

Changing Perspective of Indians towards British Rule in E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India*

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Abstract – *The focus of the present research paper is to show changing thinking and perspective of Indian towards British rule and their policies. The novel clearly presents intention of policies of British Empire to control and rule Indian continent politically, economically and socially. In the beginning of expansion of British rule, Indian people believe that British rule would improve poor condition of Indian people with the help of various political and economic policies. But with passage of the time, they get realized that British people are not here to develop the Indian continent but to satisfy their vested interests.*

Key-words: - *Economic Discrimination, Conspiracy, Exploitation, Physical Violence, Judiciary System, Fake Trial.*

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INTRODUCTION

A Passage to India is a seminal work by E. M. Forster in English literature. For this outstanding novel, Forster has been highly eulogized all over the world for the presentation of British colonial process in India. The story of the novel is set in a small village of India named Chandrapore. The major events of the story consist of coming of Mrs. Moore and Miss Adela, mysterious molestation of Miss Adela, biased trial of Dr. Aziz, picture of spurious judiciary process in attaining justice, acquittal of Dr. Aziz and so on. Major characters of the novel are Dr. Aziz, Miss Adela, Mrs. Moore, Ronny, Fielding, Godbole and Dass. The main characters of the novel are Dr. Aziz and Miss Adela.

In the novel, E.M. Forster directly or indirectly shows that Indian people believe in every establishments of the British Empire whether it is judiciary system, police system, economic policies, British culture of modernization so on in the beginning of expansion of British the empire in India. They think that the British rulers have come in India to improve the bad condition of Indian continent. They would improve the impoverished people of India from the acute penury. With the passage of the time, this myth vanishes from the minds of Indian people who are the supporters of British rule in India.

DISCRIMINATION IN PROVIDING RAILWAY SERVICES TO INDIAN PEOPLE

The novel categorically shows the British Empire has established railway system to satisfy their vested interests. There is no doubt that the capital invested on the development of railway system has been provided by the British Empire. The role of cheap labour provided by poor Indian cannot be neglected and overlooked in this process of developing railway system. It is very easy for the British people to recruit cheap labour. The main point is that after establishing railway system, British people started discrimination in providing railway services to Indian people. When Dr. Aziz, Miss Adela, Mrs. Moore, Godbole and Fielding plan to travel to Malabara hills, Dr. Aziz is not treated as par with the Mrs. Moore and Miss Adela. This biased nature of white people show it does matter whether Indian are well educated or not. Even Dr. Aziz is well qualified and having good manners in with other people. In spite of having good etiquette, Dr. Aziz is not treated too good to travel with white ladies in the train. This discrimination in the railway system brings changing in the perspective of the Indian people toward white rulers that they are even discriminated in the basic service.

UNFAIR JUSTICE SYSTEM

Providing fair and unbiased justice to the common mass is basic fundamental feature of any civilized society. British rule always claims providing fair justice to common mass. But his

claim is partially true in the case of Indian context. The verdict of any case in context of Indian people is pre-mediated whether they are culprit or not in any case. The novel delineates Indian people is not equal say in any case. Firstly, Indian people do not have proper understanding of judiciary process of conviction in court established by British rule. Secondly they do not have well experienced lawyer who can defend them in the court. Thirdly, there is no any investigating agency which can inquire into the real incident. Fourthly, there is also dearth of Indian lawyers in villages of India. The last but not the least is the manipulation of witnesses out the premise of the court. A cursory look in the novel would show all these anti-Indian situation created by British rule can be applied in the case of Dr. Aziz.

Firstly Dr. Aziz is entangled in a fake case of molesting Miss. Adela. Then Ronny, fiancé of Miss Adela, persuades her to prove the fact that Dr. Aziz intentionally molests her. However, she does not confidently say that Dr. Aziz is the one who molests her. In the process of justice process, facts are molded to prove his involvement in the crime. But it is Miss Adela who takes case back. Only this act of Adela saves Dr. Aziz from going to jail. This is most significant event which brings change in the thinking and ideas of Dr. Aziz towards British rule. After this event he believes white people are here not to provide justice to Indian people but are to satisfy their own vested interest. Moreover, the case of Dr. Aziz is not against the Miss Adela but against British rule. It is considered by Indian mass to be freedom fight or movement to free India from the shackles of the British Empire.

UNJUST TREATMENT OF POLICE

Another significant issue raised by the novelist is the police establishment which is established by the white people to curb the Indian mass psychologically and physically. The novel ostensibly shows white people employ the police mechanism as tool to keep Indian people under control. It is irony that Indian people are used by them to control the Indian people. Even Indian people are not posted on the higher posts. They are posted on the lower rank so as to follow their order and beat their own people. The novel also shows there is discrepancy towards the treatment of Indian and British people. To arrest any white person in any case, police are mandated to provide arrest warrant to alleged person. But is not same case in Indian people. They can be arrested without any warrant whether is simple or serious crime committed by Indian. While arresting Dr. Aziz, he is not given and shown any arrest by police inspector on simple statement lodged by Miss. Adela in the police station. The police inspector says 'Sir, excuse me, no warrant is required under these particular circumstances (Forster 158). Although it is necessary and mandatory for the police to show arrest warrant to alleged person whether she/he is

an Indian or British resident. This can be considered a major cause for changing the thinking of Dr. Aziz towards British people.

LESS PARTICIPATION OF INDIAN PEOPLE IN GOVERNMENT JOBS

When white people come to India, they commits to Indian mass to eradicate their poverty by providing jobs to Indian people. But this promise is broken by white people. With the passage of time, it comes to know that the proportion of Indian people is very less in the government jobs in comparison to British people. On the other hand, British people are posted on the higher rank. The novel shows that there is no absence of well-educated Indian people but they are not given opportunity of attractive jobs. The discussion between Fielding and Indian community present the changing attitude of Indian people. They gradually understand the fact that they are well educated and knowledge but are not preferred in jobs. Fielding also accepts the truth that he is here only for his earning. He needs job to survive. It becomes clear when Fielding replies the question and says: 'I'm out here personally because I needed a job. I cannot tell you why England is here or whether she ought to be here. It's beyond me' (Forster 180). But the Indian community argues that the service given by Fielding can be performed a well-educated Indian lecturer. Now it becomes clear to the Indian intellectual that white people are in India to devastate and ravage Indian people. The questioning of Hamidullah makes more these situation by saying: 'Then excuse me again- is it fair an Englishman should occupy one when Indian are available? Of course I mean nothing personally. Personally we are delighted you should be here, and we benefit greatly by this frank talk' (Forster 180).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be easily stated that *A Passage to India* by E.M. Forster is a seminal work which clearly reflects the changing attitude of Indian people towards the British Empire and its economic and political policies to control and ravage India to satisfy its own vested interests. There are numerous reasons which contribute to the changing attitude of Indian people. They are devastating economic policies, biased judiciary system, less participation of Indian people in the government jobs, unfair police system and so on.

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