

Racial Politics in E. M. Foster's *A Passage to India*

Mr. Biswanath Mahapatra

(Teaches at Khatra Adibasi Mahavidyalaya, Khatra, Bankura

Dept. of English And Research Scholar of The University of Burdwan)

E. M. Foster's *A Passage to India* is not written on biased form but a critical point of view from a man who belongs the British empire. The novel explores the complex relationship of the peoples of India and the British people who captured India as a ruler. Through the intimation or the closeness which was one probable presupposition from both sections but E.M. Foster in a very subtle way draws the internal lines which holds the non-superficial relationship of these both sections. Forster's purpose was meaningful introspection to know India maximum possible way from various angles. In that connection, Elleke Boehmer throws his perception, "In stark contrast, the final scenes of E.M. Foster's study of latter-day colonial India, *A Passage to India* (1904), hold out little hope either for social interaction between European and Indians, or for Indian National Independence British rule is represented as irrelevant" (Boehmer, Elleke, 1995; 101).

The novel, Foster's *A Passage To India* highlights the three characters, viz., Dr. Aziz, Fielding and Adela Quested. The novel starts with Chandrapore which Forster represents as a miniature from of India. It symbolized the racial disparity between the Indian and British people. The Railway Line clearly indicates this bi-furcation. The masterclass, British always got privileged and enjoyed more rather than the Indian people who always got the hatred and arrogant looks from the British people. The "Marabar Caves" is itself play a vital role in the whole novel which helps both the British people and the Indians to understand each other in terms of suspicion, hatred, lack of faith, racial prejudice. It helps to unfolding the hidden stories of the British people, the Indians in a better way. Adela Quested accuses Dr. Aziz in the charge at attempt to rape during a trip to the Marabar caves. This incident became an invisible pillar in between two sections. Dr. Aziz's trial enrages the India people to be united against the British people who did not love Indian people but know how to rule.

A Passage to India is a perfect example of racial politics in between superior and inferior class which may be classified as the activity of colonial people over the colonizer. As Boehmer mentioned colonialism has often been regarded as the struggle of determine who is fittest, even in the times before Darwin. Boehmer again opines that colonization was a struggle for supremacy (Boehmer, 1995 : 80)

A Passage to India unfolded an attempt to understand the real India. The entry of Miss Adela Quested from England to India changes the atmosphere of both the novel and at the same time the relationship between India and Britain in reality. Racial politics deep rooted within prejudice among the British against the people of India. To the British people India is a country of weak, unreliable, dishonest, lustful country having feminine qualities. Through this novel we realize that the British people try to come close to the Indian people, but ultimately they realize it is not possible for some reasons one of which is a difference of race, superior and inferior. The suppressed and oppressed racial attitudes hover towards and oppressed racial attitudes hovers towards the native Indians by the British people. It runs to its climax point in the cave episode where Adela Quested throws a charge against Dr. Aziz for attempting to rape. According to Forster for Indian people this is common as it is said by the policeman “ When an Indian goes bad, he goes hot only very bad, but very queer.” By guided racial prejudice and complete racial politics he thought that all unfortunate natives are criminal at heart.” (Foster, 1979 : 176). At present, in India the case of “Nirvaya” also proves that comment.

It is the nature of the colonizer to rule in a maximum way but apparently they try to show that they only can improve the position of the native Indians and for this reason to rule the people is necessary. But India is a country who still believes the good relationship between guest and host. There is a Sanskrit proverb “*Atithi Devo Bhabo*” that means to respect guest like God. But in the case of British people such type of perception was shattered by the Indian people after observing the activities and attitudes of the so called white British people towards the Indians. Ultimately it looks that ‘Pucca Sahibs’ could never mix with the native people of India. One character, Fielding in to some extent different. He nourished the nation of equality of human being and was blamed by his own people for this nation. Miss Adela Quested like a storm had the urgency to know India after coming in India and it brought a disaster in the life of all this

people. Though Dr. Aziz and Fielding sometimes came closer and show their feelings but still he was not happy with Dr. Aziz. The racial politics in slightly dominated by the extreme heat of India because such type of odd geographical phenomena creates a gap both mentally and physically in between British and Indian people.

Caves symbolize multiple features of India. Like caves Indian people are subjects of mystery, muddle and surprise. As a cave is hazy and full of mystery and muddle, it is unable to understand properly for the outsider for the lack of sufficient sunlight which represents enlightenment of the British people. So as they can't able to understand the caves in the same way they unable to understand the Indians.

Somewhere Dr. Aziz was presented as hypocrite and a fraud in companion with Fielding who was presented as a good man and also as a good Englishman having sympathy. Though later the friendship between Dr. Aziz and Fielding was increasing but caves episode disturbed everything though Fielding's smartness has been observed actively about Dr. Aziz after cave episodes. In India, the British people compelled to face two different castes in India as Hindu and Muslim where their perception about Hindus was that they are always engaged themselves with Gods and Goddess like spiritualism.

Racial politics between Oriental and Occidental in very much vibrant in *A Passage To India*. The occidental like Miss Adela Quested are very frank and easy while Dr. Aziz, the representative orientalist having with supreme and qualms. Dr. Aziz's arrest heightens the lesion between two races. Fielding, the gentlemen throws his insight to understand the situation properly to give Dr. Justice with the help of the law. The British police throws very unimpressive and vulgar attitude towards the Indian people. Hamidullah's role in this matter added a racial colour to make the situation more volatile. The caves episode brought another positiveness in the context of India and a negative result to the British people. Because all the Indian were untied against the colonizer British people considering that this is nothing but racial politics or tactics or a calculated conspiracy to humiliate and to insult the Indian people. Only for taking a revenge for not properly understanding India what actually it is. We can say it's a spark of angst, hatred and typically racial biasness. As the time passes India and British people are departing from each

other gradually so the closeness between two different races remained as only a dream. Though the characters like Fielding and Mrs. Moore has different opinion.

The racial supremacy also observed within the trial where the British people played the role within this judiciary system like a ruler NawabBahadur's reaction went against the callous British mentality. India people expressed their mistrust towards the British people. The small victory was in terms of nationalism. As if it was the answer in the faces of the British people that they are not so as they thought always, i.e., all the good qualities must have possessed with them. The characters like Mrs. Moore who mostly realizes the feelings of the Indians, represented the spirit of truth.

Ronny's attitude also reflects disparity between two cultures – where Ronny like a British people prefers duty than relationship while we, the India people give more importance on our relationship, marriage and other such type of things, than our duties – it is a different characteristics of two races.

Chapter 29 indicates the breaking of two races – Indian and British when Mrs. Moore had left India and Miss Adela Quested was ready to go. Only Fielding was the last hope. India faces two types of racial problems – one in from external and another is from internal. External problem was a conflict between the Indian and the British. And on the other hand the internal conflict lies in between Hindus and Muslims where the British thought that Muslims actually did not love India but they compelled to love and their such type of internal mutual hatred still remain about which the British were very concerned.

In “The Temple” part the author represented Hinduism as a universal religion a religion for the unity of mankind which was different from all those bloody racial conflicts. In this part, the tension was slightly removed. Temple part helps us to realize that after all East is East, West is West. These two giants shall never meet together.

In the concluding chapter it is clear that friendship is built only within the equal persons as Ronny as the British remained the masters in India they were unable to stop to accept Indian as their friends because the boat episode was the ultimate proof. And DR. Aziz's utterance not yet hints that unless and until India will be free, the British can't be left from India.

E.M. Foster's psychological understanding is so in depth, acute as if he knew more India than his own country. It is also the achievement of E.M. Forster to capture India and its features from a different look, i.e., a look from an occidental. Rama Kundu also very scholarly explainsthe two India-The Englishman's India and Foster's India in her critical book on E.M. Foster's *A Passage to India*.(Atlantic Publication,2007).

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Address: BiswanathMahapatra

Post- Khatra, near Karali More

Dist – Bankura

PIN- 722140

State- West Bengal(INDIA)