The Journal of Teaching Language Skills (JTLS)
3(3), Fall 2011, Ser. 64/4
(Previously *Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities)*

Texts and Politics: Postcolonial Revaluations of two British Classics

S. R. Moosavinia
Assistant Professor
Shahid Chamran University, Ahvaz
email: moosavinia@scu.ac.ir

Abstract

The major argument of this essay is that Kipling treats the colonial subject as the "other," and Forster proves to be almost as pro-Empire as writers like Kipling. Nevertheless, *A Passage to India* is eloquent in rejecting British values and introducing Indian voices. This novel records a shift in attitude in terms of exposing the bitter realities about and attitudes of British imperialists. Despite Forster's rejection of the inhuman perspectives on the natives and his sympathy towards Indians, he remains mostly unrealistic in his characterization of Indians. The two novelists are similar in their political inclinations. Their difference lies in the strategies they adopt for their literary expression. The British Empire moved further towards its decline when Forster was writing and publishing *A Passage to India*. Saidian worldly reading of these two literary texts has facilitated the connection between text and politics in this study.

Keywords: politics, postcolonialism, orientalism, Edward Said, E.M. Forster, Rudyard Kipling

1. Introduction

It is really a formidable challenge to judge certain discrepancies between historically recorded experience and imaginatively constructed conceptions about India and Indians. However, studying literary texts in

Received: 11/16/2010 Accepted: 07/04/2011

English against the historical background of India is highly rewarding in the specific case of Orientalist representations of India in *Kim* and *A Passage to India*. One is increasingly conscious of the role English language and literature play in India. It has become the most important and predominant medium for educational and academic purposes. English happened to be the canonical language for expressing canonical truths. So perspectives of non-Indian (and later Indian) authors on India have been regarded as particularly authoritative. The language itself notwithstanding, the problem lies in the fake authority attached to it. It has the power to explain India and Indians not only to Westerners but also to Indians themselves. In fact, a critical awareness of Orientalist distortions and misrepresentations has been established especially after Said's *Orientalism*.

It seems as if the novel genre is the most affiliated to politics in general and to colonialism in particular. No one could exclude the novel from the list of imperialism and colonialism. The novel is recited as a key genre of Orientalism. It has a revolutionary history different from the history of other genres. "We know almost instinctively that there is at least one genre of postcoloniality: this genre is the novel" (Hitchcock, 2003, p.299).

There is a host of novels on India by both Indian and non-Indian authors. Kipling's *Kim* resembles the typical colonialist tradition of writing, while Forster's *A Passage to India* merely questions aspects of this tradition. Indian writers writing on India in English could appropriate the novel form; nevertheless, they were hampered. Indian writers in English like R.K. Narayan or Raja Rao found themselves in a dilemma. They had to either choose to write in their indigenous languages or select English as their medium of expression. They understood well that choosing the first alternative would prevent them from joining mainstream canonical literature. Writing in Indian languages would delay the process.

The two novels under scrutiny have a lot to share. Both show an interest in Indian relationships. The influence of Western civilization on India and the resultant conflicts are of major interest to the writers of the two texts. What concerns us here is the location of the two novels and the role they play in reflecting India in English literary texts. Then there will

be a word about new treatments of the subject. *Kim* is a linear narrative that takes, more or less, a Westerner's attitude toward the Indian. The locale and the colour are Indian, but the author's attitude is an alien one. The narrative voice in the novel treats the Oriental as an inferior being. The Oriental tells lies, takes commission, is accustomed to disorder, and has no sense of time. Little sympathy is shown towards Indian characters; the most is directed at Teshoo Lama whose mystical experience is reflected at best as exotic and esoteric. Kipling's picture of the Lama and his Buddhism does not have a sense of completeness, rather it oscillates between fascination and indulgence. The presence of the Sahibs is clear in the novel. Kim, being an affiliate of this class, takes a course to be a scribe for the British Indian government. The lama consents to this despite the fact that he wants him to become a spiritual seeker. India, in *Kim*, is picturesque, mystical and exotic and it badly needs British order and supervision. British presence is like a halo at which natives are staring and they are defined according to the distance from their peripheral position to the centre.

2. Kipling and Forster at Work

The common theme of East-West relationship is more sensitively reflected in *A Passage to India*. The author of this novel explicitly contemplates his contempt for the Anglo-Indians. Forster undermines the basic values of the West. He questions Christianity as an inefficient religion and Western civilization as an inadequate yardstick of evolution. Father Victor and Bennett in *Kim* are indifferent to Christianity but they can find no alternative. Forster, on the other hand, is more straightforward about Christianity. He portrays it as a feeble force.

The two novels can be compared and contrasted on the basis of their narrative form. While *Kim* is written as a linear narrative, *A Passage to India* opts for a much more complex way of narration. Kipling's evocation of landscape is descriptive and decorative. He is the master of portraying the flora and the fauna of India. Forster's novel goes beyond the descriptive to include the symbolic and the philosophical. Forster has realized that it is impossible to understand Indian experience and the nature of cultural contact between the British and the natives through the linear narrative tradition practiced till that time. Forster deviated from

this narrative tradition to emphasize the complexity of experience. Forster introduces a theory of the novel called "expansion." Through this he dispenses with linear narration and the omniscient narrator: "This is the idea the novelist must cling to. Not completion. Not rounding off but opening out" (Forster, 1962, p.170).

There is a gradual disruption of linear narrative that realizes its complete potential in the Marabar Caves episode. Forster employs some modern techniques of narration through introspection, evocative description and speculation. During the climactic episode in the Marabar Caves a sense of ambiguity and confusion dominates. There is no comment from the narrative voice and only different characters give their comments and offer interpretations of what happens there. The narrator concentrates on the views and opinions of characters rather than on the actual event. According to Forster, the incident in the Caves "is as elusive and ungraspable as the experience of India itself". The novel becomes "a metaphor for the breakdown of Anglo-Indian and Occidental yardsticks of measurement" (Raman, 1989, p.181). In a way, the mode of narrative reinforces the complex content of the novel. The various attitudes, speculations and the intermittent disruptions of the linear narrative expose the imperialist assumptions and the actual state of Anglo-Indian relations.

There is no doubt that Forster has exposed the malicious attitudes of the British in his novel. He has accused the Imperialists of inhuman treatment of the natives, while he has shown sympathy and readiness towards a better understanding of the natives as individuals. Nevertheless, Forster remains unrealistic in character portrayal of Indians. He uses clichés, stereotypes, and generalizations about Indians, and Orientals in general. Professor Godbole, for instance, is depicted as a character obsessed with his Hinduism and strange Hindu hymns. He is even sometimes ridiculed, through his frequent references to cows. He is exotically dressed, particularly fond of food, a failure as a headmaster, and unable to be punctual. Orientalist representations of the individual Oriental have not disappeared in *A Passage to India*. At the end of *A Passage to India,* Forster reminds the reader of the history of the British Empire, and also the conflict between Dr. Aziz and Fielding; "yet can neither recommend decolonization, nor continued colonization. ‘No, not

yet, not here,' is all Forster can muster by way of resolution" (Said, Representing, p.223).

Even the protagonist of the novel, Dr. Aziz, is not exempted from this Orientalist formula. A careful reader would not miss the general statements by the narrative voice on the character of Aziz. It is possible to make a thorough study of such Orientalist generalizations; however, the list could be extended to a degree that would betray the relationship between the narrative strategies and characterization, and the cause of the Empire. Even Aziz's plus points, like his profession as a physician and his handsome features are slighted by the Orientalist narrator. Aziz is also depicted as an eccentric Oriental sharing Oriental characteristics of other natives, whether Indians or Easterners in general.

In characterizing Indians in this novel Forster makes his narrator adopt the tone of condescension. Today we notice many general statements about Oriental traits and characters. Even among common people, we hear statements regarding Oriental unpunctuality, lack of coordination, and poverty of administration. Once Dr. Aziz is away from British administration and supervision, his medical knowledge is minimized. Indians do not deserve all this. Actually, Forster was aware of the agitated and political atmosphere in India during the first quarter of the twentieth century. There is almost nothing said about political incitements and political figures. Forster was concerned with "the crisis of post-war Western humanism, typified in the failure of British Imperialism in India" (188). Forster's representation of Indians turns out to be a means for justifying the failure of British Imperialism.

These two Raj novels could be considered in the light of Edward Said's *Orientalism*. This decodes the power relationship between the West and the Orient, in order to show how the West manipulates knowledge about the Orient. It also elaborates on how the Orient is influenced by and survives in that knowledge. A brief history of *Orientalism* from the eighteenth through the twentieth century connotes the shifting position of the Orient as romantic and exotic to a more matter-of-fact but representational and inferior entity. As a result "*Orientalism* imposed limits on thoughts about the Orient" (Rivkin & Ryan, p. 882).

Edward Said has expounded various examples of early colonial writings, ranging from Macaulay to the Raj novels. There is a non-dialectical distinction between India as a European discovery and an incomprehensible entity. As explained earlier, E.M. Forster's Marabar Caves in *A Passage to India* reflect India as an object of non-comprehension. *Kim*, on the other hand, is a step behind in this regard: it is a reverberation of India as an object of Western discovery. Cartography is an element in the novel that testifies to this fact. But at the end this distinction becomes obliterated. The notion of India as an incomprehensible and immense object is more or less related to Eastern mysticism and Orientalist discourse. The Oriental is portrayed as an unreasonable creature. (Note should be added here: Khair, 2001, p.83) Tabish Khair (2001) points out: "[T]he incomprehensibility of India is an extended socio-geographical crystallization of the irrationality of the Indian, a transference of the logic of this Orientalist sentiment from the psychological to the social, historical and geographical" (pp. 83-4).

A point of significance is that many Indian English authors, including V.S. Naipaul and Salman Rushdie, have widely followed the Orientalist tradition of the perception of India as incomprehensible, ambiguous, and multicultural. They somehow comply with E.M. Forster's non-pejorative ideas, beyond human logic and rationality. Then there is:

> the question of whether or not the industrial scene – which is ideally the epitome of order, predictability and rationality – might not be inherently contradictory to the westernized, Babu-bourgeois, Indian English notion of India. If so, its elision is not only a question of oversight and socio-literary compulsions, but also an indication of the westernized discursive structures and even ideological nature of Indian English Fiction. (Khair, 2001, 169)

Fiction is usually the most realistic of all genres. Novels, more often than not, reflect the social circumstances along with the workings of the plot. Reading Charles Dickens's novels, for instance, would tell or show a lot about the growth of industry, the need for social reforms and many

other things about the nation's development. Even Jane Austen's novel *Mansfield Park*, which used to be studied merely in terms of its aesthetic achievements, is now the object of Said's analysis of Orientalism. It "steadily, if unobtrusively, opens up a broad expanse of domestic imperialist culture without which Britain's subsequent acquisition of territory would not have been possible" (Said, 1993, p.114). What is related here is that novels like *Kim* and *A Passage to India* are somehow expected to convey meaning with regard to India's development or forces of social change. But what dominate the scene of these two novels are imperial power and the strategies and tactics of strengthening and implementing it. One might say that they are colonial novels and are supposed to reflect colonial relationships. That is true; nevertheless, as works of art and literature, they are expected to base their creative and imaginary patterns on social facts and figures. Since they are immensely affiliated to the world of politics they should be affected by the political atmosphere governing the setting. What we witness is a complete reversal of the situation, and the exploitation of it for consolidating imperial power and justifying the Empire.

3. Change in the Trend of Colonization and Narration

The dominance and control of the Empire is expressed even in the professions of (the educated) Indian characters. Aziz is a general practitioner graduated from an English University. Godbole is working as a teacher where he is a junior of the English Fielding, his assistant. Hamidullah has been honoured by the University of Cambridge. On the other hand, all English characters in *A Passage to India* are involved in imperial complicity. Even Mrs. Moore and Adela, as tourists, look for the "real India" of exoticism. So they are interested in the earlier Orientalist definition of the East as the land of the unknown and incomprehensible. Overall, the characters of the novel comply with the commandments of the Empire, whether knowingly or unknowingly. The net of the Empire is all-inclusive and even resistance is defined and mitigated within the imperial domain. English writing about India, whether by Anglo-Indian authors or the more recent Indian writing in English, is sophisticated. Different elements, such as linguistic and cultural, and the interactions between various facets of the two sides introduce crucial factors into the

matter. The Orientalist tradition of writing about India has continued to exist, although modified at times. The essentialist vision has accompanied fictions of the great writers and even the heavy-weight ones. In the instance of "the incomprehensible India" which has been introduced in *A Passage to India,* and specifically in the symbol of the unknown bird or the caves, nothing essential has been changed in the Orientalist tradition. As another instance, Kipling and Forster with their westernized perceptions and preconceptions about Indians and Indian characters, provide the reader with easy humour. In their novels humour is based upon depiction of the Indian as child-like, irrational, untrustworthy, and comic.

Rudyard Kipling and E.M. Forster can both be ranked as Anglo-Indian writers who originally refer to British writers writing about India and Indians. Nevertheless, there are certain nuances which are worth noticing. Kipling's writings are more often than not considered to be colonialist. His thinking is also known to be so. But the contrast between East and West is sometimes resolved mainly within the discourse of chivalry or colonial superiority. Ultimately, Kipling believes in colonial superiority or the right of the Englishman to rule. Still there are times when Kipling consciously treats India or Indians equivocally. In *Kim* he insists on his colonial perception and portrayal of Hurree Babu as unreliable, a weakling and a coward, while the Babu, as a character in the novel, contradicts all these in action. So, at times, there is an indication of a sort of conflict in the discourse of *Kim* and Kipling in general.

Kipling is inclined to transcend colonial forms and codes of behavior occasionally, though he generally operates within the colonial framework. In other words, Kipling's Indian fiction and even his travel writings are largely colonial but there are occasional instances where this author transcends the colonial element and shows deep affection for India.

Even a comparison and contrast of Kipling and Forster in their realistic description of India is of unique interest as it shows the meticulous difference of viewpoint of these two Anglo-Indian writers. Kipling first saw the Taj Mahal from the train on his way to Jaipur. It goes without saying that the description of his perception is "Orientalist in the Saidian sense, a romantic reinterpretation of the monument"

(Panwar, 2000, pp. 28-9). Kipling's description remains effusive, like lyrical outpourings. Forster's description of the same monument twenty five years later is quite realistic and matter-of-fact. Forster's views on India are, more often than not, liberal and humanistic while at times, he reveals an Orientalist influence in terms of Said's analyses.

Literature cannot be severed from its contexts. We should get outside literature in order to understand it. There are, then, two completely different approaches to literature. One is restricted within the framework of the literary, while the other adopts a position outside literature. The latter approach is inclined to register the history of literature in terms of "functions, rules, techniques and institutions…" (Bennett, 1990, p. 4). Day by day, literature is being co-ordinated with society, history, institutions, and discursive rims. Literary texts and criticism are expected to have a universal influence on the general culture of nations.

Rudyard Kipling and E.M. Forster, more or less, have the same political inclinations; they differ in their adaptation of strategies towards a literary interpretation and expression of the atmosphere of their novels. Kipling wrote *Kim* while the British Empire was well-established. So he could express imperial themes and relate them to the imperial structure freely and openly. Although the voice of resistance was in the air, it was not well-heard. The writer has managed to make it so by giving the imperial themes a local colour. He has proved to be a master at portraying the Indian scene and Indian character. His artistic talent enabled him to impose the Empire on the reader and take it for granted. Forster, on the other hand, felt the native resistance and took it more seriously in his work. Writing his novel at a later time, he had no other choice except to be more sympathetic towards the native. The sympathy appeared in the form of characterization, the nature of dialogue between Anglo-Indians and Indians, and in the narration on the whole. The native was given a voice but that was an unequal voice; it was, nevertheless, a step forward. Forster has exposed the ingenuity of the condescending Anglo-Indians and criticized it. However, he has not exposed the underlying absurdity of the Empire. His statement on the problem is restricted to a sympathetic treatment of the natives, and not their liberation from British rule.

Besides the significant role of native resistance at the time of writing and publishing *A Passage to India*, Forster's position as a homosexual also had a key function in his overall sympathy for the colonized Indians. As a marginal figure, he is unconsciously affiliated to anything marginal. Native Indians are located on the margin. Forster and the natives are in the same boat, as it were, and thus the resulting sympathy. Therefore, the increasing colonial resistance and Forster's position as a marginal figure were major forces in giving *A Passage to India* its final shape. One of the reasons for Forster's empathy/sympathy with colonized races, as R. Raj Rao (1994) asserts, could be his homosexuality, "which was in a sense attempting to resist both Anglo-centric and hetero-centric domination" (p.7). Other factors were also at work. Among these, we can refer to the imperial project as a "civilizing project." Forster as an advocate of Western humanism witnessed its failure during the British Raj. So he attempted to make up for that failure by changing his style from that of his predecessors, like Kipling. He attempted to qualify the Orientalist image of India; however, that succeeded only on the surface and not in essence. The sharp black-and-white dichotomy between the West and what is known as East of the West, has been moderately modified by including the Oriental in the dialogue with the Occidental; nevertheless, most of the facts surrounding the interlocutions were either excluded or distorted in an Orientalist way.

Another factor that led to Forster's different treatment of his Indian subjects is the overall change in the trend of colonialism that was taking place during the twentieth century. Nations fought the Empires back and most of them won their independence. India's case was a special one. It was the jewel in the crown. Britain faced a dilemma. Neither granting India its independence nor was persevering colonial authority convenient here. The Empire had to resort to other options. It had to resist the natives' resistance and modify aspects of its interactions with them. Writers such as Kipling and Forster had to comply with the trend.

In the cultural, and to be more specific, literary arena, literary figures such as Rudyard Kipling and E. M. Forster were more or less associated with mainstream colonialism and imperialism. They were among the few writers who enjoyed the advantage of being British and residing in India at the same time. They were dislocated. But we should

make a distinction between this English group of writers who moved from centre to periphery (in this instance from Britain to British India) and another group of writers who, at a later stage, moved from periphery to centre. The first group had a mission that was to consolidate the Empire culturally; the second attempted to write back. The two groups are both located within the area of postcolonial studies, while our concern here has been the study of the first group.

4. Conclusion: Contrapuntal Ironies

Kipling does not deny the existence of an anti-imperial presence, but rather engages in a careful negation of it. On the other hand, although *Kim* is not generically a utopian narrative, it does draw upon the narrative mechanisms of the utopia in order to construct its own conflict-free figure of the present situation in India. The crucial absent historical "referent" in *Kim* turns out to be what Said calls the "clear demarcation" point in the history of empire: the Great Mutiny of 1857 (1987, p.24). Although one could be quite sure it is unintended, this moment serves well as an allegory of the last days of the British Empire (Wegner, 1994, p.156).

There are two ways of reading Forster's novel: first to take it as a container of colonial discourse or a means for editing that old age discourse and second to replace it by a more liberal one which paves the way for a discourse based on balance and mutual understanding that would ultimately lead to postcolonialism.

Forster offers a rich experience of reading in *A Passage to India* but he remains at that level of artistic mastery of narrative. He does not give the chance to the reader to search for the correctness of the representation and his faithfulness to the history of India after World War I. He wrote his novel at the time when the white-nonwhite divide was questioned by many intellectuals and scholars. Although he has avoided the discourse of "we and they" as stereotyped by Orientalists he has failed to create a "hybrid" identity as meant by Homi K. Bhabha. Moreover, the fact that Forster creates the type of polyphonic narrative as defined by Mikhail Bakhtin could be regarded as [establishing to establish] a kind of resistance "to the dominance of any one discourse" (Lodge, 1990, p. 22). Forster has managed to distance his novel from a single dominant

perspective by several strategies: creating many voices in and making them circulate in the dialogic structure; employment of a variety of tones such as Hindu, Muslim, British imperialist, liberal humanist, and Indian nationalist; frequent use of free indirect speech; the use of irony; and creating uncertainty about the attribution of utterances.

The rhythm of a novel is created by the "structure of attitude and reference", as postulated by Edward Said who had followed Williams's notion of a culture's "structure of feeling" (Said, 1993, p. 89). The repetition of images and symbols in the novel create a typical atmosphere of the Raj and the British outlook. So the writer is highly conscious of the way India should be represented, but he could not transcend the colonial perspective of the British Raj. The sympathy Forster has for individual characters of the novel and his excellent artistic mastery over the artistic genre does not change his position: "although there is sympathy for the colonized there is no real sense of solidarity with them in their struggle" (Williams, 1980, p.155).

The perspective of Forster in *A Passage to India* is one of doubt, since it constantly defers meaning. This prevents him from making any definite statement about his subject. This is emphasized by Lionel Trilling (1962) when he asserts: "Forster refuses to be conclusive. No sooner does he come to a conclusion than he must unravel it again." (p.16) He finds in Forster a postmodern hermeneutic sensibility which continuously deconstructs the impending meaning and relentlessly defers the final word. So the all-present style is a good container for his content that alludes to the impossibility of connection in the novel. Truth and justice can be attained in the novel without doubt – Aziz is innocent and India must be liberated from the British Empire and oppression. However, the writer has manipulated the point of view in a way to suspend any type of finality and to demonstrate "the difficulty (perhaps impossibility) of attaining a lasting consensus about any matter or of discovering a final, uncontestable meaning to any state of affairs (Armstrong, 1992, p.367).

Forster is not interested in making declarations of faith (Forster, 1972, p.382). Although he escapes from announcing any type of belief, he, following the same pattern of invoking and negating processes, creates ideals and criticizes them immediately. Armstrong (1992) has

suggested that it is not possible to reach a consensus about truth and justice, and that different perspectives have the right to pursue their own particular visions (p.382). This statement sounds contradictory. It negates itself as we find the same problem with deconstruction. Is it not strange that one reaches truth on everyday scale but he or she fails to come to a conclusive finding in matters of great consequence? One feels that the writer has invited us for a game in the novel where the reader experiences invoking and negating at the same time, to suspect ideals one believes and believe ideals one suspects.

According to Edward Said, the contrapuntal reading of Kipling's *Kim*, despite the manifest and overt presence of the Empire, provides an intelligent reader with the two important insights. Firstly, Kipling is writing from the perspective of "massive colonial system whose economy, functioning and history had acquired the status of a virtual fact of nature" (1993, p.162). Secondly, the novel was written at a time when the relationship between Britain and India was changing. Said advises us not to "unilaterally abrogate the connections *in it"* (p.175). Among such connections the dominant maleness in the novel is a good example. The recurring images of sport, competition, Great Game, and the operations of the Secret Service are all indicative of the important role of Empire in India. Another instance of a contrapuntal reading of the novel proves that there is no conflict between Kipling's empathy for British India and his promises to British imperial rule. Said rejects the existence of any such conflict since he believes that, for Kipling, it was India's best destiny to be a colony of the English Empire. Consequently, we find examples of contrapuntal ironies in *Kim*, despite the presence of conspicuous imperial themes. The Indian Mutiny is a case in view. It was clear that the British view of this historical event is extremely fictitious; obviously it enters "the world of imperialist polemic, in which the native is naturally a delinquent, the white a stern but moral judge and parent" (Ashcroft & Ahluwalia, 1999, p.178). History is overlooked and distorted, while fiction is made to pass off for history. Another example of contrapuntal irony happens when the widow of Kula makes her well-known comment. She praises the British officers who know India and its customs while overseeing justice there. In this way Kipling's message has been conveyed through the voice of a native. The message, according to Said,

is that natives are willing to submit to colonial rule as long as it is right. These kinds of fantasies of approval have been a strategy on the part of imperialism, for not only justifying but also praising itself. But *Kim* remains a great work of art. It shows how the expatriate European can experience a great life of "lush complexity" in India. Native resistance is not even hinted at. The European feels free to manoeuvre, do and be anything he pleases (p.192).

On the other hand, the presence of the Empire in *A Passage to India* is not as manifest as in *Kim*. So it is replete with contrapuntal ironies, and generally provides a good case for a contrapuntal reading of a colonial text. This novel can be located somewhere between *Kim* and *Mansfield Park*. Nevertheless, this novel can also be read for the purpose of revealing its deep involvement in imperialism and the colonial process. This means a responsive reading of the text, which results in a counterpoint to the text. In this way colonial implications emerge, which might otherwise remain hidden. There are various examples for such a reading in *A Passage to India*. The main point is that Forster's treatment of the two opposed nations is played down and consequently is not balanced. A contrapuntal reading of the text shows that the political realities of the 1910s and 1920s and the undeniable facts of Indian nationalism have been evaded and wasted away. Therefore, Forster's *A Passage to India* is contrapuntally read by Said as "evasive and more patronizing" (1993, p.246).

Once more we return to Edward Said whose ideas, analyses, and theories made this "worldly" reading of *Kim, A Passage to India* and dozens of other literary texts possible. Finally, we adopted an essential supporting structure from Said for re-reading colonial texts. This framework is an open-ended and worldly one with no commitments to any particular "ism" or school of thought to hinder the process of textual interpretation. Said's achievement is internationally acclaimed and implemented. He prescribes a way of reading, which liberates the text as well as the context. He insists on the adoption of a circumstantial setting that requires contexts, which are open to interpretation. Said's position as a literary critic is superbly consolidated by his position as a public intellectual:

> His ability not to succumb to the dominant culture, his exilic condition, his steadfast determination to remain on the margins and his refusal to submit to political quietism allow him to imagine another world – a world where the self and the other are not pitted against one another constantly, a world of the self, a world of the Saidian "intellectual." (Ashcroft & Ahluwalia, 1999, p.156)

Edward Said has penetrated the imperial Western world, and exposed its deficiencies, strategies of exclusion and distortions. At the same time, he introduced an optimistically constructive and comprehensive model for reading the text – and the world.

References

Armstrong, P. B. (1992). Reading India: E. M. Forster and the politics of interpretation. *Twentieth Century Literature 38*(4), 365-385.

Ashcroft, B. & Ahluwalia, P. (1999). *Edward Said: The paradox of identity*. London: Routledge.

Bennett, T. (1990). *Outside literature.* London: Routledge.

Bradshaw, D. (Ed.). (2007). *The Cambridge companion to E. M. Forster*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Forster, E.M. (1962). *Aspects of the novel.* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Forster, E.M. (1951). *Two cheers for democracy*. Oliver Stallybrass (Ed.). London: Arnold.

Hitchcock, P. (2003). The genre of postcoloniality. *New Literary History 34*, 299-330.

Khair, T. (2001). *Babu fictions: Alienation in contemporary Indian English novels.* Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Kipling, R. (1987). *Kim*. New York: Penguin.

Lodge, D. (1990). *After Bakhtin: Essays on fiction and criticism.* London: Routledge.

Panwar, P. (2000). *India in the works of Kipling, Forster and Naipaul: Postcolonial revaluations.* Delhi: Pencraft International.

Raman, R. (1989). Passage to more than India: Shifting perspectives in *Kim*, *A Passage to India* and *Midnight's Children*. In R. K. Dhawan, P. V. Dhanija & A. K. Shrivastava (Eds.). *Recent Commonwealth literature* (pp. 181-193). New Delhi: Prestige Books.

Rivkin, J. & Ryan, M. (1998). *Literary theory: An anthology.* Massachusetts: Blackwell.

Rao, R. R. (1994). Fo(r)stering Anglo-Indian fiction: Two responses. *New Quest,* 107, 5-12.

Said, E. W. (1993). *Culture and imperialism.* London: Chatto & Windus.

Said, E. W. (1987). Introduction. In R. Kipling, *Kim* (pp. 7-24). New York: Penguin.

Said, E. W. *(1989.)* Representing the colonized: Anthropology's interlocutors. *Critical Inquiry, 15*(2), 205-225.

Trilling, L. (1962). *E. M. Forster*. London: Hogarth.

Wegner, P. E. (1994). Life as he would have it: The invention of India in Kipling's "Kim". *Cultural Critique*, 26, 129-159.

Williams, R. (1980). *Problems in materialism and culture.* London: Verso & NLB.