The Conflict of Cultures: A Fresh Reading of Forster's 
*A Passage to India* and Kipling's *Kim*

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Abstract

This thesis discusses the effects of the colonizer upon the colonized and the moral and spiritual erosion that took place during the colonial era. It also explores the common misrepresentation of India by two English novelists, Kipling and Forster. Its analysis of India as depicted in *Kim* and *A Passage to India* suggests that the representations are traceable to the novelist perspectives, their personal backgrounds and relevant history of England in India.

History and biography provide helpful background and examples of how those two novelists misrepresent India. In Kipling’s case, his childhood’s experience in India is a clue to his idealized view of the country, while his political stance and the history of the British imperialism contribute to his biased view in *Kim*: For Forster, his friendship with an Indian native, and his anti-racist attitude led to his interest in India. But his sincere effort to see the country as well as reading and writing about India did not help him counter the biased view of India that pervades Kipling.

In addition to that, this thesis adopts the view that literary discourses are a political and ideological response to a crisis at a certain historical moment. It argues that colonial writers such as Kipling and Forster produce ideological resolutions for historically irresolvable conflicts in order to rationalize western colonial rule over natives. Reading of *Kim* and *A Passage to India* in opposition
to the view of their authors reveals the colonial resistance of the natives which has been discursively suppressed in the novels. Kipling wrote \textit{Kim} to argue for the maintenance of British rule in India. According to him, British India is, or ought to be a harmonious coalition between the Indian spiritual and the British rule of India.

This thesis also reveals that most of the newly emerging nations are ill-equipped to join the main stream of world society. It was felt that an exposition on these attitudes and opinions would supply knowledge and understanding that would work toward healthier and more constructive dealings with the new nations.