an insult to both Hindu and Muslim religious sensibilities was the catalyst for the conflict. (17)

The researcher has found it useful to employ Michel Foucault's notion of discourse as described in *The Archeology of knowledge* and in *Discipline and Punish*, to identify orientalism as a discourse. One cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage and even produce- the orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post enlightenment period.

The researcher would like to discuss about history as a site of contestation in relation to the documentary 'The Red Year' by Louis Tracy and the Hindi movie 'Mangal Pandey'. A historical event can be analyzed from different perspectives. One may argue or oppose or even remain neutral regarding a certain issue. Although the issue of the movie and the documentary is the same, they have been presented in different ways. Of course, one can say that writing history is influenced by various factors such as when it was written, who it was written by, and what was the writers inclination towards etc.

In the documentary 'The Red Year' Tracy uses different characters such as Mr. Frank Malcolm, miss Mayne, Roshinarabegam the daughter of Bahadur Shah etc. whereas in the movie 'Mangal Pandey' here are different characters playing different roles such as captain William Gorden , Mangal Pandey, Heera, Jwala etc. Similarly in terms of the content of the two texts one can find a number of differences. For example in the documentary the writer, being an European, seems to present the documentary as an unsuccessful Indian mutiny, which was carried out due to their foolishness, aggressive nature, lack of far sightedness etc., whereas according to the movie, it was their first war of independence, since they were not ready to accept the foreign hegemony in their land, which they had been tolerating for almost two hundred years.

In regard to the movie, the entire Indian sub continent has been ruled by East India Company as the most influential business enterprise in India. The company has its own rules and

laws, administration as well as security. It controls the lives of millions of people around the world. The movie tells the story of love, friendship, and sacrifice etc. set against the British, which they called the sepoy mutiny. However, for Indians it was their first war of independence as the Europeans had been dominating and exploiting them in different ways.

Tracy refers that there was awareness among the Indians for their own rules and systems. During one of the wars namely Afgan war, Mangal Pandey had saved the life of his British commanding officer, William Gorden, due to that there was good friendly relation between the two. However, their friendship was challenged by the introduction of a new rifle called Enfield, which was supposed to contain the grease of cows and pigs fat. The new cartridge had to be bitten before it was loaded, which ignited fury among the Indian sepoy, as the cow is sacred to the Hindus, and the pig forbidden to the Muslims (20).

Mangal Pandey tells the story of friends, lovers, enemies, exploiters, and exploited, besides the growth and consciousness of people and nation. It is a story of a man and his dream of freedom. On the other hand, the documentary focuses on the Indian betrayal, mischievousness, disloyalty, foolishness etc.

Thus, history can be relooked differently at different times, as the meaning of the particular history can be variable, while observing through different lens at different times. Etymologically, the word history is derived from the Greek word meaning 'past event' and hence history is the record of past events related to culture, religion, literature, politics etc. History is also a part of literature and its function is to examine its excellences and defects and finally to evaluate its artistic worth. However, things are not quite so simple as that. As soon as one proceeds to examine the nature and function of criticism in some detail, one is confronted with a host of conflicting views, theories and definitions.

According to D. Innes, Historical criticism views a work of art against the background of the Age in which it was written. Every writer is influenced by the Age in which he lives, and his work cannot properly be estimated without an understanding of the social, economic, religious, political and literary events and trends which influences the writer. Shakespeare's works cannot be understood without the knowledge of the social and political life of the day, more specially its popular customs and sports. Historical criticism examines a work with reference to its social milieu, it relates the writer to his Age and thus seeks to account for his shortcomings and excellences. Historical criticism has its value, but its one great weakness is that pre occupation with the history that makes the critic forget, the very existence of the work under consideration (29).

History is a subject that teaches us something about our past time. It studies about people, politics, religion, culture, geography, language and so on. However, when one observes any historical events or facts one might see it through different lenses. For example, there are people who look at the monarchy of Nepal in a positive way. Especially, one can find many old generation people believe that king and queen are the incarnation of god and goddess. However, the generation now has different views regarding the issue of monarchy. Most of them are negative, some of them are positive, and others are uncertain about it. The remark indicates the recognition that culture is shaped and continues to be shaped by people of diverse backgrounds. So, history is an ongoing process of discovery and interpretation of the past, and that there is more than one-way of looking the world.

It is understood that the study of different historical methods is known as historiography. It is often said that history repeats itself by simply observing what's happening to us now and what had happened in the past. Similarly, when one observes any historical events such as first

and Second World War, one can evaluate the leading nations of the wars in positive as well as negative ways. Some might support German, others may support the U.K.. Many believe Hitler to be one of the most tyrannical despotic ruler, nevertheless, his supporters assumed that whatever he did, was a necessary evil, as German was badly humiliated, after the first world war in which they were forced to accept certain requirements demanded by Britain.

Therefore, when one assess the historical events, one needs to be clear about that any recorded history can not be far from certain type of prejudices. It is important to notice who prepares such history. The Indian mutiny was seen as the first war of independence from Indian nationalistic perspective, while it was evaluated as the 'sepoyrebel' from European perspective. Thus the event has been taken in two different ways and it has been further appreciated or criticized by different writers and critics.

For centuries men had recorded the events of the past, in Egypt, in Mesopotamia, in China. But before Herodotus, no one had ever tried to put down a coherent story, with a beginning, middle, and an end, and with an explanation of why things happened the way they did. Again it was the Greek victory over the Persians in 490—480 B.C. that inspired the Athenian historian, as it had inspired the dramatists. Nothing had ever happened before that was so astonishing and so wonderful, they thought, this momentous victory required them to try harder to understand it than men had ever before tried to understand such events, as mentioned by A. R. Desai (14).

Herodotus grew up with tales of the Greek triumph ringing in his ears. He was a great traveler. His wide journeys, over many years, took him to most parts of the Persian Empire to Egypt and most cities of Greece. He apparently made careful notes wherever he went recording

his observations and his interviews with eminent persons. His curiosity was boundless, and he spent his life indulging it.

Similarly, Thucydides as a young man determined to write an ongoing account of the war that filled his lifetime and that of his contemporaries. He was himself a prominent soldier, although he was removed from his command and exiled because of his failure in an important battle, he concentrated on the military history of the drawn-out conflict. He enlivened this with a device of his own invention, the insertion into the narrative of speeches by important war figures, which, for their eloquence and apparent verisimilitude, are almost unique in history (15).

The beginnings of historical studies are shrouded in darkness. But it appears that in the ancient world history began almost simultaneously with creation. There are countless historical references scattered in different books, poems, dramas, dialogues etc. however, it was only with Plato that history was accepted as a vital force in the ancient world.

According to Bhardwaj, history is the record of past events and times, the three general historic eras include ancient, middle and modern history. Although the ending date of history is largely arbitrary, most western scholars use the fall of Roman Empire in 476 A.D. as the traditional ending. The beginning of the Middle Age is called the Dark Age, because the great civilization of Rome and Greece had been conquered. During 1450's began the Renaissance that refers to rebirth when the art became more true to life. People began to learn about new lands, customs and belief (18).

The questions asked by traditional historian and by new historians are quite different because these two approaches to history are based on very different views of what history is and how one can know it. Traditional historians ask what happened, and what does the event tell us

about history? In contrast, new historicists ask, how has the event been interpreted? And what do the interpretations tell us about the interpreters? In this connection Bhardwaj further explains:

Historians may believe they're being objective, but their own views of what is right and wrong, what is civilized and uncivilized, what is important and unimportant, and the like, will strongly influence the ways in which they interpret events. For example, the traditional historians view that history is progressive, is based on the belief, held in the past by many Anglo European historians, that the primitive cultures of native people are inferior to the civilized Anglo European cultures. As a result, ancient cultures with highly developed art forms, ethical codes, and spiritual philosophies, such as tribal cultures of native Americans and Africans were often misrepresented as lawless, superstitious and savage. (22)

Historical analysis cannot be objective, cannot adequately demonstrate that a particular spirit of the times or world view account for the complexities of any given culture and cannot adequately demonstrate that history is linear, casual, or progressive in the view of D. Innes "One cannot understand a historical event, object, or person in isolation from the web of discourses in which it was represented because one cannot understand it in isolation from the meanings it carried. The more one isolates it, the more one tends to view it through the meanings of our own time and place and, perhaps, our own desire to believe that the human race is improving with the passage of time" (26).

For new historical literary critics, the literary text, through its representations of human experience at a given time and place, is an interpretation of history. As such, the literary text

maps the discourses circulating at the time it was written and is itself one of those discourses.

Literary text is shaped by the discourses circulating in the culture in which it was produced.

Likewise, our interpretations of literature are shaped by the culture in which one lives which one cannot separate from each other.

For example, cultural criticism shares with new historicism the view that human history and culture constitute a complex arena of dynamic forces of which one can construct only a partial, subjective picture. Both fields share the belief that individual human subjectivity develops in a give and take relationship with its cultural milieu. So the culture and history share an equal and remarkable space in forming certain kind of historiography.

Indeed, both cultural criticism and new historicism draw heavily on the same philosophical sources, in particular the work of French philosopher Michel Foucault, in practice, cultural criticism is not always readily distinguishable from new historicism. For cultural critics, culture is a process, not a product, it is a lived experience not a fixed definition. More precisely, a culture is a collection of interactive cultures, each of which is growing and changing, each of which is constituted at any given moment in time by the intersection of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, occupation and similar factors that contribute to the experience of its members. All historical analysis is unavoidably subjective. Historians must therefore reveal the ways in which they know they have been positioned, by their own cultural experience, to interpret history. So, it can be said that writing of history is a matter of interpretations, not facts. Thus, all the historical accounts are narratives and can be analyzed using many of the tools used by literary critics to analyze narrative.

Hayden White's work, especially his *Meta-history*, published in 1973, had a huge influence in many different fields: in new philosophy of history, in literary studies, in cultural

studies, in the so-called “narrative turn” in social sciences, etc. For many professional historians, however, White was a traitor who smuggled literary theory into historiography, thereby undermining the scientific nature of historical research and turning it into mere literature. Historians of the late 19th century were quick to disassociate their discipline from literature, arguing that historical writing was like scientific analysis. History does not have ‘aesthetic form’. It was not a ‘narrative’. History was a science (7).

But, by the late 20th century, theorists and historians were beginning to emphasize the link between history, narrative and rhetoric. This was a ‘revival narrative’. They claimed that narrative served to impose coherence and continuity. Most prominent of these revivalists were Roland Barthes, Paul Veyne, and Hayden White. His ‘Meta-history’ continued to challenge the views that history operates in a manifestly different mode from literature. The most important point is that White claimed that the differences in historians’ conclusions when working with the same data, can be attributed to the different ways in which they prefigure the historical field, these differing prefiguration entail meta-historical and ideological implications. However, also many literary scholars, often with a more or less formalist background, have been disturbed by what they have taken as a blurring of the distinction between fact and fiction. Why has White’s project been so dangerous, to both “history” and “literature”? On the second page of his introduction White has stated: “My own analysis of the deep structure of the historical imagination of 19th century Europe is intended to provide a new perspective in the current debate over the nature and function of historical knowledge”(24).

According to White a historian begins his work by consisting a chronicle of events, which is to be organized into a coherent story. These are the two preliminary steps before processing the material into a plot, which is argumentative as to express an ideology. Thus the

historical work is a verbal structure in the form of a narrative prose discourse that imports to be a model, or icon, of post structure and processes in the interest of explaining what they were by representing them (2). For several of the reasons given above, White's ideas are somewhat controversial among academic historians, who have expressed both enthusiasm for and frustration with meta-history. For example, Arthur Marwick praised it as "a brilliant analysis of the rhetorical techniques of some famous early 19th century historians who write well before the emergence of professional history" (7).

In Meta-history, White examined the narrative deep structure of historiography in 19th - century Europe, the "golden age of historiography". One of his main sources of inspiration was, nevertheless, rooted in literary criticism. Using Northrop Frye's vision of the literary universe, White went back to the common roots of literature and historiography: the arch-typical forms of epic thinking. Following Frye, White distinguished four kinds of narrative styles in historiography, while all striving towards some kind of "realistic" representation of the past, used different strategies to achieve their "explanatory effect." Therefore he was able to describe Michael's historical narratives by the notion of Romance, Ranke's by that of Comedy, Tocqueville's by that of Tragedy, and Burckhardt's by way of Satire (10).

White then related four different historiographical styles to four principal modes of historical consciousness on the basis of topological theory that was mainly derived from Giambattista Vico, the great 18th -century precursor of the "linguistic turn". From Vico, White inherited the vision of four "meta tropes" that prefigured all human thinking: Metaphor, Metonymy, Synecdoche, and Irony. Thus, not only historiographical discourse was predetermined by literary styles, but historical consciousness in general was predetermined by certain linguistic structures (12).

According to Foucault, truth and knowledge were the constructions one offers to persuade others. They do not need to correspond to reality, since one constructs his or her own reality in such a way as to give us power over others. With his mind, his admission in knowledge/power is revealing as he states:

I am well aware that I have never written anything but fictions. I do not mean to say, however that truth is therefore absent. It seems to me that the possibility exists for fictions to function in truth, for a fictional discourse to induce effects of truth, and for bringing it about that a true discourse engenders or 'manufactures' something that does not as yet exist, that it fictions it. One 'fictions' history on the basis of a political reality that makes it true, one 'fictions' a politics not yet in existence on the basis of a historical truth. (6)

So, the history is the combination of both facts and fictions. However, it is difficult as such, in making of history is also determined by a certain kind of power. It circulates from different sectors. Basically, it spreads from higher section to the lower section. As the popular proverb says 'everybody worships the rising sun', so is the power worshipped. The one who has power, can control, manipulate, motivate, demotivate others by using his power method.

In terms of the movie and the documentary too, one can see various examples of such use of power, control, motivation etc. for the sake of their own benefits. One of the examples of such events is that in the documentary how they tried to dominate the sepoys by insulting them of not knowing how the cartridge have been made and how they need to be used.

Foucault's work has highly influenced the study of politics. "Governmental" and "bi-power" are the most prominent concepts. More broadly, Foucault developed a radical new concept of social power as forming strategies embodying intentions of their own, above those of

individuals for Foucault are as much products of as participants in game of power. To summarize his thought from an objectively, his political works have two things in common: a historical perspective, studying social phenomena in historical context, a discursive methodology, with the study of text to understand how the historical formation of discovers have shaped the political thinking and political institutions of present time. Foucault sees power and knowledge as inseparably joined, one can never have one without the other, with neither having casual suzerainty over other.

Another Marxist philosopher Habermas also believes that history, culture, art and morality are the subjects of changing phenomena. Modernism, for him, is an incomplete project, since there is no end of modernism. It seems true that even a hundred year back people used to assume themselves modern. Moreover, people after a hundred year will think us to be the generation of old age. So, it is never-ending process. Similarly, the subjects like history can be seen from the different angles at different times. How one looks into his or her past cultures and history is determined, by the kind of society he or she lives, by the time and by the background of our schooling, economic and other aspects. History, according to Habermas, is not homogeneous and stable pattern of facts and events which can be used as the background to explain the literature of an era, or which literature can be said simply to reflect or which can be adverted to as the material conditions that in a simple and unilateral way, determine the particularities of a literary text (15).

New historians acknowledge that they themselves, like all authors are subjectivists that have been shaped and informed by the circumstances and discourses specific to their era, hence their own critical writing construct, rather than discover readymade, the textual meanings they describe and the literary and cultural histories they narrate. The concept, themes and the

procedures of new historicist critic took shape in the late 1970s and early 1980s, most prominently in the writings by scholars of English Renaissance. They directed their attention especially to literary forms such as the pastoral and masque and above all drama emphasized the role in shaping a text of social and economic conditions such as literary patronage and the control of access to printing.

N.K. Nigam points out that history and literature share much of the things as within literature historical events are included .In the broadest sense, literature means simply the written records of the race, including all its history and sciences, as well as its poem and novels; in the narrower sense literature is the artistic record of life, and most of our writing is excluded from it, just as the mass of our buildings, mere shelters from storm and from cold, are excluded from architecture. A history or a work of science may be and sometimes is literature, but only as one forgets the subject matter and the presentations of facts in the simple beauty of its expression (18).

Prehistory traditionally refers to the span of time before recorded history, ending with the invention of writing systems. Similarly, prototype refers to the transition period between prehistory and history, after the advent of literacy in a society but before the writings of the first historians. During the prehistoric era things were either passed from one generation to another through preaching, dialogues, carving on stones, wooden things or by piercing on leaves or other materials. There were myths, and tales shared among the people. Whatever important or memorable events were there, they would record in one of the mediums for the knowledge of their future generation.

Similarly, during the medieval period, history was recorded more or less in the same ways as in the ancient times. There were some kinds of slates, on which people could write

important things for their future records. However, there were various means to record historical events used during the period. They recorded mostly the heroic deeds of the emperors, knights, as well as other brave sons, which could be an inspiration to other generation.

Modern history began with the introduction of printing press that was a huge step because it provided education to the masses. During this period a number of changes could be seen such as religious reforms, scientific and industrial revolution, enlightenment, feeling of nationalism etc. due to the invention of printing machines life became easier as people could easily print their necessary documents, creative writings such as poetry, stories, tales, drama, fiction etc.

Besides, with the expansions of industries life of people began to change drastically, and a new mode of thought evolved about religion, science, and human knowledge as there were increasing number of education institutions, which spread knowledge for the human enlightenment and to arise the feelings of nationalism among the people, as referred by N.K. Nigam (22). During the colonial period, history was assessed through the eyes of colonial empire. What they thought good for others was accepted, or made to accept by the native people of different colonized countries. For example, in India they accused natives of the country as being of barbaric, crazy and strange. They tried to impose their hegemony over the naive citizens of the country and exploited them in the name of making them civilized by capturing over the natural, cultural, and religious fields.

In the words of Nigam, the first Empire was founded in the 17th century, and based on the migration of large numbers of settlers to the American, as well as the development of the sugar plantation colonies in the West Indies. It ended with the British loss of the American War for Independence. The second Empire had already started to emerge. It was originally designed

as a chain of trading ports and naval bases. However, it expanded inland into the control of large numbers of natives, when the East India Company proved highly successful in taking control of most of India. India became the keystone of the second empire, along with colonies later developed across Africa (27).

A few new settler colonies were also built up in Australia and New Zealand, and to a lesser extent in South Africa. Marshall in 1999 shows the consensus of scholars is clear, since 1900 A.D. the concepts of the first British empire have held their ground in historians “usage without serious challenge” (31). In 1988, Peter Marshall said that late 18th century transformations constituted a fundamental reordering of the Empire which make it appropriate to talk about a first British Empire giving way to a second one....Historians have long identified certain developments in the late eighteenth century that undermined the fundamentals of the old Empire and were to bring about a new one. These were the American Revolution and the industrial revolution (62).

The historiography of British Empire refers to the studies, sources, critical methods and interpretations used by scholars. Historians and their ideas are the focus here; specific lands and historical dates and episodes are covered in the article on the British Empire. Scholars have long studied the Empire, looking at the causes for its formation, its relations to the French and other empires, and the kinds of people who became imperialists or anti-imperialists, together with their mindsets. The history of the breakdown of the Empire has attracted scholars of the histories of the United States which broke away in 1776, India independent in 1947, and the African colonies in the 1960s. Historians have approached imperial history from numerous angles and turns over the last century. In recent decades scholars have expanded the range of topics into new areas in social and cultural history, paying special attention to the impact on the natives and their agency

in response. The cultural turn in historiography has recently emphasized issues of language, religion, gender, and identity. Recent debates have considered the relationship between the "Metropole" (Britain itself, especially London), and the colonial peripheries. The "British world" historians stress the material, emotional, and financial links among the colonizers across the imperial diaspora. The "new imperial historians," by contrast, are more concerned with the Empire's impact on the Metropole, including everyday experiences and images (5).

Phillip Buckner says that by the 1990s few historians portrayed the empire as benevolent. The new thinking was that the impact was not so great, for historians had discovered the many ways which the locals responded to and adapted to Imperial rule. The implication Buckner says is that Imperial history is "therefore less important than was formerly believed" (6). Historians agree that the Empire was not planned by anyone. The concept of the British Empire is a construct and was never a legal entity, unlike the Roman or other European empires. There was no imperial constitution, no office of emperor, no uniformity of laws. So when it began, when it ended, and what stages it went through is a matter of opinion, not official orders or laws. The dividing line was Britain's shift in the 1763-93 period from emphasis on Western to Eastern territories following U.S. independence. The London bureaucracy governing the colonies also changed, policies to white settler colonies changed and slavery was phased out.

The first major history was 'The Expansion of England (1883), by Sir John Seeley. It was a bestseller for decades, and was widely admired by the imperialistic faction in British politics, and opposed by the anti-imperialists of the Liberal Party. The book points out how and why Britain gained the colonies, the character of the Empire, and the light in which it should be regarded. It was well written and persuasive.

Seeley argued that British rule is in India's best interest. He also warned that India had to be protected and vastly increased the responsibilities and dangers to Britain. The book contains the much-quoted statement that "one seem, as it were, to have conquered half the world in a fit of absence of mind". *Expansion of England* appeared at an opportune time, and did much to make the British regard the colonies as an expansion of the British state as well as of British nationality, and to confirm to them the value of Britain's empire in the East. In his history of the British Empire, written in 1940, A.P. Newton lamented that Seeley "dealt with men in the great wars of eighteenth century and this gave the false impression that the British Empire has been founded largely by war and conquest, an idea that was unfortunately planted firmly in the public mind, not only in Great Britain, but also in foreign countries" (8).

Historians often point out that in the First British Empire (before the 1780s) there was no single imperial vision, but rather a multiplicity of private operations led by different groups of English businessmen or religious groups. Although protected by the Royal Navy, they were not funded or planned by the government. After the American war, says Bruce Collins, British leaders" focused not on any military lessons to be learned, but upon the regulation and expansion of imperial trade and the readjustment of Britain's constitutional relationship with its colonies." In the Second British Empire, by 1815 historians identify four distinct elements in the colonies. The most politically developed colonies were the self-governing colonies in the Caribbean and those that later formed Canada and Australia. India was in a category by itself, and its immense size and distance required control of the routes to it, and in turn permitted British naval dominance from Persian Gulf to the South China Sea. The third group was a mixed bag of smaller territories, including isolated ports used as way stations to India, and emerging trade entrepot such as Hong Kong and Singapore, along with a few isolated ports in Africa.

The fourth kind of empire was the "informal empire," that is financial dominance exercised through investments, as in Latin America, and including the complex situation in Egypt (it was owned theoretically by the Ottoman Empire, but ruled by Britain). Darwin argues the British Empire was distinguished by the adaptability of its builders: "The hallmark of British imperialism was its extraordinary versatility in method, outlook and object .The British tried to avoid military action in favor of reliance on networks of local elites and businessmen who voluntarily collaborated and in turn gained authority (and military protection) from British recognition" (14).

After decolonization, the scenario of the world changed immensely. Many of the countries, which were in the grip of European domination, got rid of them now. They began to celebrate the new systems, in which they could write their own constitutions and system of government, which were historical in themselves. Countries such as India, Burma, among many of the African countries became independent to begin their own ruling systems. Many historians saw this change as one of the most revolutionary historical change in the history of the world.

With the decolonization, India went through a partition period, which was also known as the 'great divide' that led to a huge movements and an ethnic conflict across the India Pakistan border. Consequently, around ten million Hindus and Sikhs were expelled from Pakistan, and around seven million Muslims crossed the border from India to Pakistan. In the incident, thousands of people were killed in the conflict. Ever since these incidents, there have been problems between the two countries, which lead to different wars particularly in the Kashmir region.

At present, although India is making a significant economic progress, it has been facing its old problems like overpopulation, pollution, poverty as well as ethnic and religious conflicts

between Hindus and Muslims. Moreover, the Kashmir conflict has not come to an end yet, while both the countries have been threatening each other with their arsenals of atomic weapons.

Regarding postcolonial literature, Edward Saïd's book 'Orientalism' is regarded as the beginning of postcolonial studies. In his book he analyses how European countries began colonialism as a result of what they called their own racial superiority.

The religious ethnic conflicts between different groups of people play an important role in the early years of post-colonialism. People from both sides of the India Pakistan conflict wrote about their feelings and experience during genocide, being confronted to blind and irrational violence and hatred. The partition is often described as an Indian trauma.

Orientalism is the way of interpreting the East by the West; it is assumed that what the West thinks about the East, they are supposed to believe. By the same token, the European colonialists claimed the East to have been irrational, barbaric, aggressive as well as conservative. Such views can also be seen in the documentary 'The Red Year' by Tracy.

Tracy seems to assume India as an original part of Europe, which shows his colonial mentality as he describes about Punjab in the following lines:

A May morning in Punjab, must not be confused with its prototype in Britain undimmed by cloud, unchecked by cooling breeze, the sun scorches at the earth from the moment his glowing rays first peel over the horizon. Thus, men who value their health and have work to be done rise at an hour when London's greets are emptiest. Merchants were busy in the bazaar, soldiers were in parade, judges were sitting in the courts of the Cutcherry, and the European housewives of the station were making their morning purchases of food for breakfast and dinner, when some of the loungers on the riverside wall saw groups of horsemen raising

the dust on the Meerut road beyond the bridge of boats which spanned the Jumna.

(41)

It shows how the Europeans wished to impose a hegemonic domain over other countries during the period. Before the nineteenth century, the relation between historical writing and literary writing was not problematical. Since Aristotle, it had been thought that, although both history and imaginative writing were rhetorical arts, they dealt with different things: historical writing was about the real world while “poetry” was about the possible. During the nineteenth century, however, the concept of history was reformulated, historical consciousness was for the first time theorized, and the modern scientific method of historical inquiry was inaugurated.

According to Alexander Duff, history was no longer simply the past or accounts of the past, but now became identified as a process, a dimension of human existence, and a force to be controlled or succumbed to. During the same time, what had formerly been called discourse and belles lettres underwent reconceptualization. Now literary writing, as practiced by Balzac and Flaubert, Dickens and Scott, Manzoni, etc., was detached from of summoning up the unconscious or latent dimensions human reality. Now, literature became history’s other in a double sense; it pretended to have discovered a dimension of reality that historians would never recognize and it developed techniques of writing that undermined the authority of history’s favored realistic or plain style of writing (44).

It is often thought that history’s principal enemy is the lie, but actually it has two enemies considered to be more deadly to its mission to tell the truth and nothing but the truth about the past; rhetoric and fiction. Rhetoric because, according to the doxaphilosophica, it seeks to seduce where it cannot convince by evidence and argument; and fiction because, according to

the same doxa, it presents imaginary things as if they were real and substitutes illusion for truth as Duff claims (45).

History is one of the ‘others’ of literature inasmuch as literature is understood to be identifiable with fiction, because history wishes to make true statements about the real world, not an imaginary or illusory world. Secondly, history is literature’s other inasmuch as literature is understood to be identifiable with figuration, figurative language, and metaphor, rather than with literal speech, unambiguous assertion, and free or poetic (rather than bound) utterance.

While the history of humanity itself may not have a purpose, the writing of historical accounts does. Resonating with Foucault’s approach to history is the view that the writing of history should promote an ideology. If, as Foucault declares, a claim to knowledge really is nothing but an attempt to overpower others, then retelling history serves the purpose of gaining power for some repressed group (24).

Thus, according to the postmodern condition the discipline of history has turned away from the study of significant individuals and the struggles between nations to focus on social groups and institutions. Tom Dixon writes, “Social historians are often driven by Activists goals. Historical research becomes not an attempt to understand the past but a propaganda tool for use in modern political and social power struggles”. Dixon also notes, “Postmodern cultural historians consider bias unavoidable in whole or even in part. As a result, one sees a rowing willingness to arrange and edit facts in a way that supports the message of particular historians” (7). This is precisely where the line between recording history and revising history is crossed.

So, what can be said about history is that it is not free from certain kind of biasness. It serves to the benefit of certain groups, classes, system etc., as it is described by these groups. In comparison to the documentary and the movie ‘Mangal Pandey’ too, one can clearly see the

references that the movie tries to valorize Indian culture, tradition, assumptions as well as the action taken by the sepoys during their mutiny against the European empire. While, observing through the lens of Tracy in his documentary one can find the contrary views regarding Indian sepoys and favoritism towards European hegemony.

According to Walter Benjamin, an influential Marxist, who stands at the threshold of a new intellectual era, historiography is highly influenced by the class of social group. He seems to believe that economic power plays an important role in the making of history (10). People who possess such power they are likely to manipulate the historical events according to their vested interest and advantages. So, the history cannot be authentic in itself rather it is influenced by the game of economic power. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to understand that Benjamin is against progress. He is against that man internalizes the logic of progress, and in this way he would indefinitely reproduce it. Therefore, it should not be taken as economic power always dominates in recreating process of history, rather it can be one of the possible tools to manipulate historical event in favor of those who dominate the society economically.

Benjamin's thesis closely connects the theory of historiography, narrative with the theory of history, the nature and transformation of human society, in the same way in which history itself is referred to its political praxis. For Benjamin, it is necessary to have a certain conception of the present that allows us to generate an interrelationship between history and politics. The concept of history intended by Benjamin is meant to improve our position in the class struggle and historical materialism in the process. He immediately begins to develop the conception of an alternate political praxis, which would pursue the cause of historical materialism (12).

Historicism contents itself with establishing a causal nexus among various moments in history. But no state of affairs having casual significance is for that very reason historical. It

became historical posthumously, as it were, through events that may be separated from it by thousands of years. The historians who proceed from this consideration ceases to tell the sequences of events like the beads of a rosary. He grasps the constellation into which his own era has entered, along with a very specific earlier one. Thus, he establishes a conception of the present as now time shot through with splinters of messianic time (19).

Thus, with the views of Benjamin, one can deduce that in writing of any history there is a great role of economic power on behalf of the ruling class, with that they can easily manipulate the historical events according to their desirable goal , so that they can still stick to power ahead. In 'The Nation and its Peasants' Partha Chatterjee follows on the work of Gramsci, actually responsible for the substitution of the word subaltern for the previously used term proletariat, and explores peasants, peasants' consciousness, and the nature of peasants resistance to colonial domination. Like Guha, Chatterjee describes peasants as a cohesive group, a group that is the object of manipulation by elites. In order to explain why or how that resistance sometimes had limited success, he asks for a critique of both colonialist and nationalist historiographies by bringing in the peasantry as a subject of history distinctive forms of consciousness and making sense of an action up to the work on its own term (267). It means peasants were the subjects of history. The colonizers played various tricks on them in the name of making their life better and cheating them with sugarcoated languages.

Chakravarty points out possible direction for complete study by recognizing the role of enlightenment rationalism and secularism on Indian historians and historiography, asking historians to, at least bring religion into their consideration of that history. He closes with plea that both acknowledges a possible outcome of that omission and celebrates a potential for the future (277).

In addition to presenting many historiographic methods and ideas, the authors provide the tale glimpse at what they consider to be the rule of the historian and at the difficulties facing historian at the turn of the 21st century. Chatterjee states that the relation between history and the theoretical disciplines of the social sciences is necessarily one where structure neatness of the latter is constantly disturbed and refashioned by the intransigent material of the former.

History is a human construct that evolves from interpretation, theorizing, and records of subjective biases of the individuals who make it up. The history that one consciously and actively create ourselves is only the genuine history, however, it should acknowledge the social, religious as well as cultural aspects of historiography (37). Hall's work, such as studies showing the lines between social prejudice and media have a reputation as influential, and serves as important foundational tests for contemporary cultural studies. He also widely discusses notions of cultural identity, race and ethnicity, particularly in the creation of the politics of Black Diaspora identities. He believed identity to be an ongoing product of history and culture, rather than a finished product (24). Hall and cultural studies also tell us that 'Culture' is not singular. There are many cultures present in post-industrial society. These cultures vie for hegemony or power.

Generally speaking cultures associated with the economic or political elite will be more powerful, as they control the culture producing organization, yet even they are in competition and must create an alliance in order to have hegemonic effects. Hegemonic culture is generally accepted by the masses because it co-operates certain elements of their cultures and thus appears as if it embraces all, the masses also tend to accept the hegemonic culture because they must work and live in and through organizations that are controlled by elite. The masses thus must buy

into the elite culture to some degree in order to survive. If left unchallenged, hegemonic culture functions as ideology and oppression is taken for granted and seen as normal (25).

According to Hall, “a message must be perceived as meaningful discourse and be meaningfully decoded before it has an effect, a use, or satisfies a need”. There are four codes of the encoding and decoding model of communication. The first way of encoding is the dominant or hegemonic code. This is the code the encoder expects the decoder to recognize and decode: “When the viewer takes the connoted meaning full and straight and decodes the message in terms of the reference code in which it has been coded, it operates inside the dominant code” (14).

The second way of encoding is the professional code. It operates in tandem with the dominant code. “It serves to reproduce the dominant definitions precisely by bracketing the hegemonic quality and operating with professional coding which relate to such questions as visual quality, news and presentational values. The third way of encoding is the negotiated code.

It acknowledges the legitimacy of the hegemonic definitions to make the grand significations, while, at a more restricted, situational level, it makes its own ground rules, it operates with ‘exceptions’ to rule. The fourth way of encoding is the oppositional code, also known as the globally contrary code. It is possible for a viewer perfectly to understand both the literal and connotative inflection given to an event, but to determine to decode the message in a globally contrary way.

Hall challenged all four components of the mass communications model. He argues that meaning is not simply fixed or determined by the sender, the message is never transparent, and the audience is not the passive recipient of meaning. So, the historical events described by a certain authority cannot have realistic facts, as it can be only the viewpoint of them. There

remain a number of meanings, mysteries, as well as motives to serve their purposes. However, the audiences also have their own perspective. They might not believe what they hear or see outward. So, the historical events can have a variety of messages with its denotations as well as connotations.

Therefore, history is a site of contestation, as there are multiple dimensions in viewing a particular historical event, which one can find in the documentary by Tracy, which tries to valorize the European ideologies while he seems rather critical towards Indian sepoys as well as citizens in terms of their thought, actions, and attitude.

II. Indian Mutiny: A multiple narratives

Before starting the analysis on multiple narratives in the Indian mutiny, it would be pertinent to discuss briefly about the general meanings of multiple narratives. First of all, it is necessary to understand that a story can be presented in various ways. Although plot is the same, there can be different characters or the number of characters may differ from one story to another.

Multiple narratives have both pros and cons. It can give the readers ways to look at things from different angles. One narrative might miss some important issues, but other narratives may clarify the events to the readers. It provides readers with ample of sources to learn different facts about a certain historical, cultural events. However, the multiple narratives can baffle the readers because sometimes it is difficult to figure out which one is authentic, realistic and closer to the fact.

The term ‘mutiny’ is very deceptive and misleading. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, ‘mutiny’ is an open revolt against constituted authority. There is no doubt that the army was abundantly involved in the uprising and that the drive was supplied by the Bengal army. But there were signs of disaffection and rebellion in some regiment of the other presidencies as well. The outbreak, in its whole length and duration, was neither confined to the army nor was it a mutiny in the ordinary sense of the term, i.e. a defiance of the established pattern of deference and of obedience to constituted authority.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan takes the mutiny as an Indian revolt, a rebellion that challenged the authority of the then government. But he very skillfully avoids the use of the word ‘constituted’ or lawful as the attribute of that authority. Similarly, he also does not use the term ‘mutiny’. He calls it a ‘revolt’ and not a mutiny. In fact, one gets the impression after

reading his book that he considered the mutiny, a part of a larger ‘revolt’ hinting to the popular nature of this uprising (12).

The Indian rebellion of 1857, which is popularly known as Mutiny, occurred not because of a single factor but of multiple factors over time. The sepoys were local soldiers, mostly Hindus or Muslims who were recruited into the company’s army. The mutiny began with a series of military revolts. It was possible only after the debate among the soldiers themselves was settled. Some were in favor of it while others were against it. However, the major cause of this event was the petting and pampering for the sepoys. What is more obvious is the fact that British believed the activities of the preachers to have been a main cause of the mutiny. The outbreak of the mutiny sparked a vigorous debate in England on the desirability or otherwise of the conversion of India.

Lord Robers, recalling his days as a subaltern in forty one years in India (1897) writes of the cartridges that when the sepoys were solemnly assured by their officers. They had been greased with perfectly unobjectionable mixture. Nothing was easier for the men belonging to the regiments quartered near Calcutta to ascertain from the low caste native workmen. The Indian soldiers were dissatisfied with their pays as well as with certain changes in regulations, which they interpreted as part of a plot to force them to adopt Christianity. This belief was strengthened when the British furnished the soldiers with cartridges coated with grease made from the fat of cows, objectionable for Hindus and pigs (anathema to Muslims): “The British replaced the cartridges . . . at the Fort, that the assurances of their officers were not in accordance with facts” (57).

The Indian mutiny can be analyzed from multiple perspectives. In other words, it has religious, political, historical, psychological, technical, cultural, social, ideological and

economical, factors. More sophisticated historical reading on Mutiny found a range of causes for the bubbling discontent that led to open rebellion. The punitive tax collective system, a succession of British territorial seizures and the rise of aggressive Christian evangelism among others were taken to be the major factors that incited rebellion.

According to religious point of view, Hindus and Muslims were infuriated due to the fact that British had given the sepoy, a kind of new Enfield rifle which included fats of cows and pigs. Religiously, it was an unholy acts in part of them. Hindus and Muslims felt insulted due to the humiliating and disrespecting behavior of the British.

Similarly, political motive also plays a role in inciting the event. Indians were jealous of British rule in India, while Europe had ill motive to rule over the country and exploit its resources as much as possible in the name of civilizing its citizens. It was also felt that the previous lack of consultation between rulers and ruled had been another significant factor in contributing to the uprising. In consequence, Indians were drawn into government at a local level. Though on a limited scale, a crucial precedent had been set with the creation of a new 'white collar' Indian elite. It was further stimulated by the opening of universities at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, a result of the Indian Universities Act.

So, alongside the values of traditional and ancient India, there was an emergence of a new professional middle class in no way bound by the values of the past. Their ambition can only have been stimulated by Queen Victoria's Proclamation of November 1858, in which it is expressly stated by Roberts:

We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to our other subjects...it is our further will that... our subjects of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to

offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity, duly to discharge. (14)

The rebellion had two immediate consequences, the exiling of the last Mugal emperor, Bahadur Shah, to Burma and the founding of the British raj as the East India Company was dissolved and India placed under the direct rule of the British government.

The first and foremost controversy about the Uprising of 1857 is about its nature and character. Was it a mutiny or a war of independence? To the British people, it was a mutiny not because it had challenged their rule in India but because they considered it a revolt against a lawful and constituted authority. The event was branded as mutiny for the first time by the then secretary of state of India Earl Stanley while reporting the situation to the British parliament. Later on, most of the British writers followed the trend. A patriotic British perspective was that it was ‘just a mutiny’, not any other, no matter how objective the writer might have been.

Even those who later condemned the British policy of oppression and injustice in India did not accept it as a national struggle for independence. It was not a military mutiny but the symptoms of deep discontent among the whole populations. Therefore, he stressed the point that only military reforms would not meet the dangers threatening British power in India.

Arther D. Innes, another British author, who seems to be less biased and more methodical than others, is also not certain about the true character of the uprising. He is of the view that “the truth has to be found somewhere between those who say that the revolt was simply a mutiny of sepoy in a panic and those who call the event as an organized revolt” (10).

Though more positive and objective in his view, Innes was still careful enough to avoid the use of words ‘war of independence’. Instead, he preferred to use the words ‘organized revolt.’ Lord Ellenborough, who became the president of the board of control of the East India

Company in 1858 wrote: “We must admit that, under the circumstances, the hostilities which have been carried on, in Oudh have rather the character of legitimate war than that of rebellion” (11).

Although, he confines his statement only to the events in Oudh but it gives us a hint into the red character of the whole episode if one generalizes his comments in the context of the uprising of 1857. It was in Oudh that the military revolt had expanded into a popular rebellion involving all sections of the society. It was affected by the uprising more than any other part of India (12).

Charles Canning, the Governor General and the viceroy of India recognized the sentiments of the rising as something more than a mutiny: “The struggle that we have had, has been more like a national war than a local insurrection. In its magnitude, duration, scale of expenditure and in some of its moral features it partakes largely of the former character” (13).

Tara Chand, one of the most reputed writers on Indian history, declares the uprising of 1857 to be a war for the liberation of India from the yoke of foreigners. According to him, there were two most important causes of this event. The first was the ‘mortal offence to the dignity and self-respect of the ruling class, which had immense social influence over the India masses. And the other was the alienation and antagonizing of the masses because of the oppressive economic policies, offensive laws, interferences in social and religious sensitivities measures and acts of severe discrimination against them (14). In fact, one can say that grievances against the rule of East India Company (EIC) were not limited to the ruling class only but it was widespread phenomena among the masses of people.

N.K. Nigam, an Indian writer, declares it a popular insurrection, of course with a little exaggeration when he writes that “Every street become a fighting arena and every house a

barricade. He (common Indian) had no weapons to fight as they had already been taken away from him by the Indian soldiers. But he still had sword and stone and he made use of both” (21). However, this statement should not be taken as if it was the situation all over India.

Another question of importance that has been raised by several writers is about the planning and organization of the uprising. Was it preplanned and organized? Although the causes of uprising were deep rooted and can be traced to several decades prior to the uprising, there is no evidence available to suggest that the event was preplanned and well organized. Even the British writers agree that the sepoys took their leap blindly in the dark, not knowing where they were going and where it would lead to.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, who was an eye witness to the events during the uprising, has clearly stated that there was no planning or organized conspiracy behind the uprising. He says, “The manner in which the rebellion spread, first here, then there, now breaking out in this place and now in that, is alone good proof that there existed no widespread conspiracy”(29).

The unbridled and uncontrolled manner in which the rebel operated and took their decisions in Delhi and the way they disobeyed Bahadur Shah, the unwilling symbolic head of the uprising proves that there was no planning and organization behind the uprising. Sir Syed refers that Bahadur Shah had no effective control over happenings within his own palace. The orders for the killing of the British women, and children in the Red Fort were issued by lesser authorities without the consent of the emperor (32).

Another very widely believed misconception about the nature of the uprising among the British writers is that it was purely Muslim intrigue. They believed that the Hindus who participated in the fighting were instigated and made to rise by the Muslims. This is mainly because of the assumption on the part of the British that as they had snatched political power

from the Muslims, they wanted to overthrow the British rule to regain their lost positions in the subcontinent. But the spark of disaffection, it is generally agreed upon, were kindled among the Hindu sepoys who feared an attack upon their caste, honor and self-respect. The civil rising in Oudh, Bihar and central India were mostly led by the Hindus. But the British believed it was the Muslims who fanned the flames of discontent and placed themselves at the head of the movement, for they saw in these religious grievances of the Hindus the stepping stone to political power (37).

The researcher again likes to refer to what Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had to say about the concept of a Muslim conspiracy and Jihad against the British. Ahmad totally dismisses the idea that it was a religious war launched by the Muslims against the British.

Alexander Duff, the Scottish Missionary and one of the founders of Calcutta University says that as the British did not interfere with the Mohammadans on the practice of their religion, the ideal of the religious crusade against the British could not be entertained. In other words, the Muslims neither had the excuse nor the legitimate reason to declare a holy war against the British. Apart from the role of Muslims in the uprising, it is also important to determine whether religion had a role in British historians assert that it was a religious war, fought by the Hindus and the Muslims together against the Christians and Christianity (44).

Many people believe that Persians and Russians were also responsible for fanning the spark of the rebellion into a full-fledged revolt. Since they were jealous of the European high-handedness in Indian territory, they had been plotting some kinds of conspiracies to move away the European rulers, so that they could enjoy the resources of the country. However, none of the Russian agents was ever caught or seen in the courts of the local rulers participating in the revolt. So, it could have been just exaggeration.

The same was the case with the Persian involvement. A poster was posted on the back wall of Jamia Masjid, Delhi purporting to be a proclamation from the shah of Iran, which stated that “the Persian forces had crossed the Afgan border and were marching from Herat to India to liberate Delhi from Christian rule” (12).

According to the poster, over five hundred Persian soldiers were present in Delhi in disguise. Acting on these sentiments of Lord Ripon Vicery, from 1880 to 1885, extended the power of local self-government and sought to remove racial practices in the law courts by the Ilbert Bill. But the so called liberal and progressive policy was reactionary and backward creating new elites and confirming old attitudes. The Ilbert Bill had the effect only of causing a white mutiny and the end of the prospect of perfect equality before the law. In 1886 measures were adopted to restrict Indian entry into the civil service.

Likewise, Europe had its Empirical records whereas India had its history of colonization since the early seventeenth century. In the same way, if we observe the rebel technically, the sepoy thought that they had to bite the cartridge, which was not an advanced rifle and they felt dominated and insulted by the Europeans as the sepoy had to do what they were asked to do by the colonizers.

Two factors ensured the ideological significance of the rebellion. First was the explosion of British media, which coincided neatly with the timing of the rebellion. This unprecedented expansion allowed for the first time the event of an imperial conflict to reach the mass audience in Britain. Second was the spectacle of the massacre of British women and children at Kanpur on July 15, 1857, and the threat of a second massacre at the garrison at Lucknow. These events involving as they did the fate of innocent British women and children seemed to provide proof of

the racial depravity of mutinous sepoy while simultaneously justifying vengeance on a scale that might otherwise have provoked moral outrage in Britain.

From the point of view of economy, the main cause of war was the feeling of wealth. Even though the cause of war seemed at the beginning due to fats used in the rifle, the main reason was Indians feeling of being exploited by the Europeans. Their natural resources were captured by the Europeans for their own economic benefit, which was intolerable for the Indians.

Historians argue that Britain built an informal economic empire through control of trade and finance in Latin America after the independence of Spanish and Portuguese colonies about 1820. By the 1840s, Britain had adopted a highly successful policy of free trade that gave it dominance in the trade of much of the world. After losing its first Empire to the Americans, Britain then turned its attention towards Asia, Africa, and the Pacific.

Bosworth, in his historical narrative, writes that after the defeat of Napoleonic France in 1815, Britain enjoyed a century of almost unchallenged dominance and expanded its imperial holdings around the globe. Increasing degrees of internal autonomy were granted to its white settler colonies in the 20th century (17).

Mercantilism was the basic policy imposed by Britain on its colonies. Mercantilism meant that the government and the merchants became partners with the goal of increasing political power and private wealth, to the exclusion of other empires. The government protected its merchants and kept others out by trade barriers, regulations, and subsidies to domestic industries in order to maximize exports from and minimize imports to the realm. The government had to fight smuggling, which became a favorite American technique in the 18th century to circumvent the restrictions on trading with the French, Spanish or Dutch. The goal of mercantilism was to run trade surpluses so that gold and silver would pour into London. The

government took its share through duties and taxes, with the remainder going to merchants in Britain. The government spent much of its revenue on a superb Royal Navy, which not only protected the British colonies but threatened the colonies of the other empires, and sometimes seized them. Thus, the British Navy captured New Amsterdam (New York) in 1664. The colonies were captive markets for British industry, and the goal was to enrich the mother country (48-49).

Debate continues about the economic impact of British imperialism on India. The issue was actually raised by conservative British politician Edmund Burke, who in the 1780s vehemently attacked the East India Company. He claimed that Warren Hastings and other top officials had ruined the Indian economy and society. Indian historian Rajat Kanta Ray (1998) continues this line of argument. He argues that the new economy brought by the British in the 18th century was a form of "plunder" and a catastrophe for the traditional economy of Mughal India. Ray accuses the British of depleting the food and money stocks and imposing high taxes that helped cause the terrible famine of 1770, which killed a third of the people of Bengal as mentioned in the book of Chakravarty (180).

Rejecting the Indian nationalist account of the British as alien aggressors who seized power by brute force and impoverished all of India, British historian P.J. Marshall argues that the British were not in full control. Instead, they were players in what was primarily an Indian play and in which their rise to power depended upon excellent cooperation with Indian elites. Marshall admits that much of his interpretation is still rejected by many historians. Marshall argues that the prosperity of the formerly benign Mughal rule gave way to poverty and anarchy. Marshall further argues that the British takeover did not make any sharp break with the past. The British largely delegated control to regional Mughal rulers and sustained a generally prosperous

economy for the rest of the 18th century. Marshall notes the British went into partnership with Indian bankers and raised revenue through local tax administrators and kept the old Mughal rates of taxation. Professor Ray agrees that the East India Company inherited an onerous taxation system that took one-third of the produce of Indian cultivators (72).

In terms of cultures, Indians felt that they were dominated and imposed upon their typical Indian culture which means the deterioration of Indian culture by the Europeans. Similarly, it seemed that India was widely dominated by British colonization language, fashion and manner. Psychologically, Indians were against foreign intervention as they actually did not like the idea of British imposing their hegemony over the Indians though their ideology was that they were there to civilize them. So, Indians were irritated by the British raj in their country. Several other factors specific to the decades just prior to the rebellion added fuel to the fire of the Bengal sepoys' discontent.

First, there was the rapid expansion of British power in the sub-continent, signaled by the annexation of Awadh in 1856. The final conquest of the Punjab had discontented many soldiers in the Bengal army, who had been receiving extra pay for serving in an area outside of company control. Once that Punjab officially became part of the company's territories on 1849, the batta ceased, causing grumbling irritation in the ranks.

Second, sepoys in Bengal army increasingly feared that the British meant to convert the population of India to Christianity. Christian missionary activity had in fact increased dramatically in the 1840s and 1850s, following an 1834 Act that receded the East India Company's right to keep British people out of India. Although many missionaries believed they held only the best intentions for Indian people, they were often over jealous and almost always publicly critical of Islam and Hinduism, including not a few Bengal army officers.

Indeed, Christianity in India was vital element in the liberal Punjab to reform and uplift Indian society begun in earnest with the governor generalship of Lord William Bentinck in 1828(29).

Yet, both Hindus and Muslims often felt deep horror at British Christian evangelism. Rumors of British intent to resort to forced conversion circulated widely in the light of changes in landholding, law and customary rights to recently imposed. Mistrust of British intentions with regard to religion were particularly acute in Bengal army where high caste sepoys believed the religious tolerance traditionally allowed them by British officers was rapidly being reserved.

For all these reasons, it appeared to many Bengal army sepoys and especially those from the newly conquered area of Awadh that the British were in fact bent on seizing power, destroying their traditions and subverting their religion in order to convert them to Christianity.

Some British writers who call it a mutiny admit that it was little short of ‘real war of independence’. E.D. Thompson makes the following comment about the controversy and the nature of the uprising:

Two factors differentiated the mutiny from the host of ‘little wars’ which the English fought in Asia and Africa during the 19th century .In most of these wars, the final issue was never seriously in doubt, but for four months during the summer of 1857, it seemed that the mutiny might have developed into a real war of independence, which would make re-conquest impossible. (27)

One cannot find a better conclusion to these parts of the paper than the Syed has given in his book. He concludes his arguments about the nature of the uprising of 1857 in these words:

It was obviously not a mutiny – the word mutiny was labeled to it by the British to distort and divert the view and blur the judgment. On the other hand, it was not a war in the ordinary sense of the term for war. Its essence is motivated by the

desire to conquer, and the people of the subcontinent who fought so heroically in 1857, did not aim at any conquest. If they wanted to conquer any people or any land at all, it was their own land and their own people, something quite different from the conquest aimed at and achieved by duplex and cleave, for example, we must, therefore, put emphasis on the word ‘independence rather than on the word ‘war’ and dismiss the word mutiny as a cruel joke, if nothing else. (37)

Thus, he opines that the incident was not really a mutiny, although it was called so by the Europeans so that they could gain the support from naïve citizens of the country and they could further achieve their vested interest to exploit the country and its people.

The historical narrative of the Indian mutiny has also diverse narratives. The European perspective to the history is different from the Indian perspective. Some of the European views seem supportive to Indian culture, while others are rather negative or even neutral. Whereas, the Indian ideology regarding the issue seems much supportive to its history.

First of all, even the names given to this event by both the Indian historians, as well as the European are different. Indians called it the First Nationalist Uprising, while the Europeans regarded it a mutiny by a large sections of the Bengal army.

The Indians would like to brand this event as a nationalist uprising. It was unusual in that it did attract Muslims and Hindus to the cause. But the event was clearly confined to the northern India in general and Bengal in particular. On the other hand, the Europeans called it the Bengal mutiny, as it was only supported by the majority of Bengal army, as there could have been the rebel from Bombay and madras armies, who had remained quiet in this case. According to the documentary, one can find a number of references in which it seems the writer’s veneration for the European empire:

All day long the troopers of the third cavalry nursed their wrath at the fate of their comrades who had refused to handle the suspected cartridges. They had seen men whom they regarded as martyrs stripped off their uniform and riveted in chains in front of the whole garrison of the morning of the 9th. Though fear of the British force in the cantonment kept them quiet, Hindu viewed with Musalmaan in muttered execrations of the dominant race. The fact that the day following the punishment parade was a Sunday brought about a certain relaxation from discipline. The men loafed in the bazaars, were taunted by courtesans with lack of courage, and drowned their trouble in strong drink or drew tighter in knots to talk treason. Suddenly a sepoy ran up to the cavalry lines with a thrilling news. The rifles and Artillery are coming to disarm all the native regiments!’ he shouted. (22)

He had watched the 60th falling in for the church parade and, in view of the action taken at Barrackpore and Lucknow- sepoy battalions having been disbanded in both stations for mutinous conduct- he instantly jumped to the conclusion that the military authorities at Meerut meant to steal a march on the disaffected troops. His warning was as a touch laid to a gunpowder train. The 8th cavalry, Malcolm's own corps, swarmed out of bazaar and quarters like angry wasps. Nearly half the regiments ran to secure their picketed horses, armed themselves in hot haste, and galloped to the jail. Smashing open the door, they freed the imprisoned troopers struck off their fetters, and took no measures to prevent the escape of the general horde of convicts. Yet, even in that moment of frenzy, some the men remained true to their colors.

Captain Craigie and lieutenant Melville Clarke, hearing the uproar, mounted their chargers, rode to the lines, and actually brought their troops to the parade ground in perfect

discipline. Meanwhile, they had spread to sepoys. No one knew exactly what caused all the commotion. Wild rumors spread, but no man could speak definitely.

Thus, he tries to clarify that Hindus were not as much angry or irritated by the Europeans as they had been by the Muslims in the country since their different states had the kings and rulers from either the Muslims or the Hindus. The Hindus always wanted to have domination over the Muslims. However, according to the movie, it seems clear that the Hindus were against the British empire as time and again there had been tensions between them and the Indian sepoys, who were mostly the Hindus, especially in Meerut as well as in Delhi.

The movie 'Mangal Pandey', one can clearly find the script written with the valorization of Indian culture, people, as well as the sepoys. The main plot of the film shows the Indians' feelings of nationalism and patriotism. Mangal Pandey angered by the recent actions of the East India Company, declared that he would rebel against his commanders. Having known about Pandey's behavior Sergeant-Major James Hewson went to investigate, only to have Pandey shoot at him. Hewson raised the alarm. His adjutant Lt. Henry Baugh came out to investigate the unrest, Pandey opened fire but hit Baugh's horse instead.

General John Hearsey came out to the parade ground to investigate, and claimed later that Mangal Pandey was in some kind of "religious frenzy". He ordered the Indian commander of the quarter guard Jemadar Ishwori Prasad to arrest Mangal Pandey, but the Jemadar refused. The quarter guard and other sepoys present, with the single exception of a soldier called Shaikh Paltu, drew back from restraining or arresting Mangal Pandey. Shaikh Paltu restrained Pandey from continuing his attack. After failing to incite his comrades into an open and active Rebellion, Mangal Pandey tried to take his own life by placing his musket to his chest and pulling the

trigger with his toe. He managed only to wound himself, and he was court-martialed on 6 April and hanged on 8 April.

Tracy writes that Jemadar Ishwari Prasad was sentenced to death and hanged on 22 April. The regiment was disbanded and stripped off its uniforms because it was felt that it harbored ill-feelings towards its superiors, particularly after this incident. Shaikh Paltu was promoted to the rank of Jemadar in the Bengal Army (17).

Sepoys in other regiments thought these punishments were harsh. The demonstration of disgrace during the formal disbanding helped foment the rebellion in view of some historians. Disgruntled ex-sepoys returned home to Awadh with a desire for revenge.

Therefore, it can be said that Mangal Pandey made a brave attempt, on the part of its maker to bring the life an important chapter from history and make us realize that the freedom people enjoy today is only because of their predecessors, who gave their blood for the nation. The film succeeds in invoking patriotic feelings without any doubt. The turning point of the film, when Mangal Pandey (Aamir Khan) uses the gun cartridge that has been greased with cow and pig fat.

Almost from the moment the first sepoys mutinied in Meerut, the nature and the scope of the Indian rebellion of 1857 has been contested and argued over. Speaking in the House of Commons in July 1857, Benjamin Disraeli labelled it a 'national revolt' while lord Palmerton the P.M. tried to downplay the scope and the significance of the event as a mere military mutiny.

Reflecting this debate, an early historian of the rebellion, Charles Ball, used the word mutiny in his title, but labelled it a struggle for liberty and independence as a people in the text. Historians remain divided in whether the rebellion can properly be considered a war of Indian independence or not, although it is popularly considered to be such in India.

However, there were other arguments against the views regarding the issue. Some opined that it was not a war of independence as India at that time was not united politically, culturally or from other ethnic point of view. Similarly, others believed that the revolt was largely limited to north and central India. While risings occurred elsewhere, they had little impact because of their limited nature. In the same way, the revolt was divided along religious, ethnic and regional lines. A number of revolts occurred in areas not under British rule. They were against native rulers. Other were a result of local internal politics. Likewise, it was supposed that not all of the rebels accepted the return of the Mughals. As even the king of Delhi had no real control over the mutineers. Also the rebellion was put down with the help of other Indian soldiers drawn from the Madras , the Bombay and the Sikh regiments, as majority of the East India Company forces were Indians.

On the other hand, other group of people assumed that the rebellion may indeed be called a war of India's independence due to the number of reasons. First of all, although the rebellion had various causes, most of the rebel Sepoys ,who were able to do so, made their way to Delhi to revive the old Mughal empire that signified national unity for even the Hindus amongst them.

Similarly, there was widespread popular revolt in many areas such as Awadh, Bundelkhand and Rohilkhand .The rebellion was therefore more than just a military rebellion and it spanned more than one region. Moreover, the sepoy did not seek to just revive small kingdoms in their regions. Instead, they repeatedly proclaimed a country wide rebel of the Mughals and vowed to drive out the British from India as they know it then. The main objective of the driving out 'foreigners' from not only one's own area but from their conception of the

entry of India, signifies that some Indian politicians' attempt to belittle the importance of what happened and therefore reflects an imperialistic attitude.

Still others dispute this interpretation. In the U.K. and parts of the commonwealth it is commonly called the 'Indian mutiny' but terms such as 'great Indian mutiny', the 'Sepoy mutiny', the 'Sepoy rebellion', the 'Sepoy war', the 'Great mutiny', the 'rebellion of 1857', 'The Uprising', the 'Mahomedan rebellion', and the 'Revolt of 1857', have also been used. On the other hand, in India and Pakistan it has been termed as the 'War of Independence of 1857' or 'First war of Indian Independence'. The term 'Indian Mutiny' is considered nationalist sentiment. Thus, there is no universally agreed name for the events of this period.

What would the mutiny look like, if one looks at it from the point of view of the mutineers? What did they call it? The mutiny? The first war of independence? Neither did they conceive it as an inversion as the latter days sub-alternists have done. They usually called it a war, and conceived it as a restoration of the sovereignty of the Mughal Empire. Their ideas and institutions reflected this awkward mentality. But more than mentality, it is the emotions that provided the dynamism behind the uprising. These emotions may be summed up in two words, race and religion, in that order. This essay will seek to explore the mentality, the aspirations and emotions of 1857, and do so in the words of the indigenous participants themselves. To those end, both speech and the written word will be utilized, especially unguarded utterances and the reflective proclamations. The first reflects the sentiments of race the second reflects the sentiments of religions, there is a sense of the entire country and its legitimate Mughal sovereignty, but no sense of nationalism as mentioned by Harrison (19).

R.P. Dutta writes that some of the larger meanings of the conflict of 1857 were its effects on Indians in Britain. For those thousands of Indians of all classes already present there, the news

of this conflicts profoundly altered their positions in British society. Working class India servants and seamen found themselves assaulted verbally and otherwise by passersby on the street as ‘johnnysepoy’. Their hitherto relatively easy relationship with British men and women of their own economic class were charged with racial and sexual tensions as lurid rumors and reports flooded London about sepoy atrocities against British men and women and children. Similarly, Indian elites in Britain found their loyalty to the British queen questioned. For example, the huge delegation from the deposed king of Awadh, Wajid Ali Shah which included his mother, a brother and a son who came to plead for his restoration had to alter their mission fundamentally. As the news of the fighting began to shape British policies, this Awadh delegation suddenly proposed that Wajid Ali Shah be released from prison in Calcutta and put in charge of a British army that would reconquer north India in the name of Queen Victoria (22).

From 1857 onward, British attitude towards Indians generally, including toward Indians in Britain, shifted. British racial theory altered, based on 1857 and other colonial conflicts in New Zealand and Jamaica. Hence, both immediately and subsequently, the events of 1857 reshaped and continue to affect the meanings of being South Asian in Britain.

British interference with customs like widow burning and widow remarriage or British enforcement of the intermingling of castes through common messing in prisons and the common carriage of passengers by the rail. British explanation of 1857 have continued to rely heavily on Victorian assumptions about the hazards of British interference with India ‘superstition’.

Such interpretations are deeply embedded with pre-existing orientalist discourses about the centrality of religion in Indian life, as well as a post 1857 agenda that sought to delegitimize the uprising by preventing it as ‘irrational’ religious fanaticism. Such an approach not only obfuscates the complete and diverse social, economic and political concerns that prompted the

uprising, it obstructs the real patterns of causality between specific religious issues and unrest. It shows the British fears of rebellion that surround the prohibition of sati in 1829 arguing that the assumptions about the dangers of religious interference that solidified during the sati death had a major impact on determining how the uprising of 1857 was interpreted. The prohibition of sati is frequently portrayed as one of the causes of Indian discontent in 1857 in British historiography, despite glaring contradictions and disjuncture between the two events.

By exploring British experiences of sati as site of contest between 1829 and 1857, this paper will suggest that sati was at best a marginal issue in the unrest of 1857 and the British appropriation of it a major causal factor reveals more about the assumptions and agendas that informed the construction of colonial discourses on 1857 what it does about the reality of the event.

In the words of Dutta, prostitutes are believed to have taken an active role in promoting the mutinies of the 3rd Light cavalry and the 20th native infantry at Meerut. They were also reported to have offered their services to the rebellions at Lucknow and Delhi. Disposition taken later in 1857-58 paint a different picture. However, that prostitutes knew of the imminent uprising in Meerut and even took steps to warn those in authority, though their warnings were not heeded in order to shed light on the conflicting political trajectories of prostitutes during the mutiny, rebellion and to probe the conflicted meanings ascribed to sex work in company north India. I examine criminal court records in the years leading up to 1857. The picture of prostitution and policing that emerges from these records. It is the one, in which officials, police and prostitutes were bound to one another through what may be termed a benevolent paternalism, but a benevolent paternalism that only makes sense in the context of changing attitudes toward the moral economy of enslavement and the rise of a modern discourse of

freedom. These conclusions afford, as well a glimpse of the social economic and cultural mechanism (24).

Of course, history is a contested subject. If one observes this mutiny from the view point of the movie 'Mangal Pandey', one can certainly find that its glorification of Indian nationals, culture, arts, religions etc. since it was directed and produced by an Indian. On the other hand, it shows its contempt towards the European hegemony and dominance. Although there might have been some positive things done by the Europeans but the Indians found it all negative towards them.

Therefore, if one notices why the rebel could not succeed, one can find a number of factors in this regard. Firstly, the mutiny was localized. There were many parts of India, which were not affected by it at all. Especially, the southern parts were remained undisturbed. Even the central and eastern Bengal was also undisturbed. In spite of the fact that the Punjab had been conquered from the Sikhs only eight years before the revolt, it remained quiet. If the people of Punjab had joined the rebels, the story of the revolt would have been absolutely different. As a matter of fact, the rule of Sir John Lawrence was not very popular and he himself was not certain about the loyalty of the people.

The rebels failed on account of the lack of leadership among them. It is true that the Rani of Jhansi was a capable woman, but she was neither the head of all the forces nor an experienced General. They were short of modern weapons and other materials of war. They fought with ancient weapons such as pikes and swords. They were brave and selfless but they were ill disciplined. Sometimes they behaved more like a riotous mob than a disciplined army.

There was no centralized leadership. There was even no co-ordination among them in various parts of the country. Selfishness of the leaders also sapped the strength of the revolt and

prevented its consolidation. As a result, the British succeeded in crushing the leaders of the revolt one by one.

Similarly, the rebels had no forward looking programs to be implemented after the capture of the power. The absence of the modern and progressive programs enabled the reactionary princes and zamindaars to seize the levers of power of the movement. It is these people who had already been defeated by the British and there was nothing new in them which could help them to succeed against the British.

Likewise, the moneylenders were the targets of the attacks by the villagers. They were naturally hostile to the revolt. The merchants also gradually became unfriendly towards the rebels, who were compelled to impose heavy taxes on them, in order to finance the war or to seize their stocks of foodstuffs. The educated Indians also did not support the revolt. They stood for ending the backwardness of their country and they believed that the British government in India was destroying the feudal forces in the country and bringing in a new era of progress in the country. Their view was that the rebels of 1857 stood for the old order along with its superstitions.

The British had great personalities in Sir John Lawrence, Nicholson, Edwards, Neil, etc. who controlled the situation from the beginning to the end and the Indians were no match for them. The personal character of the Bengal troops was also responsible for the failure of the revolt. They were arrogant and were hated in every part of India to which they were sent. At many places, the rebels were crushed by the people themselves.

Similarly, as the British had control over the seas, they were in a positions to pour men and materials into India with practically no difficulty. A large number of troops were at once

sent to India. The Indians fighting with primitive weapons were no match for the British with the Enfield rifles.

The only hope of success for the rebels was to have quick victories. Time factor was against them. It could be taken for granted that the English would be able to get reinforcements from outside and when that happened the revolt collapsed. The rebels appealed to all other sections of society but no appeal was made to the peasants or tillers of the soil. While all other classes were promised a better deal, the peasants were ignored altogether. The inability of rebel leaders to rally the peasants to their side doomed their cause. The revolt got its strength from the princess, ruined noblemen and other feudal interests and those forces were incapable of overthrowing the British government in India.

The opinion of Dr. A.R. Desai is that while England was a capitalist country, India was essentially feudal and the victory of the former was a foregone conclusion:

A capitalist nation is socially, politically, economically and culturally stronger than a feudal people. A capitalist nation has a high sense of patriotism and nationalism since, unlike the feudal people who are physically separated, socially disunited and politically un-amalgamated, it is socially, economically and politically high integrated, living under one political regime and single economic system. This is why throughout the whole history of British conquest one hardly come across Britons who betrayed the interests of Britain in India in contrast to hundreds of Indians, princes, Generals and merchants who went over to the British and assisted them to dominate India. (18)

This fact eninces why Indian rebels couldn't achieve their mission at the time though they were keen to chase the Europeans from their homeland.

In the same note, R.P. Dutta argues:

The rising of 1857 was in its essential character and dominant leadership the revolt of the old conservative and feudal forces and dethroned potentates for their rights and privileges which they saw in process for destruction. The reactionary character of the rising prevented any wide measure of popular support and doomed it to failure. (India today, 274)

Thus, these factors played crucial role in the failure of sepoy rebel, which in turn had a number of effects in both the sides. The moral of British Empire was high with the successful domination over the rebellion. The most significant change was psychological. They were now regarded as the members of an order and not just survivals. They were an integral part of the Indian Empire and had personal relation with the monarch. Queen Victoria declared in her proclamation of 1858 that the British Government in future would not mix the Indian states. The government of India began to rely more and more on the Indian princes on account of the alienation of the feelings of the Indians.

There was a change in the policy of the government of India to westernize the Indians. The British view that all good things came from the West and more of them the better, received a rude shock. The revolt was considered in on respect as a resurgence of the old order against western innovations. It was now thought that the upper classes must be conciliated as the humbler classes followed them. The upper classes were the most conservative in a conservative country and all interference was given up in the future.

On the other hand, the revolt of 1857 created a lot of bitterness between the Indians and the Englishmen. In this regard, Garratt writes:

The English killed their prisoners without trials and in a manner held by all Indians to be the height of barbarity, sewing Mohammedans in pig skins, smearing them with pork fat before execution and burning their bodies and forcing Hindus to defile themselves. They also massacred thousands of civilians not only in Delhi, but also in country.(112)

When the rebellion started, both the Hindus and Muslims took part in it in large numbers. However, the Muslims were more violently anti British than the Hindus and the British feared the Muslims more than the Hindus. The result was that the hand of repression fell more heavily on the Muslims than on the Hindus .Many of the Muslims were hanged or exiled, e.g., Nawab Sahibs of Jhajjar, Ballabhgarh, Faruknar and Farukabad were hanged in Delhi on 18 November, 1857 alone. Muslim quarters were everywhere in target. Their property was widely confiscated. The result of all this was that the Muslims came to have annoyance towards the Hindus. The difference between the two began to develop and they drifted away from each other.

The problem of Hindu-Muslim unity became impossible to tackle and ultimately that led to the partition of India in 1947 A.D. The revolt of 1857 did not leave India unaffected. It is contended that perhaps a more fortunate occurrence than the mutiny of 1857 never occurred in India. It swept the Indian sky clear of many clouds. It disbanded the lazy, pampered army which thought that in its hundred years of life, it had done splendid service. It showed to the world that the English possessed courage and national spirit which made light of disaster and which did not care for the heavy odds.

As a direct result of the revolt of 1857, the English East India Company was ended and the government of India was taken over by the crown. The board of control and the court of

Directors were abolished and their place was taken by the secretary of State for India and the India Council.

The result of the uprising created a feeling among the British that they had conquered and were entitled to rule. The Mugal emperor was banished and Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom was declared sovereign. The British east India Company, which had represented the British government in India and which acted as agent of the Mughals, was closed down and replaced by direct control from London through a Governor General.

Prior to the revolt, some British officials in India saw Indians as equals and dreamed of a long term partnership between Britain and India to the benefit of both. These officials had a sympathetic knowledge of Indian languages and culture. Afterwards, fewer officials saw value in anything Indians and many developed a sense of racial superiority, depicting India as a chaotic and dangerous place where the different communities, especially Muslims and Hindus, were only kept from butchering one another by Britain's existence of power.

As these stories indicate, the history of the Rebellion, like all historical subjects, is continually in the process of being revised and re-interpreted. Scholars in post-colonial period in particular have challenged British centered accounts of the rebellion, emphasizing instead the widespread nature of the conflict among Indian civilians as well as soldiers, and the scale of British retribution and violence. In recent year, historians of gender and racial theory have also contributed to the reinterpretation of the Rebellion by emphasizing the important consequences of the conflict for imperial ideologies.

All of the multiple narratives mentioned above have helped to deepen our understanding of this bloody, brutal, but significant conflict. The rebellion was both a military mutiny and a

peasant rebellion. It included murders and atrocities on both the British and the Indian sides and it was significant not just in military terms but in ideological and historical terms as well.

Chapter III: Conclusion

To sum up, the present discussion on history as a site of contestation, in regard to the documentary 'The Red Year' and the movie 'Mangal Pandey', it can be deduced that no historical facts are objective, since they are bound by the time and the ideology of the writers, who are influenced by the then political, cultural, religious as well as historical aspects.

No doubt, Tracy's description with supportive ideology for the European empire over the Indian sepoys, at least reveal some of his personal feelings, that is, he has his solidarity towards the European hegemony, while he gave a little space for the patriotic feelings of the Indian sepoys, which seems biased in much sense, as the lens he viewed towards the Eastern traditions and culture was dimmed by European influence.

On the other hand, if one perceives the movie 'Mangal Pandey', as it has been produced and directed by the Indians, in order to gain popularity with certain patriotic viewpoint, what one can find there is, it valorizes Indian soldiers' bravery, courage, unity among others, whereas it ignores various drawbacks and loopholes of Indian attitude, superstitious beliefs, deceptions and uncivilized manners etc. in order to prove the supremacy of the country. Therefore, the main point is, who are the observers and who are being observed and from what point of view is much more important in the context of any historical analyses.

Moreover, as history can be interpreted from various angles and aspects, it may be true to refer the Indian mutiny as an 'uprising' or 'a sepoy rebel' or even 'a war of independence'. For the patriotic Indian historicists, the rebel could be seen as the initiation of a war of independence, while the same could be described as a betrayal of Indian sepoys against the European empire.

However, as a journalist and professional European writer, one cannot help appreciating his coverage of the incidents and as much as realistic fictional characters that overwhelm all of its readers, may they be Indians or Europeans. It is also true that there are readers within India who supports the views of the writer as well as who disagree with his writing, also it is the same case within European readers or critics.

At the same time, one can say that the acts of brutality committed by both the sides during the uprising, can not be justified by any standard of morality and humanity.

The killing of innocent English women and children was never justifiable. On the other hand the size of the brutality committed by the British after they recaptured Delhi was far greater than what had been done by the rebels. The so called civilized British, butchered and humiliated, Indians including princes of the royal Mugal family, the most undignified and uncivilized manner. Still, it was a proud moment in the history of the subcontinent and history must not forget the patriotic men and women who gave their all in the cause of redeeming their country from the burden of the alien rulers.

As, a history is the combination of both fact and fiction, it is never too easy to observe it with full credibility. There remains certain loopholes as well as authenticity. It works with the ideology of a writer or perceiver, what he/she is intending to portray in the picture. It rests on the readers, how they look into the work of art, according to their attitudes of observation.

Thus, the question of any historical study is a complex subject matter. Since, it can be assessed from social, cultural, political, historical, economic, ideological, and many other perspectives on the one hand and these views observed by certain groups of people of a certain period of time can not be identical in the way of perceiving things or internalizing them.

Having said this, it is pertinent to say that history is really a subject of multiple narratives or interpretations, in which one particular event can be seen from various points of views as required, such as political, religious, historical, economic, cultural etc. It means there is no event without multiple interpretations. Only the thing is that one needs to know whether from which point of view it should be observed or analyzed. Therefore, it would be right to say that history is a site of contestation.

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