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British-Indian and Hindu-Muslim relationship in *A passage to India*

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Dinesh Pandit

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

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Abstracts

A Passage to India is presented from oriental perspective E.M. Forster as a writer belongs to the colonial block and his work as a liberal humanism comes under the shadow. The domination of orientalist culture is overt throughout the novel. Forester's mind, thoughts and activities are circumscribed by orientalist perspective. This orientalist thought creates the picture of supremacy of Anglo- Indian characters upon native- Indian characters. He belongs to different culture. There is a conflict between two different culture related people like British, Indians and native- Indian (Hindus and Muslim). The cultural conflict is the major discussion of the research. People of different culture people have different practices. Forster faces difficulty to inscribe the cultural practices held in India. Forster belongs to alien culture, however, he attempts to translate the Indian culture. As he picks the Muslim as a protagonist of the novel from the majority population from the Hindus city named Chndarpore. In his attempt to represent 'real India', Forester is failure.

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Introduction

Edward Morgan Forster's *A Passage to India* (1924), one of the best novels ever written, was the land mark in his career as a writer. In spite of the varied and divergent responses it has evoked among its critics and readers, the novel has been recognized as a classic of the twentieth century British fiction. Forster has made a vigorous attempt to depict social and political life of British in India through this novel. The novel, *A Passage to India* may be interpreted in various ways and on many levels: as a liberal classic, a sociological work of fiction, a predominantly political novel, a creative work about the mysterious east, a symbolist syndrome, a mythical archetypal work, and the expression in art of a liberal Englishman's interpretation of the seemingly incomprehensible and baffling India.

Forster's Novel, *A Passage to India* as the apex of his literary achievement, deals with the human relationship. His attitudes are liberal, humanist reformist, romantic; and yet they are constantly being questioned from the standpoint of a quizzical moral realism by the author himself. Hence, his conviction is that art has a humanist power, and that it has a central role perform in the culture as a whole. This humanist view of art and this moral skepticism is apparent in all of Forster's novels. This, in one sense can be taken as the adventure of the liberal humanist mind in this novel also. Although his personal experience and impression that he received during his stay in India have played a vital role in shaping the structure of the novel, he has presented those impressions in a very impersonal way. He presents India's social and political image in a philosophical and symbolic manner.

Forster is a celebrated liberal humanist and his position in a social framework that prefers to be labeled as the champion of personal relationship. He speaks or writes a sense of individualism, a sense of humanism, and a sense of liberalism. All these qualities are overwhelmingly present every where in his expression. Thus, the novel which apparently seems to be concerned with the personal relationship between two individuals, an English and Indian on the one hand, is also concerned with another kind of relationship between Hindu and Muslim community on the other with in Indian. The novel is mainly concerned with a seemingly inexplicable universe, a cosmos which cannot be discerned by a rational intellect or even by some sharp sensibility. As we know, Forster was trained and educated in western European rational tradition, his mentality and attitude is influenced or even shaped according to that tradition and it works in formation of the novel.

A Passage to India deals with conflict of cultures in terms of ambiguous personal relationship between an English and an Indian subject during British rule in India. This research notices the gulf between the British and Indian at macro level and the internal conflict between Hindu and Muslim at the micro level of novel. It seems overall conflict belongs to a civilization conflict. There is clash between different civilizations, especially English civilization, Hindu civilization and Muslim civilization in this novel. This literary work represents various cultural clashes.

Any work of art, be it poetry or novel, is a verbal artifact which is subject to varied interpretations. Being no exception to this, in Forster's *A Passage to India*, the political implication of a 'novel' has been emphasized and interpreted from various

points of view. N. C. Chaudhuri writes, ‘*A Passage to India* has possibly been an even greater influence in British imperial politics than in English literature.’ This view demonstrates that the novel has been a weapon of power in the hand of imperialists to impose power over the orient. Other critics have observed the text from different angles, F.R. Leavis considers *A Passage to India* a classic of the liberal spirit a powerful voice of British liberalism towards India. Lionel Trilling evaluates the novel in terms of the artistic expression of the liberal imagination.

The social image depicted in *A Passage to India*, is basically one of schism and division. The English are little gods and they create their own heaven in the exclusive Anglo- Indian club. Hindu and Muslims are entangled in various forms of social relationship and create their private little world cut off from each other. Hindus and Muslims, who face dual problem of confrontation with the English and also with each other, friendship between them are formed and forged but misunderstandings and alienation cast a dark shadow over the world of human and social relationship. Bitterness replaces affections, hatred comes in the place of love, and the ways of men towards men are strewn with thorns. Forster effectively protects the value of personal relations; they are for him necessary element of humanistic and liberal creed, and consequently the blindness of the Anglo-Indian to this intensely significant value is the principle cause of this human and social tragedy as depicted in the text.

A Passage to India is a technically self- conscious and sophisticated book. But more symbolist readings of the novel are not sufficient. Forster’s representation of Indian society is, certainly Indian, and its life in the period of the British Raj, is, for Forster, something more than just a ‘symbolic’ landscape. Forster’s rational mind

seems to be fascinated by the grandeur of Indian landscape and divergent cultural forms of India, and his attentiveness to the character and characteristics of Indian communities, religions, customs and more is always apparent. There is another kind of complexity in the novel- the complexity of a densely created society, and a densely created web of relationship which is fundamental to the book. Forster's rational mind is confused, overwhelmed and baffled when he encounters India.

The political implications of *A Passage to India* clearly reflect the tragedy of the British in India. Forster suggests, is that the tragedy in part due to the projection on Indian tropical soil of the British mentality molded by the British public school system. Ronny Heaslop has no perception of the truth of personal relationship between the English and the Indian, and the only bond he can conceive is that which subsists between the ruler and ruled. The British public school cultivated the qualities of leadership capacity or action, tact, courage and patriotism, but it also created narrowness and a feeling of superiority.

The discussion between Aziz and his friends about the English in India is very revealing and underscores the complex nature of indo- British political and social relationship of that period. The English in England are good and hospitable. But after their arrival in British India they are claimed by the herd mentality of bureaucratic Anglo- India. The political images are marked by feeling of mutual distrust between Anglo- Indian and Indians. In this context it worth remembering that Forster's portrayal of political and racial tensions in the wake of Aziz's trial and Mohorrum and the spectacles of panic of Anglo-Indian is considered rather exaggerated.

Even though Forster attempts to translate Indian culture through English language; he finds it difficult to translate Indian experience in the rhetoric of English language. In course of presenting colonial India, Forster ultimate take side of English people. He creates superior English characters in Indian community. Here, the focus on the text as an autonomous entity, sufficient in itself, living possibilities open to multiple interpretations, assigns full power to the text. Those critics and theorists who stress on the textuality of the text view the text doesn't merely refer to the external existential reality but that text, by the power of language, creates its own reality. And the reality that the text creates becomes even more powerful than the actuality itself. From this perspective it can be a god that text creates its own reality, and that the text is capable of generation its meaning. It is, however, not to say that text emerges out of void. The text is discursive formation which does take place in space and time. Michel Foucault seems to be right when he says that the discourse involves power. To say that social and political power operates through discourse is to say that the text as a form of discourses is an instrument of power; it is also to say that identity of the self is established by discriminating. It is associated with the "non- self as the other", so as to make it easier to control, to dominate and to rule the other. In this sense, to represent the other through the medium of discourse is to exercise power over the "other". Similarly, Edward Said relates this notion in studying the relationship between the east and the west and argues that orientalism, as a discourse of the orientalist about orient, contributed in sustaining and strengthening the western imperial rule by making statements about orient by representing the orient as primitive, uncivilized , inferior, and as and other of the west.

Forster's subject of interest is problematic in cultural discrepancy and

colonial perspectives. There is a problem within the Indian community as well. They seem united because of their common stand point against the British Empire. Dr. Aziz and professor Godbole are two standing out individuals in their religious groups respectively. They are the spokesmen of their different religious communities. The author reveals to us that the behavior of Indian people towards the English is hostile. By the same token Hindu and Muslim in the novel are also hostile to each other. These cultural conflicts are the subject in this present dissertation.

Forster tries to represent the life of Indo- British culture with relation to native Indian culture of Chandrapore. Chandrapore is Hindu state, why and the question in Forster selects the Muslim as a protagonist of the novel, in a setting where majority of Hindu people are living). It seems clear that Forster is near to Muslim community and tries to carry the fraction in Indian community. Now Forster's liberal humanism comes under the question. In the novel, we find some colonial element where the western people feel themselves a primary, a civilized; they feel that they have come to India to educate, to civilize, to settle it, and to rule over it. Forster attempts to translate the culture thorough the foreign language but being the foreigner is not very successful in representing the real India. All the above reasons clarify that Forster is colonial a humanist; he himself is western, and his education and thought were also western. Forster fails to represent 'Real India' is the major point of discussion in this research.

Literature Review

A Passage to India has elicited much criticism since its publication. The novel has been viewed from colonial, cultural, racial and symbolical perspectives as well. Multiplicity of the meaning is an inherent feature of the literary text. *A Passage to India*, too, time and again has evoked varied and divergent responses from readers, critics and scholars. The basic theme of the novel is liberal humanist's study of personal relations among the individuals who differ from each other culturally and racially in terms of religious faiths culturally discrepant as. It is difficult to fix a single meaning of the text. It would not be an exaggeration to say that *A Passage to India* falls totally at the mercy of readers for its meaning. That is the reason why it has been perceived from divergent perspectives. Peter Burra has rightly pointed out that its, "thought like music's can not be fixed, nor its meaning defined" (qtd. in Bradbury 133). This is not to say that to search a particular meaning of novel is a vain enterprise. V. A. Shahane in his book *E.M. Forster: A Passage to India* has interpreted the book "as a liberal classic, a sociological work of fiction a predominantly political novel, a creative work about the mysterious east, a symbolic syndrome, a mythical archetypal and expression in art of a liberal English man's interpretation in the seemingly incompressible and baffling India"(1)

A Passage to India basically portrays a world of cultural encounter between the East as represented by the native Indian characters and their religion and cultural preoccupation, and the West as represented by the bureaucratic Anglo-Indian and English people in a social, cultural and political context. There is a cultural dispute between East and West within east itself. This present dissertation aims to study this

cultural conflict between British and Indian at and also that between the two Indian communities, the Hindu and Muslim. The British Indian relationship is clearly seen in Forster's novel, Forster himself speaks of the book saying that it deals with the difficulties of the English in India. But, at the same time, he comes to realize the seriousness and complexity of the book and says:

When I began the book, I thought of it as a little bridge of sympathy between the east and west. But this confusing has to go my sense of truth forbids any thing so comfortable.... The book is not really about politics, though it is the political aspect that caught the general public and made it sell. It's about something wider than politic, about the search of the human race for a more lasting home, about the universe as embodied in the Indian earth lurking in the Marbar and the release symbolized by the birth of Krishna. It is rather desires to be philosophic and poetic" (qtd.in Stallybrass 15)

Forster's assertion suggests at the philosophic and symbolic preoccupations that are present in the novel. It is natural for a literary text like *A Passage to India* to have various association concerning its meaning. But what the novel pre- dominantly deals with are the contrasted cultural relations which ultimately pose a remarkable difference. Cultural difference plays very significant role in the novel. Is their any possibility of friendship between people belonging to two different culture? At the very beginning of the novel Dr. Aziz and his friends argue "whether or not it is possible to be friend with an English man. Mahmoud Ali argued that it was not, Hamidullah disagreed" (12). Indian critics' response to the suffering of Indian people in the novel is remarkably different from those of the western especially the British. The interpretations of the

critics from either side are influenced and even shaped by their habits of thought and cultural inheritance that they share.

Most of the western critics, speaking from the European point of view, take *A Passage to India*, as an encounter between the east and the west while regarding the west as superior in its culture and civilization. Highlighting the western imperial culture, they try to justify the British presence in India by presenting Indian civilization as alien, incomprehensible and ultimately unapproachable. Whereas Indian critics, for their part, stress upon expressing colonized mentality and colonial people's experience. Speaking from the native perspective, they are critical of imperial Anglo-Indian attitude towards natives and of Forster's misrepresentation of Indian life and character. They take Forster's picture of India as discriminating because Forster himself has inherited an orientalist mind set and looks India from Orientalist eyes.

Forster puts interest in human relationship over all in the novel *A Passage to India*. Here, relationship in terms of separation Lionel Trilling has said:

Forster's novel, in *A Passage to India*, is hugely expanded and everywhere dominant. The separation of race from race, sex from sex, culture from culture, even of man from himself, is what underlies every relationship. The separation of the English from the Indian is merely the most dramatic of the chasms in this novel. Hindu and Muslim can not really approach each other. (151)

Trilling remarks the separation is the major event in tracing the novel. This means that the relationship between the characters does not remain enduring. They are separated culturally, racially, sexually and from religious point of view. There is a

conflict between Hindus and Muslims. It seems they are united to each other because both of them stand against the English. In real life situation, however there is a gulf between Hindu and Muslim in the novel.

Other liberal critics like Ralph Wright and L.P. Hartley believe that “ There is much more than social feeling” and the novel does not merely deal with cultural contrasts. *A Passage to India*, Writes L.P Hartley; “is much more than a study of racial contrasts and disabilities. It is intensely personal and ... intensely cosmic. The problem of the English in India lies midway between these two greater considerations, linking them up and illuminating them (Gardener 226). L.P. Hartley, argues that *A Passage to India* not only about racial but also personal relations.

Similarly, E.K.Brown focuses upon on Dr Aziz conversation with other Mohammeden friends and argues that this conversation depicts the Dr Aziz views concerning other people' especially English who are culturally and religiously different. E.K Brown similarly says that:

Forster's novel characters begin to appear, there is Aziz, the Mohammeden, physician, engaged, in friendly argument with mohammedens friends; “they were discussing as to whether or not it is possible to be friends with an Englishman. The conclusion is that in India, at least friendship with the invader is impossible unpermitted. (94)

E.K. Brown commentary focuses upon the friendship between two different cultural peoples. He comes to conclusion that if they are form same culture or civilization the friendship is possible other wise the friendship does not remain long term.

A Passage to India has also been interpreted in a rather philosophic manner keeping the cultural aspect aside. As Forster himself insists, the novel must deal with both 'life by time' and 'life by value' and must deal both in material and spiritual matters (qtd. in Bradbury 12). We all know that every text is framed according to the time and space; and that history also takes significant role in developing the thematic of the text.

Making a critique of Forster's misrepresentation of India, they argue that *A Passage to India* has contributed a great deal in creating stereotypes about Indians. Nihal Singh, for example calls the setting of the novel Chandrapore a 'little England', and takes *A Passage to India* as showing "how the British in India despise and ostracize Indian as a result, the gulf between the two culture is widening and becoming unbridgeable"(265)

Another Indian nationalist N.C. Chaudhari, on the other hand, believes that *A Passage to India* has been an even greater influence in British imperial politics than an English literature. Chaudhari's observation is that the novel overlooks large political significance through its emphasis upon the problems of personal relations. He argues that the novel has missed the point in describing India:

"Presents all the Indian in it either a perverted clownish or queer characters. There are few delineations of the Indian characters which are more insulting condescending to self respecting Indians, Muslims and Hindu than those of this book" (qtd. in Goonetilleke 93)

In the same vein, Goonetillek says that, *A Passage to India* is ' race relation are even more important' and that the novel projects ' a microcosm of society in India

under the British empire' (91), in which the image of Indian culture becoming inferior and alien to the west, and the image of Indians subordinate to the ruling race. V.A. Shahane too, believes that *A Passage to India* projects, in all its socio-linguistic contexts, 'the interaction of two cultures of the east and west on Indian soil' (58). He thinks that lack of communications between Indians and Anglo-Indians is one of the principle theme of the novel and, he argues again, 'the projection on Indian tropical soil of the British mentality moulded by the British public school' that brings 'the tragedy of British empire in India' (255).

On the other hand Niraj Chaudhuri in the book, *Twentieth Century Literature* viewed in the selection of protagonist, "Chaudhuri criticized E.M. Forster using a Muslim as his chief protagonist since Hindus were in the forefront of the national movement" (qtd.275). It seems fact that Chaudhuri's point is correct, the choice of a Muslim protagonist, shares that Forster feels closer to Muslim people than Hindus. It generates the Forster's biasness in selecting the Aziz as a protagonist from the locality where majority of Hindus are living.

Dr Aziz appears more significant towards the end of the last of the novel, "It reveals that *A Passage to India* breaths a Gandian spirit" (*Twentieth Century Literature* 275). It clears that *A Passage to India* has a Gandian quality. Forster's sympathy goes on to Muslim they are in minority in the village Mau. It is not only Forster was partial to Muslim that he choose Aziz as his central character. At the time when Forster's second visit Gandian vision of 'self govern' is highly influence, he saw like many of the political leaders of the early twentieth century that in India, religion and politics went hand to hand; "he picked upon a Muslim because he believes that if a Muslim

could thrive under the influence of Hindu politics, then Indian native hood could never be belittled” (*B. Sing* 275). But Forster looks indifferent than other leaders. Forster belongs to British culture, in his education and ideology directly related in representing India. All these activities lead to Forster to divide the Indian culturally, which is directly an advantage for British rulers to rule the India for a long time. Directly or indirectly, Forster's choosing main character as Muslim implies the divide and rule policy.

Forster’s India, in this connection, becomes incomprehensible and ungraspable, because it is perceived from the perspectives of Anglo-Indian. The Anglo-Indian version is always negative; Sikandar Lal , in his essay *E.M. Forster’s India* rightly puts his contention that “ the attitude of English gentlemen and ladies to the Indian natives combined with Ronny’s warning to his mother against mixing with natives... underline the same unfavorable prejudiced tradition of British thinking about India”(597). He argues that “the image of India presented in the novel do not comprehend India in it’s entirety. There is still something left, eluding comprehension...” (602). This is, because of the fact that “the more you know of India the more you left with the feeling that there is still something left to be known. This air of the inexhaustible about India makes its cases quite piquant and intriguing” (602). The English people behave in better-quality in India.

K. Vankata Reddy, while analyzing social and political image of India, turns to religious and cultural theme of the novel when he argues that “the principal and most dominant image that *A Passage to India* projects, is essentially religious and spiritual” which an image is “presented through its threefold symbolic structure- ‘Mosque’

highlighting the Islamic values of unity and universal brotherhood, 'cave' suggesting primeval darkness and relation resulting in breakdown of human relationship and 'Temple' signifying harmony and regeneration and change over, from alienation to affection"(616). Professor Godbole's attitude and his preoccupation with Hinduism, especially in 'temple' section provides religious and spiritual pattern of the novel.

By the same token, Dhruva Kumar Joshi in his book, *Forster's Rough Passage to India*, takes *A Passage to India* as a "social document about the British in India and the Indians in British- India", in which "the divisions between people have become magnified almost beyond the point of no return" (606). Joshi argues:

The Anglo-Indians have an attitude of blind arrogance towards oriental civilization. Their attitude epitomize the hostility which such a self-contained group can display towards aliens, there concept and custom....those Indians who are dependent on their good will must fawn upon and be patronized by the English officials and humiliated by their wives.(609)

The novel, according to Joshi thus, becomes "an account of the pressures of imperialism involved and at work in the development of characters and relationships and in the shaping of the era and nature of contact between the civilizations represented (610). He seems to assign the failure of communication between the races to the cultural difference and also to British people's so called sense of superiority when he writes, "Dissimilarities of culture which inhabit understanding and particular sensitivity of inferiority in the Indian ... The continual suspicion and snobbery on the part of the

English colonial towards Indian and the division along religious line among themselves prevent any real mingling of the race” (610).

Most Indian critics, usually, speaking from the colonial perspectives interpret, *A Passage to India* as “a social comedy” in a colonial context. K. Venkta Reddy-takes the novel neither as “a passage more than to India, nor “a passage less than to India” but “just *A Passage to India* projecting as it does a manifold and multifaceted image of India”, argues that the social image in the novel is “basically one of schism and division, compartmentalization and stratification of Indian society on the basis of religion, race, caste and economic status ...” (614). In the novel, he mentions, “the unshakable faith in the divine right of the British to rule over and to carry out civilizing mission in India, their snobbery and rudeness and their complete refusal to see any good in the Indian are revealed character after character (614).

In Forster’s personal account of, two Indian cultures it seems, Forster has feeling of uneasiness with Hinduism, as against a feeling of easiness and comfort with Islam. He wrote in letter from Hindu state of Chandrapore, he contrasted his different feeling about two religions. He has been familiar with Muslim atmosphere at Agra; he revisited the Taj, listened to a prayer from distant mosque, and stayed rarely at Chandrapore. He says:

After nine years, I revisited the Taj ... I have never seen the vision lovelier ... a muezzin with a most glorious voice gave the evening call to prayer from a mosque. ‘there is no God but God’, I do like Islam, though I have had to come through Hinduism to discover it. After all the mess and profusion and confusion of Gokul Ashtami, where nothing ever

stopped or need have begun, it was like standing on a mountain. (qtd. Das. 95)

Forster looks a bit closer in terms of his sympathy towards the Muslims. In addition he expresses his confusion on Hindus religious activities. Suhash Chakravarty, in his book, *Raj Syndroms*, criticizes Forster for his confusing and ambivalent position despite his liberal preoccupation. Chakarvarty argues that Forster's *A Passage to India*, "represents the tragedy of liberal humanism [...] which could not construct an integrated theory of human society and reflect its inability to produce a critique of imperialism" (106). This is to say that Forster fails to provide a conscious of awareness imperialism's historical dimension. Chakravarty makes a further technique of Foster in the following manner:

Misjudge the imperial situation owing to his faith in a myopic liberalism and he misconstrued imperialism as a rational system distorted by individualism failing and Purkka Sahib Tradition ... Forster's humanism could not sustain even a purely personal relationship as the friendship between fielding and Aziz finally disintegrated. (106)

Forster's picture of India in *A Passage to India* is not real, it is rather a misrepresentation or a prejudiced representation; a presentation within which "the English was painted as viril, bold, energetic and masculine while the native were presented with the exception of some Pathan tribesman of the frontier as effeminate, weak, cowardly and lethargic" (119). This shows that Forster turns out to be "the most sympathetic spokesman of Anglo-india" and that his attempt to represent India becomes "an attempt at grasping a cloud"

Forster attempts to present Muslim characters rather strongly. The Muslim characters in the novel, especially in comparison with Hindu characters, are more fully developed. Forster on the other hand, is ambivalent concerning Hinduism:

The detail about Hinduism, on the other hand, is presented in an ambivalent ways. The aspects of Hindu gods, Hindu mythology, Hindu forms of worship, Hindu scripture and Hindu philosophy are touched upon with irony; The Hindu characters is also portrayed as comical and incomprehensible. (Das.102)

Forster's depiction of Indian cultural, there is internal conflict within Indian cultural. The conflict between Hindu and Muslim, they are united at the time of Khilafat movement and Gandhi's non-cooperation movement. The unity between these two opposite pillars seems very temporary because they are against the British ruler. In the book Foster India the Muslim characters conversation with Hindu characters. We are against one another but our main enemy is British Empire. We may hat one another, but we hat you most. (qtd. in Das.). We see the Hindu Muslim entente brought about by the Khilafat movement, they combined each other to protest against English community.

A Passage to India depicts some aspects of Hinduism and Islam with sensitiveness and intense curiosity. The novel is not to be read as a systemic exposition of the Hindu and Muslim way of life, or as an account of the author's own formulated opinions on these two religions. It will be seen that in significant way the novel reflects major questions concerning the two religions and through providing light on an interesting stage in the author's intellectual confrontation with these two religious beliefs of Indian cultural. It shows him seriously questioning with relation to Hindu and

Muslim, and emerging finally more in sympathy with Hinduism than Islam. Presenting a value the spiritualism of India, which might be notable for him personally, he seems near to Islam rather than Hinduism. He selected, Dr. Aziz as the central character, and the sore is more concerned with him than the Hindu protagonist professor Godbole. Aziz and his Muslim associates also are presented in a more intelligible way than professor Godbole and other Hindu character. The mass of Hindus are living in the native state of Mau. Forster made Dr. Aziz as a representative of Indian people made clear that he is taking side to Muslim.

The contemporary critics Michel Foucault and Edward Said give another dimension to the reading of *A Passage to India*. Michel Foucault seems to be right when he says that the discourse is also involved in power relations. To says that social and political power operates through discourse generates the text as a form of discourse. Foucault emphasizes that discourse as inseparable from power. Following Foucault's points, Said argues that such images and stereotypes about the east (the orient) are formed by western discourses aiming at governing and controlling the orient. Said's Orientalism explores "how the east- the orient is created through western discursive practices....constructed as an other which can however, be known by the dominant discourse of the west and thus assimilated in practices pronounced as inferior so far as it does not come up to these" (Tambling 7). Said argues that oriental cultural representation, through the western discourses, contributed a great deal in the process of colonization. "Imaginative command" over the other, in this sense westerner is more powerful in economic and political level. To represent this context does not merely denote to the mimetic view of literature; that it reflects the actual historical reality,

rather itself becomes an ideological construct”. It is known that the metropolitan culture exercised its domination over the subordinate periphery (133). Text is and instrument of power where the identity of the self is established by discriminating and excluding everything associated with oneself as the other so as to make it easier to control; to dominate and rule over it.

On the one hand, Forster tried to be sympathetic to Indians and wanted to penetrate into what is deepest in the oriental cultures, on the other, the burden of justifying the western civilization to the Indian was deep seated in his heart. Allen J. Greenberger seems to be right when he says, in his book *The British Image of India* that,

men such as Forster and Orwell who attacked the Raj did not do so basically because of what they felt the system was doing to the Indians, but rather because of what the situation of forcibly ruling over aliens was doing to the British. (84)

Said, too, speaking from the post colonial perspective, tries to explore Forster’s colonial preoccupation inherent in *A Passage to India*. He is mainly concerned with Forster’s inability to frame the Indian reality in the novel. He observes that *A Passage to India* “is at a loss, partly because Forster’s commitment to the novel from exposes him to difficulties in India he can not deal with.... Forster’s India is a locale frequently described as ungraspable and too large [...] the crux of the novel is, therefore, the sustained encounter between the English colonials. Well developed bodies, fairly developed minds and undeveloped hearts and India” (culture and imperialism 201). And between them are the vast cultural differences which make communication

impossible, and Forster's representation of India untenable. India is represented as a continuous bafflement to the west. Forster attempts to translate the Indian culture, through the help of foreign language and his foreign ideology leads to his future.

Defining Orientalism

Orientalism as a Discourse

The emergency of under literary theory, despite the complaints that it has applied readers with readymade angles of interpretation thus undermining readers' independent and automatic responses to text, has brought a major break through in the field of literary studies. Edward Said, concept of "Orientalism" literary theory orientalism studies the relationship between occident and orient. This is to say that it demonstrates the relationship of power between so called civilized (west) and uncivilized (east). Said uses Foucauldian notion of discourse as representation to argue that "Orientalism as a discourse" represents east through pre-conceived stereotypes and categories of description. It is a discourse constructed by west about east; not a discourse that seeks to find truth, but to create truth. So orientalism, according to Said; "It is a corporate intuition for dealing with the orient by making statement about it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it and ruled over it. In short orientalism is western style for dominating restructuring and having authority over the orient"

Said takes orientalism as a horizon of thought and all argues that the Europeans writing about orient write within that restrictive horizon of thought. West, according to Said, had consciously tried to portray the east as inferior. Said's argues that western representation of the east are related with identity, politics and psychology. He believes that, identity at any level can only be defined in relation to the other. For self-definition and motivation people need enemies; to define 'us' they need 'them'. Another answer Said presents is the political one. West wants to inferiorize east to order dominate it and

to have authority over it. And they (orientalists) became successful because there's had been the stronger culture, they have power, so they could penetrate or could wrestle to give shape and meaning to the orient. To his third answer he calls orientalism as a form of paranoia.

Orientalism, the discourse of the west, (re) presenting everything non-western as inferior, manifests west's desire to govern, to dominate and to control 'the other' and that, this attitude has colonial in dorpinning at heart. Orientalism, 'the discourse of the west about the east', in Said's words, serves this colonial purpose in an effective manner. Such a discourse produces a various types of stereotypes of concerning the orient describing it as an object of study stamped with an otherness, by categorizing the orient in such manner west seeks to control it and have preferred over it. Said's view about the impact of orientalism seems to be right I saying that, "an unbroken arc of knowledge connects the European or the western statesman and the western orientalist; it forms the rim of stage containing the orient" and the scope of orientalism exactly matched the scope of empire" (Crisis in Orientalism 204). At the very out set, by instinct and by intellect, the western people's basis belief was that civilization, science, and progress all came form the west and the natives were primitive and barbaric. These orientalists thought that it was the white man's burden to civilize 'them,' to educate 'them' and to make 'them' human. Westerners created a hierarchy of race and turned the native into collective 'we' as support to the collective 'us' of the west made themselves 'we' by the right of the race the superior position. When 'they' misbehave or rebel against 'us' we are required to give them punishment, or even the death because 'they' mainly understood force or violence best; 'they' are not like us for that

reason 'they' deserved to be ruled. Such are the arguments used by the west to justify their inhuman treatment of the easterners, especially during colonial period.

Said in 'Crisis in Orientalism' says further: "when Orientals struggle against colonial occupation you must say... that Orientals have never understood the meaning of self- government in the way 'we do' (306). Unlike Orientals, they believe, 'we' are true human beings; so we have right to govern, to rule and even to pose as 'them'. In this connection, Said refers to Abdel Malek to describe this situation in following manners "the hegemony of possessing minorities and anthropocentrism allied with Euro-centrism: a white middle class westerner believes it his human prerogative not only to manage the nonwhite world but also to own it, just because by definition, is not quite as human as 'we' are" (307).

Said analyzes the thesis on orientalism as a systematic discipline capable of exercising authority over the orient. In his book *Orientalism: A reader*, He for example argues:

My thesis is that the essential aspects of modern orientalist theory and praxis can be understood, not as a sudden access of objective knowledge about the orient, but as a set of structures inherited from the past, secularized, predisposed, and re-formed by such disciplines as philology, which in turn were naturalized, modernized, and laicized substitute for christen supernaturalism. (106)

Said further talks in the book, *Orientalism: A Reader*, argues the power exercise of orientalist over the orient. He says, "A still more implicit and powerful difference posed by the orientalist as against the oriental is that the former writes about, whereas the

oriental is written about. For the latter passive is the presumed role, for the former, the power to observe to study and so forth"(93). With the help of power the judgement upon orient seems very discriminatory. Said further expresses Joseph Conrad's position in terms of colonial relations in *Nostramo*; and describing it in the following words; "We westerners will decide who is a good native or a bad because all natives have sufficient existence by virtue of our recognition. We created them, we taught them to speak and think and when they rebel they simply conform our views of them as silly children, deepen by some of their western masters" (culture XVIII).

Similarly, Said in his book, *The World the Text and the Critic*, observes that "the methods and discourse of western scholarship confine inferior non-European cultures to a position of subordination oriental texts come to inhabit a realm with out development of power, one that exactly corresponds to be position of colony for European text and culture" (47). Said actually demonstrates that the colonial relation is maintained and guided by orientalist discourse so much so that such discourse is structured with power to support the ideologies of colonialism.

Said is highly influenced by the logic of Foucault's theories, and argues that no discourse is fixed for all time; and that it is both a cause and an effect. Discourse changes when time and space changes and Foucault believes that every discourse has parallel discourse. He writes further; "this discursive practices have no universal validity but are historically dominant way of controlling and preserving social relations of exploitation" (Selden and Peter 164). The discourse manipulated the power in order to maintain the sense of superiority and authority over 'the other'. Discourse, in this sense becomes an instrument of power, a means of governing the other. Similarly, the

struggle held by the opposition, the other, is the struggle to achieve the power, which in turn, is the struggle to gain and control over the discourse. Western discourse about the non-western world, including orientalism, played a great role in serving the purpose of European expansion, but along with the coming of white men some sorts of resistance arose in almost every where in the non-European world, such an opposition manifested in different resistance movements, formation of the political parties whose common goal was self-determination and national independence. As Foucault also says, however power also contains the possibility of resistance to it. In other words cultural domination is not static and unalterable thing; it is rather a process, one that is always being contested. These ideas were developed later in post-colonial criticism of which Said himself is an important member. Post-colonial criticism, which attempts to reexamine the colonial relationship, emerged in an act of resistance to colonial perspective employed in discourse of cultural representation and the European texts dealing with colonial relation. From post-colonial perspective Selden writes, “western values and tradition of thought and literature, including version of post-modernism are guilty of repressive ethnocentrism” because “models of western thought and literature have dominated world culture, marginalizing or excluding non-western *traditions* and forms of cultural life and expression” (189)

Exploring a similar theme, Tayeb Salih's book *Season of Migration to the North* also presents the narrative of the voyage from the reversed perspective from that of Conrad. Said writes:

Is now the Nile whose waters rejuvenate its people, and Conrad's first person British narrative style and European protagonists are, in a sense,

reversed, first through the use of Arabic; second in that Salih's novel concerns the north ward voyage of a Sudanese to Europe; and third, because the narrator speaks from the Sudanese countryside into a sacrilized hegira from Sudanese countryside, still weighted down with its colonial legacy, into the heart of Europe, where Mustapha said, a mirror image of Kurtz unleashes ritual violence on himself, on European women on the narrator's understanding. Over there is like here, neither bitter nor worse. But I am from here, just as the date palm standing in the courtyard of our house has grown in 'our' house and not in any one else's. The fact that they come to our land I know not why, does that men that we should poison our present and future. Sooner or later they will leave our country, just as many people through out history left many countries. The railways, ships, hospitals, factories, and schools will be ours and we will speak their language with out either a sense of guilt or sense of gratitude. (qtd. in Said, Culture 212)

The passage quoted above manifests "post -colonial" attitude of colonized people. Here, the speaker not only expresses his idea concerning the colonial past but also speaks of the post-colonial future, the future they are expecting. On the other hand, he shows that historical experience- be it colonial and colonized- is often reinterpretable as, "the firmly silent native speaker and act on territory reclaimed as part of general movement of resistance from the colonial" (Said Culture 212). This is to say that Said expresses the problematic of colonial situation in colonial country.

Text: As the Discourse of Power

The assertion of the text as taking place in space and time leads to the notion of text as a form of discourse. Every form of discourse (either written or spoken), with its specific context, has a pragmatic function. In speech, the relationship between addressor and addressee, and the function of discourse and common cultural background through the exchange of language, are the relationships through which the discourse becomes fully meaningful. This means that, in a spoken discourse, speech and circumstantial reality exist in the state of suspension, which is outside circumstantial reality where addressee is absent. The written discourse or the text is meant to be addressed to the reader/ critic. For this reason, they are not meaningful until they are actualized and made present by the reader or critic. Text, emanating from the author, is meant to be a verbal message which needs to be deciphered by the critic. This means to engage in an interpretation of a text is to engage in an interpretation of a text is to take part in dialogue with another. Bakhtin school, held a similar opinion by maintaining that “every utterance”, “is potentially the site of a struggle, every word launched into social space implies a dialogue and therefore a contested interpretation ...”(Selden 75). In such a situation, it is impossible to establish a single authoritative meaning because language, “is always contaminated, interleaved, opaquely colored by layers of semantic deposits resulting from the endless processes of human struggle and interaction” (75). Any interpretation then becomes a matter of power struggle to establish the power of meaning by producing alternative discourses.

Later on, Michel Foucault, a post structuralist critic, developed a theory of discourse in relation to the power structures operating in society. Foucault’s main thesis

is that discourses are rooted in social institution and that social and political power operates through discourse. The discourse therefore is inseparable from power because discourse is ordering force that governs every institution. The discursive formations have enabled institutions to wield power and domination by defining and excluding 'the other.' For this purpose, certain set standards and their dichotomies are produced and imposed on society and are operated in such way that they have real effect on society's institution.

Michel Foucault argued how the power creates the truth and the existing relationship between power and knowledge, Foucault says:

In this strange world, knowledge became not so much a matter of fact as the outcome of a struggle for power, in which events and discourse, vehicles of 'economies of power', created new 'net works' and 'regimes' of knowledge- regimes which would themselves survive only until such time as new one arose, capable of taking their place. Truth, therefore as Foucault remarks in a conversation regarding power and knowledge, was not outside power or lacking in it. ("Truth and Power" 41)

Foucault's belief is that truth is not outside the network of power; power operates the truth through discourse, and discourse ultimately establishes the knowledge. According to Foucault, texts are discourses produced by some agency of author and launched into the social context. They are meant to be addressed to any one who reads it. The text, more often than not, tries to project some sort of meaning even though it is opened to interpretations depending upon the experience of the reader or the social a cultural

context. The discourse, by way of using the power of language, not only reflect the reality, but also creates its own reality which is to claim that to produce discourse is to establish the knowledge of the world. It is through the medium of discourse that one set of people or culture attempt to fortify the self identify by contrasting the self form every thing that is concerned as "not self". To validate the self, to put it in the superior position, certain dichotomies are produced through discourse and are imposed on society as definitive of all human existence. These discourses are organized and manipulated in such a way that they have real effects on social and political institutions. The discourse in this sense becomes inseparable from power because it is through discourse that power is manipulated in the society. As an ordering principle, discourse often aims at subordinating anything that comes as "the other" by describing, defining, evaluating and excluding the other. It indicates that to have some knowledge of the other is to exercise power over that other. That discourse is produced to exert power, to make other silent; this is to say that the power itself is discursive. The truth and the meaning of the discourse therefore depend upon who controls the discourse and where it emanates from controlling the discourse. Thus, to suffer from the lack of discourse is meant to be ruled, to be governed. Discourse, including the text according to Foucault, is the embodiment of power. Being discursive in its nature thus, texts come to function as the vehicle of power.

Foucault, according to Patrick Brantlinger, "Simply identifies truth with power so that whatever discursive practices are operative or have power in a given society are true or constitute a regime of truth" (102). For example, people recognize particular piece of philosophy or scientific theory as true, only if it fits the description of truth laid

down by the day, by members of the ruling elite or by the prevailing ideologies of knowledge.

Roland Turner in his book *Thinker of the Twentieth Century*, describes Foucault's position as having the view that "For any culture, it is never enough simply to speak the 'truth' if one wants to be heard, one must be with in the 'truth' and embody its regime" (242). Every system of knowledge, we may say, establishes rules for exclusions and discrimination and it always implies taking sides.

The discursive practices, however, have no universal validity but are historically dominant ways of controlling and preserving social relations of exploitation. Foucault's interest is in historical dimension of discursive change. Turner mentions; "Foucault's conviction is that system of knowledge do not progress in relation to stable, universal object; rather it is characterized as situated knowledge (in time and space) the produces object to satisfy its practical needs and sense of order" (421). Discourses i.e., system of knowledge establish rules and procedures governing the particular epoch by exclusion and regulation. Foucault regards the nature of discourse as an 'event' in time since it is not only that which represents "struggles or systems of domination, but the object through which and with which we struggle, the power we seek to possess. For him, as for Nietzsche, any attempt to cast a control reflects a will to power. Every instance of discourse embodies the power struggle, as Foucault himself argues that, "discourse is a violence that I believe, it that truth is not outside power or lacking in power." Truth is a thing of this world; it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. Truth itself became, not an unchanging universal essence, but a perpetual object of appropriation and domination.

Foucault talks about the battle for controlling and appropriating "truth", and economic and political role such a battle plays. Foucault argues, "it is necessary to think of the political problem of intellectuals not in term of 'science' and 'ideology', but in terms to 'truth' and 'power' ("Truth and Power" 43). In Foucauldian notion, discourses including texts are the embodiment of power 'Text', writes Brantlinger in *Grusoe's Poot Prints* "are systems of forces institutionalized by the reigning culture at some human cost to its various components" (103). This is to say that texts are the discourses that speak of the power of ruling culture, the power to govern and control. This concept of discourse as the form of power has been used, by some critics, to study and analyses literary text. Said, makes a similar use o f the concept of discourse. For Said, as for Foucault "text is important because it inhibits an element of power with a discursive claim an actuality, even though that power is invisible and implied, the job of critic, therefore, is to explore the discursive power embedded in the text" (*The World* ..183).

Said, much influenced by Foucault, has gone even further in the study of literature and culture as the site of political and ideological struggle. Believing in the notion of discourse wedded with power, he linked Foucault's theory of discourse with real social and political struggle. Said's main interest is to study and analyze the relation between the west and east, and the role of 'orientalism' as a governing force in this relationship. Orientalism is the discourse of west about the east, Said argues; designates the long-term images, stereotype and general ideology about the orient as the other. For Said, "orientalism is not simply a discourse which produces knowledge of the east rather it is "the corporate institution for dealing with the orient by making

statement about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it, in short orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as a western style of dominating, restructuring and having authority over the orient” (“Crisis in Orientalism” 294). Said extended the theory of discursive formations to studying the dichotomies or cultural forms and political strategies of the expansion of empire. Said contends that orientalism depend on culturally constructed distinction between the occident and the orient, and that such a distinction is inseparably political. In “Crisis in Orientalism”, he maintains that ‘ the orient European relationship was determined by an unstoppable European expansion in search of markets, resources and colonies” and that orientalism had accomplished its self-metamorphosis from a scholarly discourse to an imperial institution” (297).

Although orientalism' political use cannot be correlated with the process of material exploitation of the east, orientalism as a discourse produces a form of knowledge which carried great utility in aiding this process serving of defining the east as its origin and serving to relegate alien cultures. Said in “Crisis in Orientalism”, argues that “the political and cultural circumstances in which western orientalism has flourished, draw attention to the debased position of the east or oriental as an object of study” (298). Said stressed the relationship between the east and the west, which is governed by discourse. Said in his book, *The World, the Text, and the Critic* writes, that culture with its superior position, has the power of culture to be an agent and perhaps the main agency of powerful differentiation with in its domain and beyond it too” (9).

Here Said seems to have given the cultural status of the nation by presenting it as “a system of values starting downward almost every thing within its preview”, but “culture dominates form above with out at the same time being available to everything and every one it dominates” (9). Said, in this connection, finds Matthew Arnold as using culture as a powerful means of differentiation. Said mentioning the view of Arnold says, "Arnold identifies a triumphant culture with the state, is so far as culture is means best self and that states its realization in material reality. Thus, the power of culture is nothing less than the power of state” (The World 10). Arnold’s point as Said explains here, is that “to be far and in culture is to be in and for a state in a compelling loyal way. With this assimilation of culture to authority and extension frame work of the state goes as well such thing as assurances, confidence, majority sense, the entire matrix of meaning we associate with ‘home’,. Outside this range of meanings for it is outside that partially defines inside in this case stands anarchy, the culturally disfranchise, those elements opposed to culture and state” (The World 11). Culture is an ideal for Arnold, but Said, as opposed to Arnold, shares a radically different opinion and argues

Culture must be seen as much for what it is not for what triumphs over, when it is consecrated by the state, as for what it possibly is. This means that culture is a system of discriminations and evaluations ... and it also means that culture is a system of exclusion legislated form above but an acted throughout its policy, by which such thing as anarchy, disorder irrationality, inferiority, bad taste and immortality are identified, then

deposited outside the culture and kept these by the power of the state and its institutions.” (The World 11)

What we come to know from this is that the realm of culture is textual, and that it can only be realized through discourse. Cultural discourse, identifying itself with the state, differentials and excludes everything outside the culture; such cultural discourse has the power to silence to dominate anything that does not resemble the definition given by the dominant culture. Culture for Said, is not only the "positive doctrine of the best that is thought and known" but rather “a differentially negative doctrine of all that is not best”. The double faceted view of culture makes one aspect of culture more powerful than the other.

Alien as Narrator of the Nation: A Colonial Perspective

Post-colonial writers and critics, by subverting the colonial perspective, played a crucial role in reinterpreting the colonial history. They are making their own endeavor to give the cultural a self definition. They are against the project by which alien or foreign subject create /recreate their own autonomous identity, and produce and reproduce their history. Homi K. Bhabha in his book *Nation and Narration*, argues that “the nation’s coming in to being, as a system of cultural signification, as the representation of social life rather than the discipline of social polity emphasized the instability of knowledge” (2). Such an emphasis on the nation makes it clear that the nation projects cultural temporality rather than the ideological history and also that; “cultural temporality of the nation inscribes more transitional social reality” (*Nation and Narration* 1).

Bhabha argues further that Nation like narrative loses their origins in the myths of time and that such narration seems impossibly romantic and excessively metaphorical. In the tradition of political thought and literary language that notion emerges as powerful historical ideas in the west. They attempt to narrate the east which is culturally alien. This is how Bhabha describes the symbolic value of nation:

an idea whose cultural compulsion lies in the impossible unity of the nation as symbolic force. This is not to deny the attempt by nationalist discourses persistently to produce the idea of the nation as a continuous narrative of national progress, the narcissism of self-generation, the primeval present of the Volk. (1)

The other, is to take nation as a cultural construct which have emerged out of ‘an immemorial past’ with the potential to surpass the limitless future. Bhabha comes up with the notion that the narration of nation from alien language is an extremely ambivalence act. Bhabha says, “What I want to emphasize in that large and liminal image of the nation with which I began is a particular ambivalence that hunts the idea of the nation the language of those who live it (1). Bhabha focuses that act of narrating is better by the same cultural background people.

Another writer Ernest Renan raises a more difficult question in defining the nation .In his essay on *what is nation?*, he has made an attempt to define the nation from a non-naturalist point of view. For him, modern nation is “A historical result brought about by a series of convergent facts” (12). He trace different elements namely, dynasty, race, language, material interest, religious affinities and geography etc. He

further argues that these things are not adequate for the creation of nation though they are considered to be the constituent part to the making of a nation.

In a same manner he argues, “As race alone, can not contribute to the making of a nation, language can't do the same thing. Language invites people to unite but it does not force them to do so” (16). Renan’s focus on the human will in the formation of a nation makes the definition of nation more abstract and ambivalent. Here, Renan’s point, however, leads to the notion that the nation is a symbolic formation which has its base in the common cultural ground. Critics and writers following this line of thought seem to emphasize on the unstable nature of the word called "nation".

Bhabha tries to clarify his aim in the following words, “It is project of Nation and Narration to explore the Janus-faced ambivalence of language itself in the construction of the Janus-faced discourse of the nation”(3). He repeatedly focuses upon the ambivalence feature of language. It seems like two faced-gods while narrating the nation by foreign cultural people. Edward Said has a similar view concerning the narration of the nation, “ For the nation as a form of cultural elaboration (in the Gramscian Sense) is an agency of ambivalent narration that holds culture at its most productive position, as a force of subordination, fracturing, defusing, reproducing, as much as producing, creating, forcing, guiding” (qtd. in *Nation and Narration* 3,4). In Said's opinion the meaning embedded in narrating the nation becomes differed; it does not carry the essence so that it seems very confusing.

Benedict Anderson, too, shares similar opinion regarding idea of nation, in his book, *Imagined community* he writes:

The century of the Enlightenment, of rationalist secularism brought with it its own modern darkness ... Few things were (are) suited to this end better than the idea of nation. If nation states are widely considered to be 'new' and 'historical' the nation states to which they give political expression always loom out of an immemorial past and ... give into a limitless future. What I am proposing is that Nationalism has to be understood, by aligning it not with self-consciously systems that preceded it, out of which as well as against which it came into being.

(19)

The above passage proposes two optional ways of perceiving the idea of the emergence of nation: one is to believe historians and political rationalists who, by believing in the natural essence, take origin and the emergence of nation as a song of the 'modernity' of society.

Bhabha's project is to develop a theoretical model which manifests the difficulties that a writer has to face; obstacles while attempting to translate the alien culture. Just for other cultural critics, culture, for Bhabha too, is of supreme importance because the nation itself is a combination of cultural practices, and can be formulated or identified only through cultural manifestations. But cultural projection is possible only through narration. This is to say that 'the nation' as a form of cultural elaboration, is an agency of ambivalence.

In a related way, Bhabha talks about the cultural identity, the identity constructed by alien cultural people. He argues, "the complex strategies of cultural identification and discursive address that function in the name of 'the people' or 'the

nation' and make them the immanent subject and object of a range of social and literary narratives" (*Nation and Narration* 292). His focus on the nation as a form of living the locality of culture paves the way for the temporal dimension of the nation as narration, Bhabha says:

More around temporality than about historicity: a form of living that is connective than country; less patriotic than particle; more rhetorical than the reason of state; more mythological than ideology; less homogeneous than hegemony; less centered than the citizen; more collective than the subject; more psychic than civility; more hybrid in the articulation of cultural differences and identifications, gender, race, class – than can be represented in any hierarchical or binary structuring of social antagonism. (292)

Bhabha realized that the concept of nation an autonomous or sovereign form of political rationality tends to be questionable because the space or the modern nation people is never horizontal and their metaphoric movement requires a kind of doubleness in writing; he says, "a temporality of representation that moves between cultural formations, and social processes without a centered causal logic" (293). Arguing in similar vein Parth Chatterjee too, reveals this ambivalent nature of nation state:

Nationalism ... seeks to represent itself, in the image of the Enlightenment and fails to do so, for Enlightenment itself, to assert its sovereignty as the universal idea, needs its other; if it could ever actualize itself in the real world as the truly universal, it would in fact destroy itself. (qtd. in *Nation and Narration* 293)

The above argument leads to the notion that there is always a kind of controversy between the idea of the historical necessity of the nation, and arbitrary sign and symbols that signify the effective life of the national culture Bhabha quotes E. Gellener, to prove the very point, “nationalism is not what it seems and above all not what it seems to itself ... cultural shreds and patches used by nationalism are often arbitrary and historical inventions” (293). By taking up such position Bhabha attempts to answer the questions as to what happens when we try to inscribe the nation in our narration and how we are to study the "nationness" in a narrative of the nation?

As a post -structuralist, Derrida has raised the linguistic interpretation of the text. Derrida is mainly concerned with the unstable and disjunctive relationship between signifier and signified. His argument is that any attempt to represent something through the medium of a sign leads us to the confrontation with another sign or substitution of sign in the process of signification what we can have is only the substitution or supplement of the sign that the object objective representation is never possible because 'the central signified, the original or transcendental signified' , as Derrida says in 'structure sign and plays in the discourse of the human sciences', "is never absolutely present out side a system of differences"(110). Robert Young in *Untying the Text*, referring to Derrida writes:

The sign must always involves the silent spacing the absence of everything form which it is differentiated. At the same time, the sign can not literally represent that which it signifies, produce the signified as present, precisely because of sign for something must imply that thing's

absence... Representation never re-presents but always defers the presence of signified (15).

Culture itself a kind of sign which is formed by the combination of different signs. that does not illustrate the meaning, meaning is absence while representing.

According to Bhabha, cultural difference opens a new dimension in establishing new forms of meaning “through processes of negotiation where no discursive authority can be established without revealing the difference of itself” (313). This is to say that sign of cultural difference is never complete and univocal because it moves in symbolic formation from one position of enunciation to another, leaving it open to cultural translation. Any demand for the full representation of cultural translation is bound to lead to the loss of meaning because it involves interdisciplinary, As also argued by Bhabha:

We can not contextualize the emergent cultural form by explaining in terms of some pre-given discursive causality or origin. We must always keep open a supplementary space for the articulation of cultural knowledge that are adjacent and adjunct but not necessary, accumulative, teleological or dialectical (313).

Cultural difference is to be found where the ‘loss’ of meaning enters, a cutting edge, into the representation of the cultural difference implies cultural translation in a foreign language to it. The enunciation of cultural difference brings a kind of split in the language of culture that makes the sign of cultural difference both different and differential and thus makes full representation impossible. This ‘Foreignness of language’ in the translation of culture makes narrative perspective foreign, which seems colonial in

nature. The language of cultural translation in a sense is the language of difference, and translation, according to Bhabha, “represents only an extreme instance of the figurative fate of writing that repeatedly generates a movement of equivalence between representation and reference, but never gets beyond the equivocal of the sign” (314).

This makes it clear that the knowledge and experience embedded in a cultural form, is untranslatable in a foreign language because it can hardly penetrate the subject matter. It is holistic representation of cultural difference, in a language alien to it, is impossible mainly for two reasons, firstly the language of cultural difference, becomes alien which prevent language from representing the real. Secondly, the cultural difference, as a sign, becomes disjunctive in the very act of enunciation making the meaning more unstable. It becomes impossible to narrate the cultural differences, the otherness from the point of view of liberal elite of tolerance. That is, it becomes natural for a language of cultural translation seems colonial in perspective when its content is alien, and foreign create unhealthy translation.

A Passage to India: As an Orientalist Text

The Text as Cultural Conflict between East and West

According to Foucault, texts are discourses produced by some agency of author and lunched into the social context. These discourses are organized and manipulated in such a way that they have real effects on social and political institutions. The discourse is in a sense inseparable from power because it is through discourse that power is manipulated in the society. Discourse aims at subordinating anything that comes as 'the other' by describing, defining, evaluating, and excluding 'the other'. The discourse is produced to exert power to dominate other power which itself is discursive. The notion of text as being the instrument of power, that the western representations of the non-westerns in the imaginative text, have been discussed and even questioned by different critics. Together with the imposition of military and political power, the empire was governed by discourse, in other words by texts.

Western imperialists as well as western orientalists have produced text in abundance. For example, in the form of political treatises, law reports and moreover imaginative literatures, in most cases, these writings, celebrating the cultural superiority of the western metropolis and championing to colonial presence in the colonies, have created long term images and stereotypes about the native culture and peoples through the use of metaphors and symbols. As a result these texts represent everything non-western as an 'object' of study stamped with an 'otherness'. The moving metaphors displayed by the orientalist discourses are the other as 'native' 'primitive' 'barbarous' 'niggers' etc. That the orientals were uncivilized and undeveloped meant, orientalists needed them to educate and civilize. And it was the white man's burden to educate

'them', to civilize 'them' and to make 'them' human. Such representation of 'the other' as barbarian, primitive and irrational is the act of discriminating and dominating the east. Their evaluation seems down grading so as to put other culture and people in the sub-ordinate position. Orientalists presented the east as inferior to the superior west. This is how the discourses were used to justify the orientalist view of the east.

European imperialist self image was projected as heroic, developed, educated and enlightened; as the disseminator of science and progress; as the torch bearer of civilization. Such images and symbols were produced in abundance even in literary text which contributed to the process of colonization. A great many western statesmen and colonialist officials, with the preoccupied notion of 'the other' in need of civilization, joined the civilization mission of the western imperialism to educate, to civilize and to make human to the 'primitive', 'niggers', and 'barbarous' just because the texts helped to create such stereotypic images available such 'natives' to them. The orientalist turned to imaginative literature not only to understand the colonized, to decipher the unfamiliar, but also to justify and legitimize their presence in the east. This is precisely to say that the process of colonization was understood and enhanced through the text. Thus text becomes the vehicle of colonial power, the instrument of imperial rule. Hence, the orientalist writes something about the colonial to name the foreign land, to define them so that they could exercise some sort of power.

In this dissertation, an attempt has been made to study the dichotomy between the western orientalist culture and the Indian oriental culture, Forster's *A Passage to India* despite its humanist, philosophic and symbolic preoccupation is just one more piece in the huge pile of orientalist text. In close reading of Forster's novel, it reveals

that he has belonged to orientalist block. We find cultural conflict in his novel, as that western imperial people dominated the eastern, as especially the Indian people.

By observing Forster's discursive strategies used in the novel it is to say that those strategies have contributed strengthening stereotypical and symbolic practices enjoyed by the west within the framework of orientalist discursive tradition. Regarding *A Passage to India*, Benita Parry seems to be right when she argues, "written form within the liberal humanist ideology, Forster does act to legitimate the authorized cultural categories of the English 'bourgeois' world" (34). Forster himself is an orientalist; this orientalist perspective leads Forster to colonial favour, a colonial humanist's scheme to change India. His colonial pre-occupation has to be explored in his discursive formations.

While talking about representation, *A Passage to India* has depicted real and authentic picture of British-India from the stand point of liberal humanist critique of British imperialism. If we view from the perspective of colonized Indian people, Forster's representation of India tends to be questionable because he has not depicted the Indians as they really are, but has recreated them so as to make them fit into the images and stereotypic set by the generations of the western orientalists. In his dramatization of cultural discrepancies between the east and the west, Forster's self-validating sense of western superiority is inherent in his discursive strategies

In *A Passage to India*, Forster has demonstrated an English view of India with imperial eyes. He is writing about India but his sense of Englishness becomes dominant everywhere in the novel. Anglo-Indian characters are presented as if they are the gift of the west to the east, as an emissary of justice and civilization. In the novel,

Ronny, as a loyal servant to the government, performs the duty to work for the sake of the western imperialism. For them ruling is more important than any thing else for them. Ronny's conversation with his mother Mrs. Moore portrays this conviction:

We're not out here, for the purpose of behaving pleasantly We're out here to do justice and keep the peace... I am out here to work mind, to hold this wretched country by force... we're not pleasant in India, and we don't intend to be pleasant, we've something more important to do.

(69)

Ronny's comment upon native community, sounds very arrogant. Anglo- Indians have commitments in administrating, controlling and governing India 'this wretched country'. Most of the Anglo-Indians including Ronny himself in the novel can not come out of the prison house of colonial mentality.

The official view of English about the Indians in Chandrapore is extremely distrustful. The attitude of the city magistrate, Ronny, is typical in the entire white bureaucracy. When Ronny's mother behaves Aziz in normal manner, Ronny feels annoyed because he expects members of the ruling class to be indicated by their superiority in tone. He wants to know what Dr. Aziz was doing in the mosque at night, because it was not his prayer time. He suspects that Aziz was playing some tricks in calling out English visitor to take out her shoes before entering the mosque. He thinks that the Indians consider the white man as 'brutal conqueror' and 'sundried bureaucrat'. He holds a low opinion about the Indians in general.

Superiority of the white has been established every where in the novel. They feel that they are economically and military superior with the comments like. 'The

English men like posing as gods' (69). It is the Anglo- Indian's snobbery and their strategy of exclusion of the native Indians that prevents the Bridge party to be a successful one. The party meant 'to bridge the gulf between east and west' (49). As a result, it simply serves to widen the gulf making it ever unbridgeable. Anglo- Indian's discriminating attitudes towards the natives has been clearly seen in bridge party.

Being an English ruler, Ronny says, "they are in India not with the object of behaving pleasantly but to do justice and keep the peace" (69). Ronny disliked his mother, Mrs. Moore and Miss. Quested (English Lady) who try to mix socially with the natives. Similarly, other Anglo- Indians are taught that, "you are superior to them any way as Mrs. Turton says, don't forget that you're superior to anyone in India except one or two of the natives, and they are on an equality" (61). Anglo- Indian snobbery makes the attempt of Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Quested in vain. Forster's Anglo- Indian characters are also western orientalist by profession and they are there in India to handle the western colonial mission to the east. As a product of the British public school tradition, Ronny Heaslop is a 'sun- dried' bureaucrat whose, "self complacency, consciousness, lack of subtlety all grew vivid beneath a tropic sky; he seemed more indifferent than of old days to what was passing in the minds of his fellows" (96). As a 'servant of the government', he is so hard boiled and coldly reasoned that "he approved of religion as long as it endorse the National Anthem" (71). He stands unsympathetic to the natives; he feels superior in every way.

The attitude of the English bureaucracy towards the Indians comes to the fore when Dr. Aziz faces a trial after Adela's accusation. It reveals that irreconcilable is the differences between the imperialist and the natives, and how wide apart are the two

cultures of the east and the west. None of the ruling class, with the exception of Fielding and Mrs. Moore, has doubt that Aziz is guilty. The Anglo- Indian bureaucracy has taken Adela's accusation as its face value. Mr. Collector takes this incident as confirming the view that the English and the Indians should never try to become intimate socially; "I have had twenty-five year experience of this country, and during those twenty-five year I have never known any thing but disaster result when English people and Indians attempt to be intimate socially (59). M.C. Bryde, the Superintendent of Police, he feels perfectly certain that Aziz is guilty. The English ladies are unanimous in their view about Aziz's guilt. Mrs. Turton, reveals her contempt for the Indians. In her opinion the Indians, "ought to crawl from hear to the caves on their hands and knees whenever an English women is in sight" (50). She believes that the English people have been too kind toward the Indians but that is not the reality.

The conflict between the east and the west confines in the novel, the Britisher's view towards the native people perfectly seen in Mrs. Callender's conversation with Mrs. Moore, "the kindest thing one can do to a native is let him die" (48). At the same time, Forster introduces the major issue of intercultural relationship with a group of Muslim characters discussing at the beginning of the novel about the problem of whether it is possible for Indians and English to be friends:

I only contend that is possible in England," replied Handullah, who had been to that country long ago, before the big rush, and had received a cordial welcome at Cambridge.

It is impossible here, Aziz! The red nose boy has again insulted me in court. I do not blame him. He was told that he ought to insult me. Until lately he was quite a nice boy, but the others have got hold of him.

Yes they have no chance here that is my point. They come out intending to be gentlemen, and are told it will not do... they all became exactly the same, not worse, not better, I give any Englishmen, two years....and I gave any English women six months. (24)

The placement of this scene early in the book, even before the plot begins to develop, shows Forster considers that this is an important issue. *A Passage to India* depicts the situation where Indian people are behaving in different manners because of their cultural differences.

A Passage to India articulates a strange meeting from a position of cultural privilege such as those which follow rhetorical instance where the other is designated with in a set of essential and fixed characteristics. They created images like: “All unfortunate natives are criminal at heart” (176). India is a “poisonous country” (180). However, when, Mrs Moore, Fielding and Adela Quested make efforts to break free of standard Raj attitudes and desire to know real India and Indians, such type of images preoccupy in the minds of these Anglo- Indian characters. The entire Anglo-Indian community of Chandrapore is appalled. Ronny frankly tells his mother and Adela; “we do not come across them socially (49). It is better to keep distance to them only because they are native.

The relation between the Anglo- Indian and native Indian is the major discussion of the novel. The friendship of Aziz and Fielding, represent two different

cultural civilizations. There is a conflict between these two distinct cultural civilizations. The principal theme of *A Passage to India* is of course the conflict of the east and west, and the gulf that separates the culture of the orient from that of occident. The friendship of Aziz and Fielding, though intended mainly to illustrate the impossibility of an adjustment or understanding between the Indians and the English, has also to be studied at a personal level. This friendship becomes fairly intimate and deep, but it does not last. It happens so because of cultural divergence. To be a friend for long-term they must belong to the same culture. At last we can say it as cultural and civilizational conflict deep-seated in the novel and its characters. These British and Indian characters represent diverse cultural civilization. At last Dr. Aziz declares that no friendship is possible between the India and the English.

The Gulf between British- Indian and Hindu- Muslim

The relation between the English and the Indian represents the major event of the novel. *A Passage to India* portrays the life of small English community in a city called Chandrapore, and the relation of this community with the local people. The relation between the English and the Indians depict among official, social and personal levels of the characters. The relations between two Indian communities mention as a secondary incident of the novel. The novel deals with clash of different cultures in different levels. The culture of east is represented by native Indians, the culture of west represented by Anglo- Indian imperialists. In a similar approach, there is clash between two Indian cultures Hindu and Muslim.

The novel, *A Passage to India* basically deals with the level of 'British Empire in India'. It is Forster's most explicit statement on the imperial idea. He reflects a loss

of confidence in the British Raj and disillusionment in the traditional justification of imperialism that the Indians feel better under English domination. Among other things Forster emphasizes the racial discrimination between the Anglo- Indian and native Indians in the colonial context. *A Passage to India* on the one hand portrays the race relation between Anglo- Indian and native Indian; on the other hand, it deals with the segregation between the Hindu and Muslims. Forster overlooks the disparity between the Anglo- Indians themselves as an evident from the different attitude of Fielding, Mrs. Moore, Adela Quested and rest of the Anglo-Indian characters.

In order to understand Forster better, it is essential to analyse the relationship between British and Indian, the relation between colonial powers and the colonized, and that of the ruler and the ruled. India confronted the British with an older and more comprehensive civilization than the one they brought with them and the imperial idea underwent a real challenge. For four thousand years before the emergence of British rule had existed indigenous cultural traditions of varying complexity.

In the opening scene of *A Passage to India* the division between the Anglo-Indians and Indians bring home with great clarity by the physical separation of the low-lying squalid and haphazardly built Indian section of Chandrapore from the clean and orderly civil station on the rise where the Europeans live like 'little god'. Even the most superficial consideration of the 'Indian' constructed by western text will show that the canon of historical, analytical, propagandist and fictional writing devised a way of dividing the world which made British rule in India appear a political imperative and moral duty. They show superiority over native people. It offers very much orientalist behavior to native Indian. The city magistrate Ronny Heaslop's conversation with

mother shows their attitude toward their country: "I am out here to work, mind, to hold this wretched country by force ..." (69). He says, we are not pleasant in India, he further says, "England holds India for her own good" (124). Ronny clearly shows their concept towards the native Indian. They come there to educate them, to civilize them and to rule over them. Here the English club stands a power symbol of segregating the Indians and Anglo- Indians. Indians do not allow in the Chandrapore club even as guest; Aziz informs Mrs. Moore. *A Passage to India* comes out with a mixture of facts and fiction. A different kind of hierarchy existed which is based on class. Mrs. Turton does not shake hands with ordinary Indians; she said, "I refuse to shake hands with any of the men, unless it has to be the Nawab Bahadur" (61). It shows that the bridge party is completely failure to fill the gap between the native and Anglo- Indian. The behaviors of English characters with relation to the Indian characters seem very arrogant. The strategy of discrimination and exclusion, in *A Passage to India*, can be further deduced from the meaning associated with the words exotic, dissimilar, unrelated, unconformable, untypical, eccentric and foreign because of the cultural unfamiliarity of the writer.

Forster's gave a picture of a divided India is historically accurate. The novel stresses the difficulty of friendship between different cultures. The Cooperation Movement helped India's fragmented cultural heritage to come together, uniting the Hindus and Muslims in a common bond, which is needed to drive the English out of India. In one conversation, Muslims and Hindus argue: "India shall be a nation! No foreigners of any sort! ...we (Indians) may hate one another, but we hate you most" (Forster's India 315). Whether India will remain one nation after the Independence, is a

great question to be confronted later on. But we see Forster throws a light on this internal conflict between Hindu and Muslim.

The Hindu Muslim elites brought about by the Khilafat Movement. In course of time, *A Passage to India* published just after this movement was over. The Khilafat Movement was initiated from Turkey. The movement was carried as an anti-British movement. Indian Muslims were roused by it to a strong sense of unity and communal feeling against the British Empire. The movement invited the Amritsar Massacre. In Amritsar Massacre the English girl, Mrs. Sherwood has been brutally assaulted by a group of Indians. The connections between Forster's story and the actual situation are correlated, although Forster seems to have deliberately avoided introducing the name 'Amritsar'. This directly affected the city Chandrapore. The co-incident in the novel was that the Amritsar was the first station of Adela Quested. All these consequences invited the Marbar disaster. The Forster's story of the alleged insult on Adela remotely echoes the actual incident of the assault on Mrs. Sherwood, this out coming situation makes belief in English community that Aziz is fault.

The discriminatory behavior upon Indian is the binding force between Hindu and Muslim. They made purely temporary bridge between the two opposite communities. Both of them found it essential to unite together against the British. Their unity may have been at the time of Gandhi's cooperation movement but it does not last long. There was not constructive force behind it to sustain it for long time. Gandhian view that all Hindu, Muslim and Sikh are Indians does not work at that time. Their (Hindu Muslim) real binding cause was their political opposition to British. Forster was aware of these separatist tendencies in Hindus' and Muslims' relation. Forster was

taking Muslim side because he was familiar with Islam. He was near with Muslim friend while staying in India.

A Passage to India is based on actual experience of Forster during his two visits. He is favoring Muslim in this novel. He selected Muslim as the protagonist in his novel. The major events revolve around the Muslim protagonist, Dr. Aziz. Though Forster is presenting the life style of the small community where the Hindus are in mainstream:

The Muslim appears to dominate in the novel. Dr. Aziz is the central character and the story is more concerned with him than with him than with the Hindu protagonist, professor Godbole. Aziz and his Muslim associates also are presented in a more intelligible way than professor Godbole and the mass of Hindus living in the Native state of Mau: Hindus, Hindus only mild featured men, mostly villagers, for whom anything outside their villagers passed in a dream. (qtd. in Das. 93)

Forster is near to Muslim before the publication of the novel. He seems to have felt easier on the society of Muslim than the Hindu. He expresses his complexity with Hindu religion than the Islam on the one hand; on the other hand Forster himself is an orientalist. His education, ideology, and opinion are shaped by the tendency of British Empire. He seems to be a liberal humanist but fails to hold longer his image as a liberal humanist. His selection of protagonist as a Muslim character creates a picture that he wants to divide the Indian culture forever. It gives weapon to the British ruler and support for the policy of 'divide and rule'.

In similar way, Nirad Chaudhari criticizes Forster for his use of Muslim as the chief protagonist of his novel. It seems believable "yet because the fact that Chaudhari points is correct, the choice of Muslim who develops like Aziz is all the more significant" (Singh 275). Chaudhari's view is rather relevant that Forster is giving emphasis to Muslim. Forster's strategy in selecting a Muslim character as protagonist puts oil in the division of Indian community.

The gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims are another discursive part of the novel. Dr Aziz and Prof. Godbole are two spokesmen of their respective religion. They are the representatives of their religious community. Dr. Aziz expresses his view about Hindus:

Slack Hindus- they have not idea of society; I know them very well because of a doctor at the hospital. Such a slack, unpunctual fellow! it is as well you did not go to their house, for it would give you a wrong idea of India. Nothing sanitary, I think for my own part they grew ashamed of their house and that is why they did not send. (68)

Here, Muslim protagonist is angry with Hindus. His disagreement with Hindu shows that Muslims are representing the India as a whole.

When Aziz was arrested, then Fielding went to Godbole to know his thought about Aziz's arrest. Fielding with his deeply worried mind, meets him at the college and is compelled to listen to a long speech from Godbole about a scandal involving an unpopular colleague. Godbole ends the speech "lacked both basis and conclusion" (174). Godbole ends the speech fantastically by saying: "I hope the expedition was a successful one", meaning the expedition to the Marabar caves. Evidently, says Fielding,

Godbole has not yet heard the news (about Aziz's Arrest) but Godbole replied that he has heard the news. Well, says Fielding with an amazed stare, how can an expedition involving such event are called successful?: "I cannot say," Godbole. "I was not present" (174). Fielding stares at him again "a most use operation, for no eye could see what lay at the bottom of the Brahman's mind, and yet he had a mind and a heart too, and all his friends trusted him, with out knowing why" (173). Here the English man is in support to Dr Aziz but Godbole who himself is Indian expresses his opinion in a very irresponsible manner. Godbole's thought about Aziz clears that they are standing for opponent culture. Fielding once again asks about the Marabar case, Godbole goes on to deliver a philosophical discourse on the nature of good and evil; "I am informed that a evil action was performed in the Marabar hills, and that a highly esteemed English lady is now seriously ill in conscious ... when evil occurs, it express the whole of universe. Similarly, when good occurs"(174). Fielding listens to Godbole in a gloomy silence. We see Godbole does not support to Aziz in such a troubled situation. Seemingly whole Indian people united against Aziz's accusation but Godbole expresses a very puzzling opinion about Aziz's arrest.

The gulf between Hindus and Muslims is one of also the striking events in the novel. It is true that they are closer to each other at the time of Aziz's trial. But these two communities are polarized apart. Godbole remarks to Aziz a cow-dung and the rhythm of Hindu drums are uncongenial to him. Hindus believe that Muslims are violent people. Aziz is fully devoted in his religion and hates the other religion equally.

The influence of the Hindu and Muslim religions can be traced in the attitude and actions of two characters that are shaped by their religions, Godbole and Aziz. We

see Muslims' arrogance manifested for Hindus in the Hamidullah's conversation with his Muslim friends who expresses their opinion about Professor Godbole and Dr Panna Lal, "oh yes both Hindus; there we have it; they hang together like flies and keep everything dark. Rifi, come here, sit down. Tell me all the details" (101). It depicts the arrogant nature of Muslim and their behavior against the Hindus. It shows the divergence involving between these two culturally dissimilar people.

Forster has given some sympathy for the Muslim characters. He has made the Muslim characters fully developed and Hindu characters as being pre-matured. Forster belongs to be a realist but his realism does not represent in character selection. He offers the Muslim as a protagonist in the novel, where majority of Hindus are living in the Chandrapore. It shows that his kindness goes to Muslim than Hindu. His Muslim friend, Masood is prominent advisor of Forster. Forster agreed that, "*A Passage to India* would never have been written with out Masood" (Das 94). Forster made us clear that he was fully dependent on his Muslim friend.

This was the proportion, in which Forster dealt with Hinduism but his personal experiences in attempts to approach the subject of Islam is deep. Although being widely praised, the novel *A Passage to India* was also criticized for exhibiting rather contradictory qualities. From the British perspective it is sometimes, seen as an anachronistic caricature. Especially from a Hindu point of view, it is considered as misleading and unrepresentative; because of the major role of a Muslim in the novel.

Forster misread the Chandrapore because it is the Hindu native state. His character selection is devoted to Muslims. He fails to represent the reality of the state where mass of Hindu are living. The condition confirms that he escapes from reality.

His view about Hindu stands ambivalent, “the details about Hinduism, on the other hand are presented in an ambivalent way. Aspect of Hindu gods, Hindu mythology, Hindu form of worship, Hindu scripture and Hindu philosophy are touch upon irony; the Hindu character is also portrayed as comical and incomprehensible” (Das. 102).

The novel faithfully presents the Forster’s actual experience concerning Hinduism and Islam. This was the peculiar state of Forster’s attitude to the two religions when he returned from his second visit to India; his mental outlook had been exposed to wider field of observations, connected this time with Hinduism rather than with Islam. Throughout his characterization, “Hindu character is presented as queer, and the Muslim as perfectly intelligible” (Das. 103). His selection of characters creates the conflict with in the Indian community. He chooses the Muslim central character, the major events developed in the novel through this character. Seeming all these happenings, Forster uses his orientalist perspective. Forster himself is an orientalist so that he does like other orientalist. He wants the fraction in Indian community, which might help to rule over India for a long time. Knowingly or unknowingly, Forster uses the divide and rule policy adopted by British Empire, which is very much orientalist in nature and having colonial mentality. In concluding, Forster is humanist but belongs to colonial humanist bloc.

Translating an Alien Culture: Ungraspable

As the notion of nation as discursive formation which involves narration as an inseparable phenomenon. Forster in writing *A Passage to India*, in this sense, he is narration a nation. Here, nation is a cultural construct, a representation of social life rather than political rationality. A nation is an ambivalent position for it poses the

temporality of cultural signification in the act of articulation of cultural signs. Because of this temporality in the act of narration of the nation, the central signified of the nation is sliding by the supplementary movement of writing itself. The narrative of cultural representation can never represent it, but becomes disjunctive where ideology becomes multi-dimensional, multi-accentual and the agency of people became split an 'object' of nationalist pedagogy and as a 'subject' of the process of signification. It is difficult to narrate the nation as a sociological solidity. What we can have, as a result, is not the holistic representation of differences, but the otherness. This disjunctive ambivalence, in the narration of the nation becomes more explicit and conspicuous when attempts to narrate the other nation from the anterior space, from the perspective of the outsider. The proposition here is that Forster fails to represent Indian nation. In *A Passage to India*, his finest attempt to write about India, to record it indigenously result in an utterances of India which is stamped with otherness as a product of western liberal humanist tradition, Forster wanted to write India as a friend of the west but he could not, he simply can not because, as any other white people, his mood of thoughts and feelings, environment, his intellectual habits of mind are circumscribed by the surrounding of his upbringing, western education and shared cultural inheritance essentially different from the oriental one. Moreover, he is writing from the perspective of the outsider; he is narrating India from the anterior space. It is obviously natural for him to think about India with English view point. India itself becomes utterly alien and other to him. As a result, what we get in his narration of India is the impossibility grasping India richly explored: "how can be the mind take hold of such a country" (*The Hill* 148).

Much of the fragments of the novel have been derived from Forster's own real Indian experience which has been recorded in the form of his letters, collected in *The Hill of Devi*. While traveling to India, Forster, initially, seems to be fascinated and bewildered by the 'new horizons' the 'new civilization and the grandeur of the sceneries of the mountains, hills and plains of India- new continent. But Forster, as he nears the approaches India for the close observation, he explores the vast and mysterious cultural and social creeds and enigmatic religious practices which are utterly incomprehensible to a mind fashioned by western intellectuality like his. Alienated from his origin, Forster feels rootless and displaced in India. His experience of India, then, turns out to be that of disappointment and despair. The sense of negation and sense of frustration in his perception is evident at the very outset of the novel:

Except for the Marabar caves ... the city of Chandrapore presents nothing extraordinary ...it trails for a couple of miles along the bank, scarcely distinguishable from the rubbish it deposits so freely... the streets are mean, the temples ineffective and Chandrapore was never large and beautiful. The very wood seems made of mud, the inhabitants of mud moving. So abased, so monotonous is everything ...and the general outline of the town persists swelling here, shrinking there, like some low but indestructible form of life. (The Hill 31)

This image of grotesqueness and lifelessness of the city of Chandrapore suggests Forster's unease and discomfort in penetrating the alien environs of India as a narrator. Even the city station, for him, "provokes no emotion. It charms not, neither does it repel ... It has nothing hideous in it ...it shares nothing with the city except the overarching

sky” (32). As Forster's grasp of sense of reality fades away leaving momentary negative vision, his language structure, used to address such reality, itself becomes unstable often slipping from the grasp as the sentences turn from the city of Chandrapore to the river Gangas, to streets and temples; from civil station to bungalows, to the overarching sky above.

Forster faces problems in representing India which caused by the disjunction between the content vastness of the land, complex cultural forms and mystic religions rituals of India- and from the canons of the novel in which he has attempted to frame these materials. Such materials which supposed to be fit for an epic cannot actually be accommodated in the novelistic form which is in a very compressed form. Forster's approach India is described as celebrated style as if he is writing an epic. In such a situation, we see Forster's desire to penetrate Indian reality, to write India from within disturbed, frustrated and violated when his conscious exposed to rival conceptions of culture, civilization and religious practices. He is encountering of human condition, he is overwhelmed and filled with a sense of awe. In such a condition, India itself becomes the sign of cultural difference, arbitrary, ambivalent and equivocal presenting both positive and negative sense, 'twilight of the double vision'. And Forster's own subjectivity is split between his desire to understand the other and his need to avoid anything that eluded his understanding. He is writing from the alien perspectives.

For Forster, 'Geography' of India in *The Hill of Devi*, stands for primordial abyss without any form, understanding any strategy of representation because of it, having no relation with 'anything seen or dreamt' and being 'older than all spirit', is

before time and before space. The meaning of India is indistinct and repetitive. Marabar cave as a signifier is always sliding:

Having seen one such cave, having seen two, having seen three, four, fourteen, twenty four, the visitors returns to Chandrapore uncertain whether he has had an interesting experience at all. He finds it difficult to discuss the caves or to keep them apart in his mind. Nothing, nothing attaches to them and their reputation ...does not depend on human speech. (138)

In Forster's writing, an intense sense of frustration at not being able to experience India and translate his experience; he gets in whatever existed in India and Forster's writing mentality seems to be perplexed. The India that Forster represents in *A Passage to India* is divided and ambivalent. No connection and chronology are possible in India because the very "spirit of India earth ...tries to keep men in compartment" (141). Forster's India is ambivalent and equivocal in the sense that it is at once mysterious and muddle causing a moral confusion to the western rational understanding. India on the one hand has been presented as the embodiment of emptiness: "Nothing, nothing attaches to them ... nothing, nothing would be added to the sum of good or evil" (138), on the other, it shows, "as the country, field, fields, then hills jungle, hills and more fields" (148). The environs of India have been anthropomorphized where, according to Benita Party, "hills move, fields jump, stones and boulders declare themselves alive and holes belch" (142). Forster, therefore, standing at the frontier, poses a difficult question:

How can the mind take hold of such a country? Generations of invaders have tried but they remain in exile. The important towns they build are only retreats, their quarrels, the malaise of men who cannot find their way home. India knows of their trouble, she knows the whole world trouble, to its uttermost depth. She calls' come through her handed mouths, through objects ridiculous and august. But come to what? She has never defined. She is not a promise, only an appeal (141)

Forster attempts to impose some sense; to India, that is to remain in exile for India, defines any western representation. Forster, as a narrator, is dwarfed by the utter incomprehensibility of India and his effort to signify India is thwarted. His failure to represent India because his inability to 'experience and understanding' India. His experience of India is not a happy one but that of a continuous bafflement. Forster's projection is not a holistic representation of India but articulations of the otherness, the other ness not outside but within himself. For him India being only an appeal not a promise, Forster celebrates not the fulfillment of his expectations but the frustration of his expectations. This is to say that Forster, in *A Passage to India*, is defeated in his attempt to capture 'Real India.'

Forster, time and again, fails in experiencing India when he approaches to describe the birth ceremony of Lord Krishna. All Hindus are hustling and bustling, and the "god to be born was largely a silver image the size of teaspoon" (281). And the choir is going on: "Tukaram Tukaram, thou art my father and mother and everybody" (282). For Forster, the native Hindus' ceremony does not give any meaning except the spiritual act. For native Hindus, this ceremonial ceremony may be a culmination of

religious experience, holiest moment to be one with God. But cold reasoned rational Forster finds it as nothing than a spiritual feeling, the image of Krishna, the universal sign of God himself slide in the form of ‘imitations’ and ‘substitutions’ leaving only the flickering sensation. As a result; “no definite image survived; at the birth it was questionable whether a silver doll or a mud village or a silk napkin or an intangible spirit or a pious resolution had been born. Perhaps all these things! Perhaps none! Perhaps all birth is an allegory!" (287).

Forster faces difficulty to penetrate the religious, rituals and cultural practices held in India by Hindus. India can not be accommodated in the western narrative of time sequences. In India, time and space can not be arranged in a logical order as in the west, rather they slip for ever from any grasp. India, for him, is amorphous, formless, a state of emptiness receding eternity. In such country, he is at a loss; a loss of meaning, a loss of identity, and a loss of interest. Forster is narrating the other nation from the point of view of an outsider. The Indian nation reveals the ethnography of its own historicity and what Forster is compelled to do is to produce the other narrative of the people and their differences. In order to find some sense of taste, sense of form and meaning in an indigenous way, Forster has to enter, by crossing the barriers and the frontiers of the western paradigm, into the Indian nation and he should undergo the experiences of cultural and religious rituals as the indigenous native people would do. But Forster simply cannot do so and this is what causes the difficulty to him in understanding and representing the ‘real India’; “though I am dressed as a Hindu, I shall never become one” (Das. 102). Perhaps this may be the central fact that Forster’s

liberal humanistic characters like Adela Quested, Mrs. Moore and Fielding, and along with them Forster himself are defeated by the Indian nation.

Miss Quested came with her well equipped mind to know India “I want to see the real India” (46), as if India is an object of study and it is understandable to some extent. Without having any race consciousness, every time she is trying to understand India out of her own curiosity, she is trying to make people talk in bridge party or trying to identify the bird or wishing “some thing universal in this country” (156) India. She is even ‘ashamed of Anglo- Indian women’s being ungenerous and snobby about Indians” (157). It seems clear that her liberal humanist fashioned by rational western intellectuality. Despite her such attempt, Adela, however, fails to understand the soul of Indian when she encounters with it with because of her limited experience of India. When she is traveling to Marabar cave with Aziz, she hears the train producing the sound ‘pomper, pomper’ but cannot decipher its message because it “avoided her well equipped mind” (148). She never knows whether it was Aziz or the guide of her own hallucination. She is incapable of understanding the cave experience which demonstrates her inability to understand India itself. Forster himself admits that he does not know whether it is a man or supernatural or an illusion that caused the Marabar disaster.

Similarly, Mrs. Moore, too, starts with “God is Here” (42) in India, “God has put us on earth to love our neighbors and to show it and he is omnipresent ever in India” (70). All she wants to show to Indians is “good will, more good will” (71) and becomes upset when Indian native guests invite and not treat properly by Anglo-Indian people. She does not have any racial feeling; she is sympathetic and friendly to the

natives like Aziz and Godbole. But she too fails to know about India and Indians. When Godbole sings a hymn to Krishna; “come, come to me only” (96). Mrs. Moore and Adela Quested do not understand the song and the ear, baffled repeatedly, soon lost any clue and wandered in a more noise, harsh or unpleasant.

Fielding, a perfect image of Forster’s liberal humanist, who appears to transcend the barriers of caste, colour and creed, is finally defeated by Indian. Fielding, “talked to anyone and he ate anything. Amid much that was alien” (65). The world to himself; “is globe of men who are trying to reach one another and can best do so by the help of good will plus culture and intelligence” (80). He stands on the side of native Indian in Aziz case. He truly believes that Aziz is innocent. As he moves out of the club and returns home contemplating the Marabar hill in his book, feels ‘dubious’ and ‘discontented’. His personality developed on advanced European line seems to be a failure in India. The Hill of Devil, He had:

Developed his personality, explored his limitations, controlled his passion – and he had done it all without becoming either pedantic or worldly. A creditable achievement, but as the moment passed, he felt he ought to have been working at something else, he didn’t know at what, never would know, never could know and that was why he felt sad. (197)

It is the utter incompatibility of his surrounding that makes his life difficult and uneasy in India. He can not identify himself where he actually belongs to. When Aziz is declared innocent, Indians become victorious. Fielding, should have been rejoicing with the Indians. But a sudden sense of dwarfishness dominates his feeling. Miss Quested finds it is difficult to make sense of life in India. Their reason and intellect have failed

in India and they retired from India as of “dwarfs talking and shaking hands and assuring each other that they stood on the same footing of insight” (262). And the stepping of insight on which they stand is not oriental one but that of western one.

Forster, thus, remains in exile in his attempt to narrate Indian nation, to inscribe cultural differences existing between the east and the west because the writing of the cultural difference implies cultural translation but his language belongs to foreign culture. (He uses the foreign language to translate the culture leads him to failure act.) On the other hand, Forster totally depends on the Muslim friend to translate the Indian culture, where majority of Hindus are living. On the advice of Muslim friend, he selected the Muslim protagonist; this action further makes him failure because the Hindus were in frontline in India. Forster is unable to capture the reality in his selection of the protagonist. As Forster is trying to translate Indian cultural experience of English language, it is natural to confront the loss of meaning, he cannot contextualize the reality. Benjamin and Bhabha believed the act of cultural translation which does not capture its essence. How can Forster inscribe Indian nation standing at the anterior space by employing foreign perspective?

Conclusion

Various conclusions can be derived from a research work like this, which aims at studying and analyzing the cultural differences and their relation. Viewed from the oriental perspective, the conclusion of the present study of Forster's *A Passage to India* can be summarized in the following discussion sentence.

The orientalist takes the help of text to impose power upon the orient. The notion of text as embedding the power that the west creates an image about the east. The imaginative 'image' is based on their military, economic and political power. The discourse, by using the power of language, not only reflects the reality, but also creates its own reality. Which makes clear to produce discourse is to establish the knowledge of the world. Through the medium of discourse the west is constructing the identity of the east. The discourses produce certain dichotomies between the west and non-west. They are subordinating the east with the support of false discourses created by them. The discourses are organized and manipulated in such a way that they have real effort on social and political instruments. The discourse is inseparable from the power, the west aims to exercise these discourse to describe, to define and to evaluate the 'other' (east). The discourse establishes the knowledge which at last helps controlling the orient and rules over them. They create image 'other' as 'native', 'primitive', 'barbarous.' Such stereotypical images are created by west to east with the assist of power. They think that orientals are uneducated and uncivilized, the European need to civilize and educate the 'east'. The very nature of civilizing mission also depicts in the novel, *A Passage to India*.

Forster belongs to liberal humanist tradition. This research stands against his liberal humanist position, especially in the continent of India because his liberalism is the product of the western culture and civilization. His ideology and knowledge of the east is framed by the western ideology. He cannot mingle with oriental culture and civilization because his understanding of the east especially the India is fashioned by the image and stereotypes framed by the west. Western orientalist's discourses place the orient in the position of subordination and domination.

Forster presents India itself incomprehensible and unapproachable by its vastness, complexities and mysteriousness. He is overwhelmed, baffled and dwarfed by India. He is defeated in his attempt to represent the real India. Forster tries to inscribe the alien culture, but it is vague and never accomplished. Forster is trying to inscribe the alien cultural difference because he belongs to alien culture. The job of translating the culture is an ambivalent act. Forster's two visits of India can not capture the sufficient knowledge at the level of cultural translation. Bhabha believes that culture is such a thing which does not translate. Forster's narrating of a nation from the outsider is a controversial act. He becomes unsuccessful to present the real Indian culture by using alien language. In his confrontation with India, he discovers the unfathomable and unrepresentable Indian culture. In his narration, his Englishness appears more vivid.

On the one hand, Forster demonstrates the conflict, British and Indian or colonizer and colonized. On the other hand, there is internal conflict within Indian community divided into the Hindus and the Muslims. They unite at the time of Khilafat Movement and Cooperation movement because their major enemies are English people (British Empire). The unity is very momentary because they belong to two different

cultural civilizations. The riot between Hindu and Muslim continuous leads to partition of India. Forster already throws light on these cultural disputes. In the novel, two characters Dr. Aziz and Prof. Godbole are representative of their respective religions. They have arrogant feelings to one another in a cultural bond. Forster seems rather bias in selection of his characters. When he attempts to present the culture, custom and life style of the community of Chandrapore, a Hindu-dominant community, Forster selected the protagonist from the Muslim block. In similar ways, his other muslim characters are intelligent and fully developed in comparison to Hindus. Hindu characters are rather comical in their activities. On the one hand the majority of Hindus are living in a small city Chandrapore, on the other Forster opts a Muslim as protagonist. This activity marks Forster's failure to represent India. Forster is basically taking the side of Muslim in his two visits, he was near to Muslim friends. He himself expresses that he finds some complexity in Hinduism and easiness in Muslim. Forster's selection of Muslim protagonist leads to carry a fraction in Indian society. He is a British; he wants to divide the Indian community which is directly advantageous to British ruler. Britishers want to rule India as long as possible. Here Forster uses the policy of British ruler that is 'divide and rule'. Forster's overall education, ideology, opinion also play the key role in representing India. Being an orientalist, Foster shows English characters superior. It sounds quite familiar to him because of his belongingness in the western ideology.

The domination of the white people finds every where in the novel. The English men pose like God. They feel themselves like God. It is the Anglo- Indian snobbery and their strategy of dominating the Indians. The English men organize the bridge party aiming at filling the gap between the English and Indian. But the actual intension of the

bridge party becomes unsuccessful rather it widens the gulf between them. These white people are reluctant even to shake the hands with the Indians in the party. Forster's novel represents his orientalist mind-set.

Forster is a Cambridge intellectual and he sees India as foreign land. Ideologically, he is a colonizer, so he creates English characters similar to the colonizer. He belongs to the colonial humanist tradition. He is humanist but his colonial mentality is perfectly seen in the novel. Thus, Forster fails to create an image of real India.

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