1. Introduction

1.1 The Questions to be Discussed

The protagonists of E.M. Forster’s *A Passage to India* (1924) and Michael Ondaatje’s *The English Patient* (1992) question their identities. Frantz Fanon claims that they go through different phases in order to become something (1993:40-41). This inevitable process of becoming is familiar to me, as I, a Sami living in Scandinavia, often find myself standing with one foot in one world and the other in another, not knowing which to choose. It is therefore natural for me to pay attention to the developing, “round”, characters which are subject to change in *A Passage to India* and *The English Patient*. I want to find out how the perspective of the native, the “Other”, is represented in these novels. What does being Indian mean to the individual native himself and how has the British presence influenced his mind? These questions are easily recognised in my own Sami context. We often debate what being Sami really means and try to find criteria for what is “the real” or “typical” Sami.

The question of identity will thus be the main focus of this thesis, in which I want to find out the following: how are the native protagonists of *A Passage to India* and *The English Patient* presented and in which context does the reader meet them? In order to answer these questions the narrative techniques of Forster and Ondaatje will be analysed and compared. Their different ways of characterising their protagonists will also be subjected to discussion. The significance of identity will be in focus throughout this thesis and especially dealt with in a postcolonial context.

1.2 A Brief Introduction to the Authors and their Narratives

The English writer E. M. Forster (1879-1970) and the Indian poet and novelist Michael Ondaatje both present colonial matters in a captivating way. They both
choose to focus on India, the jewel of the Crown, and the cross-cultural communication between the coloniser and the colonised in a colonial past. While Forster’s novel is set in India, Ondaatje’s narrative takes place in different spaces of time and place. These two authors represent different generations and traditions of English literature. Forster’s novel was published eighty years ago while Ondaatje’s book is a contemporary narrative, published in 1992. Yet they have a lot in common and are therefore interesting to compare as Forster and Ondaatje are important authors presenting India from different angles: the western and the eastern perspective.

E. M. Forster was born into a cultural upper-middle-class family at Rooksnest, a country home near Stevenage, Herefordshire. His childhood was spent in the caring company of three women: his mother, grandmother and great aunt. The latter, Marianne Thornton, left him a legacy of £8,000 when she died. This enabled Forster to become a writer. After a happy early childhood he attended Public School in Tonbridge. This was not a good experience, but his life improved when he went to King’s College, Cambridge. In Cambridge he came under the influence of the philosopher G.E. Moore, who was interested in personal relationships and stressed the power of art to influence life in a good direction. After graduating Forster spent a few years travelling mostly into the ancient classical world, writing and teaching. He met Syed Massod, the original for Aziz, in 1906 and visited him in India in 1912 and 1913. Forster published four novels in the first decades of the twentieth century: *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905), *The Longest Journey* (1907), *A Room with a View* (1908) and *Howards End* (1910). He worked for the Red Cross in Egypt during the First World War. After a second visit in India 1921-22 he finally completed and published *A Passage of India* in 1924. This was to be his last novel. He then developed a new career as a journalist, essayist, broadcaster, academic and public
Forster settled in Cambridge for the rest of his life which ended in 1970. A year after his death his novel about homosexual love, *Maurice*, was published and it was followed the next year by a collection of homosexual short stories: *The Life to Come*.

Forster borrowed the title *A Passage to India* from the American national poet Walt Whitman. It invites the reader to a journey through India, a country, or rather a continent associated with many myths. The story is set in a mystical atmosphere – this is the jewel of the British crown in the exotic and far off Orient. The events that take place in this mystical setting are described throughout the novel as “muddle and mystery” and the characters that we are presented with seem, at first glance, like stereotypes of the Empire. This is a story that takes place during the British Raj when unwritten social rules between the rulers and their ruled existed. Adela, a young English woman who is to be married into this system, challenges it by expressing her wish to see the “real India”. An expedition to the extraordinary Marabar Caves is arranged by Dr Aziz, who is trying to prove to himself and his Muslim friends that it is possible to be friends with the English. The open minded Mrs Moore, Adela’s future mother-in-law, functions as a link between the English and the Indian worlds. However, her counterpart; the mystical Hindu Brahmin Godbole, misses the train to the Marabar Hills and the expedition has to go on without its spiritual guide. In spite of Mrs Moore’s efforts to communicate with the “Other” the expedition turns out to be a failure. The turning point of the novel takes places here, in the darkness of the caves, where something happens that drives Adela into a hysteria and Aziz into prison.

The fatal incident has a great impact on both of them. Adela is followed by an echo that will not disappear until she remembers that “nothing” really happened in the
caves and Aziz turns his back on the English after he is proclaimed innocent and released. They thus both renounce the English and consequently have to leave: Adela goes back to England and Aziz moves to a Hindu native state. Aziz meets his former British friend, Mr Heaslop, two years later. He is accompanied by his wife Stella, Mrs Moore’s daughter, and Stella’s brother Ralph. Professor Godbole is also present to complete the “muddle and mystery”: Aziz has to finally face his destiny, his karma brought to him in the spirit of Mrs Moore. The novel has an ambiguous ending as the possibility of having a cross-cultural relationship is questioned again, both by the representatives of the two cultures and India herself. The whole future existence of India is thus questioned, confirming that there is a lot under the surface of Forster’s story, behind the stereotypes.

The novelist and poet Michael Ondaatje is not a Sikh himself as his protagonist Kip in his novel *The English Patient*. He is, however, from the same continent. Ondaatje was born in Kegalle, Sri Lanka, in 1943 into a family of Sri Lankan/Dutch ancestry. He was only two years old when he moved to London with his mother, after his parents’ divorce. This is where he was educated from primary school to college. At the age of nineteen he immigrated to Canada, where he continued his education in Quebec, Toronto and Kingston, Ontario. He now lives in Toronto with his wife Linda Spalding, where he teaches at the university and edits the literary journal *Brick*. Ondaatje thus represents both the Orient and the West, living in two worlds like many of his fellow native intellectuals.

*The English Patient* was published in 1992. The writer was awarded the Booker Prize for it the same year. Ondaatje has also written three other novels: *Coming Through Slaughter* (1976), *Running in the Family* (1982) and *Anil’s Ghost* (2000), but he is first and foremost a poet. He has published ten collections of poetry

*The English Patient* is set in an isolated Tuscan villa which served as a military hospital during the Second World War. It is 1944 and the villa is now deserted as the war has moved further north in Italy. Only two people remain among the ruins, left and forgotten by the rest of the world: a shell of a patient that cannot be moved and his shell-shocked nurse. The body of the patient has been burned beyond recognition. The patient is the Hungarian count Almásy, who speaks English and therefore is assumed to be English. He does not really exist anymore, except in his memories and dreams that he shares with Hana, his young Canadian nurse. Into their existence steps Caravaggio, an old friend of Hana’s father and a thief who has been tortured by wartime inquisitors. One day when Hana decides to play the piano she faces two sappers, one of them being a Sikh. The young Sikh called Kip eventually becomes her lover. These four characters interact with each other in a mixture of present tensions, hopes and past memories while the war goes on outside the frail walls of the Villa San Girolamo.

1.3 Theory

1.3a. Narrative Theory

Although aspects of narrative theory can be traced right back to Aristotle’s Poetics, it originates in its modern form in Russian formalism of the 1920s. It has then spread and increased in popularity. According to Jakob Lothe narrative theory “discusses central questions concerning human communication; it also investigates the conditions for, and form and content of, such communication” (Lothe 2000:viii). The French theorists, among them Gérard Genette, have been central to its rapid
development. Genette classified narrative fiction into *discourse, story* and *narration* in his essay ‘Discours du récit’ (1972; published in English as *Narrative Discourse* in 1980). Lothe explains Genette’s classification like this:

*Discourse* is the spoken or written presentation of events. Put in simple terms discourse is what we read, the text to which we have direct access...

*Story* refers to the narrated events and conflicts in narrative fiction, abstracted from their position in the discourse and arranged chronologically together with the fictional characters. Thus story approaches what we usually understand by a summary of the action...

*Narration* refers to how a text is written and communicated. The process of writing, of which narration is a trace, carries with it a number of narrative devices and combinations, which all contribute to constituting discourse. (Lothe 2000:6)

I am particularly interested in the concept of *narration* in which I believe the narrator performs a key function. My thoughts go back to the starting-point of my thesis; my grandmother telling me stories. She certainly had a key function in keeping the Sami oral tradition alive while Genette’s categories are primarily connected with a written discourse, according to Peter Larsen¹:

In oral cultures the story is produced and received in one and the same situation – it is immediately available to the listener as the narrator’s ‘speech’...But it is not this form of ‘discourse’ Genette has in mind...he deals in his own analytical practice exclusively with ‘literature’, with written stories. (Lothe’s translation 2000:7)

I find it difficult to agree with Larsen. I think that the listener still has to interpret what he or she hears, in the same way as the reader interprets what he reads. Yes, the narrator can control the listener’s interpretation to a certain extent, but in my opinion so does the narrator in written stories like *A Passage to India* and *The English Patient*. I do not see any major difference between an oral and a written narration and I believe it is thus possible to use Genette’s classification for both written and oral narratives.

For Peter Brooks, plot is “the dynamic shaping force of the narrative discourse” (Brooks 1984:13). Plot thus does not only include how a narrative is presented but also “the relationship between the textual form and content and the readers vital role in understanding the narrative” (Lothe 2000:7-8). This is a close
description of what I am interested in. However I prefer to use the term context, as it is the context of the narration that I want to examine. As mentioned already, I want to find out how the native protagonists of A Passage to India and The English Patient are presented and in which context the reader meets them.

Another term for storytelling is narrative communication “which indicates a process of transmission from the author as addressee to the reader as addressee” (Lothe 2000:11). Roman Jakobson illustrates this in his model for verbal communication with the message between the addresser and addressee, surrounded by context, contact and code. The context must be “verbal or capable of being verbal” (Lothe 2000:15), there has to be contact that is a “physical channel and psychological connection between the addresser and the addressee” (ibid.) and a code that represents norms and rules common to both. Jakobson links his model to six ways or functions of language: referential, emotive, conative, phatic, metalingual and poetic. One of these is always dominating, but that does not mean that the others are turned off according to Jakobson. The conative function of language is of special interest to me, as it describes orientation towards the addressee, or the listener or reader. I have chosen to use Jakobson’s model as a starting point for my discussion on the primary texts, even though I find it a bit simplified. I believe that there has to be some kind of response or feed-back from the addressee back to the addresser in order for the communication to be successful. In other words: in my opinion a successful narrative communication includes a two-way communication between the storyteller and his or her listener/reader.

Jakob Lothe bases his model of narrative communication on Jacobson among others (Lothe 2000:16). In Lothe’s model the “implied reader” (ibid.) is situated next

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1 ’TV:historie og/eller diskurs?’ (1989)
to the narratee. In short, the real reader of a text is influenced by this implied reader.

As mentioned before, I am interested in the reader’s or listener’s reception of the narrative. Wolfgang Iser is known for “his interest in the reader and the reading process” (Jefferson and Robey 1992:130). I would like to join Iser in asking: “how, and under what conditions, does a text have meaning for the reader?” (1978). I share his belief in the interaction between text and reader. This interaction is examined “through the notions of implied reader, literary repertoire and literary strategies” (Jefferson and Robey 1992:130). Iser believes that the author can control our way of reading to a certain extent. This is a control based on our literary repertoire, which consists of “social, historical and cultural norms regulating the manner in which fictional prose works and communicates” (Lothe 2000:19). As mentioned above the “implied reader” is involved in this process, structuring the text for the real reader. He is described by Iser as “a ‘model’, ‘role’ and ‘standpoint’ which allows the (real) reader to assemble the meaning of the text” (Jefferson and Robey 1992:131). As a journalist and teacher I feel that there is a lot behind Iser’s words. The real reader is thereby influenced and partly controlled by the narrator, who uses the “implied reader” to point the real reader in the direction of his interpretation of the text. Context is a key-word for me whenever reading or writing something. It is not important just to know to whom you are writing, but the text itself must be put in a context in order for the reader to receive your message. And I suspect that both Forster and Ondaatje are fully aware of this.

1.3b. Postcolonial Theory

In order to find out in which context the primary texts are told I have chosen to use postcolonial theory in addition to narrative theory. As postcolonial theory is not
primarily concerned with the study of literary form and narrative structure, I believe that only by using both narrative and postcolonial theories will I be able cover the purpose of this thesis. In my view, it is impossible to neglect textual analysis in a postcolonial context. As I look upon a literary product as being the most important and my primary source of information, the text itself becomes the primary source for interpretation or analysis. We cannot just focus on the author of a literary work and forget about the narrator and thus reducing “literary texts to relatively stable carriers of ideological positions” (Lothe 2000:viii). There must be a balance in our approach and therefore I believe in a combination of both narrative and postcolonial theory. Literature written by authors outside the west or of non-western descent, like Michael Ondaatje, shows the colonial experience in a different light, but to just focus on an ideological analysis of it is not enough. It would not do literary masterpieces like *A Passage to India* and *The English Patient* justice.

Colonisation is, by no means, anything new as it has taken place since the ancient times of the Greek and Roman Empires. The postcolonial covers a vast area of both the former colonies of the British Empire and other European nations. Postcolonial and colonial criticism has a long tradition as well. Works published in the 1950s and 1960s written by Franz Fanon, Chinua Achebe and Ngugi Thiong attempt to “decolonize the minds of the colonized” (Lothe, Holden Rønning, Young 2001:10). Key elements in this criticism are “questions of belonging, of identity, of expressing, explaining and analysing contemporary and earlier attitudes to peoples and cultures including your own” (ibid.). Bart Moore-Gilbert distinguishes between postcolonial “high” theory, initiated by critics focused in French theorising (e.g. Said, Spivak, and Bhabha), and postcolonial criticism in his *Postcolonial Theory: Contexts, Practices, Politics* (1997). He points out that theorising is not exclusively for those
belonging to the high theory category and has therefore created a broad definition of postcolonial criticism:

In my view, postcolonial criticism can still be seen as more or less a distinct set of reading practices, if it is understood as preoccupied principally with analysis of cultural forms which mediate, challenge or reflect upon the relations of domination and subordination – economic, cultural and political – between (and often within) nations, races or cultures, which characteristically have their roots in the history of modern European colonialism and imperialism and which, equally characteristically, continue to be apparent in the present era of neo-colonialism. (1997:12)

Postcolonialism is described by Johan Schimanski as “a globalising tendency, taking an interest in not only the literature of the colonized but also that of the colonizer” (2001:138). It is evident that both The English Patient and A Passage to India can be read with postcolonialist eyes as “we all live in a world formed by colonialism” (Schimanski 2001:139). Cross-cultural communication and the question of identity are central themes in both novels and the progression from assimilation to rebellion by Aziz and Kip is easily recognised in a postcolonial discourse.

Edward Said (1935-2003) was one of the many intellectuals from the east who lived in both worlds; the east and west, just like Michael Ondaatje. Said is the father of “Orientalism” and one of the initiators of postcolonial theory. He was born in Jerusalem but lived in the USA from 1951, when he was expelled from Victoria College in Cairo. According to him it is this lifelong exile that has helped him, an intellectual Oriental, to look upon things from different perspectives. He turned the world upside down with his “Orientalism”, questioning our western values that have become common to everyone today, both in the east and west. Said claims that:

without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage – and even produce – the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period. (Said 1978:3)

I will therefore take his advice and compare the development of the native protagonists of Forster and Ondaatje; Aziz and Kip, in the discourse of Orientalism and my own experience, being a representative of the “Other” myself as a Sami living
in Scandinavia. I find the question of identity interesting and relevant in our multi-cultural society of today and I see many parallels to young Samis searching for their contemporary identities. I think that our society can benefit from the stories of Aziz and Kip, as they can make us more aware of the processes that take place in our minds when we are trying to communicate across cultural barriers.

1.4 Approach

The German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer says that everything we know is based on our pre-knowledge, which originates from our personal- and cultural context. This pre-knowledge decides how we approach a text and can best be illustrated as a pair of glasses through which the reader sees everything. Understanding is for him “not so much an action of one’s subjectivity but the placing of oneself within the process of tradition in which past and present are constantly fused” (Gadamer 1975:258). Gadamer refers to our “horizon of understanding” (1975) and he stresses the importance of the context in which we meet a text. Here he speaks of historical, cultural, personal and contemporary contexts. According to Jefferson and Robey, his “main contribution to modern theories of meaning and interpretation lies in his reinsertion of history into the process of understanding” (1992:135). I feel that there is a lot behind Gadamer’s observations, but I find it difficult to look upon our “horizon of understanding” as being static. I think that it is possible for everybody to add new knowledge to their pre-knowledge. The first step is, however, to be aware of which glasses we see the world through. Not until we have recognised who we are, will we be able to widen our horizons.

Asle Høgmo defines culture as a pair of glasses through which you “experience, understand and relate to society” (1986:11, my translation). I would
therefore like to underline that I will be looking through my Sami and postcolonial
glasses when discussing and analysing the novels of Forster and Ondaatje. I would
also like to point out to the reader of this thesis that this is my interpretation of the
literary works and their adaptations to the screen, which is probably limited by my
own “horizon of understanding”.

As I look upon a literary work as being the primary source for research I will
approach the primary texts by applying the method “close reading”. Close reading can
be described as a formalist way of encountering a text, which revolutionised literary
studies in the USA in the 1940s and 1950s. It is a reading methodology in its own
right, but it also provides the cornerstone for many newer reading methodologies. It
presumes a few things, most of which are drawn from the New Critics. The New
Critics believed that the text makes sense on its own. One of its defining features, in
fact, is that it can make sense on its own, separate from its historical context. What the
author really “meant” does not concern the New Critics. However, I do not intend to
neglect the circumstances around the actual creation of the texts as I do think there is
a connection between a literary product and its wider context (e.g. historical or
cultural context). In spite of being a close reader I still regard a text as being as much
a result of its context, as the author is a result of his. I see no contradiction between a
text and its context, as I look at the text as my primary source of information. The
primary texts thus form the foundation of my analyses in this thesis.

Before approaching the primary texts I would, again, like to specify the
purpose of this thesis. In order to find out how the native protagonists of A Passage to
India and The English Patient are presented and in which context the reader meets
them I am going to focus on Forster’s and Ondaatje’s presentation of their developing
characters. With development I mean a change or progress, which is triggered by an
event and takes place within the character. I am interested in finding out the reason and the nature of this process and will therefore make an attempt to analyse the changes that take place on the “inside”, that is, in the minds of the characters. Both western and eastern characters will be analysed, as well as the context in which the reader meets them. After applying narrative theory to the narratives in my analyses I will add more content to their presentation by approaching their native protagonist in a postcolonial discourse. Aziz’s and Kip’s struggle for new identities will be the main focus in my postcolonial discussion, which will be preceded by a brief look at the adapted film-versions, also seen in a postcolonial light.

The importance of using film as a pedagogical tool in teaching literature cannot be exaggerated. Seeing the film often functions as an eye-opener and encourages the students to further reading. In fact, I think many readers of today start off as viewers, being one of them myself. One of the many challenges for a film maker, who is adapting a novel, must be the choice of perspective. We are often shown the events from an outside perspective in a film while an author may choose to tell his story from an inside perspective. I think that the choice of perspective influences the viewer’s/reader’s impression, which forms the basis for his/her interpretation and, thereby, has an impact on how the whole story is appreciated. I therefore find it relevant to include a short discussion of the adaptations of *A Passage to India* and *The English Patient* in my thesis.

To sum up: I believe that the impression we as viewers or readers will get all depends on through which glasses we are allowed to see the events that take place. The question is whether or not we are aware of it. The narrators of Forster and Ondaatje certainly are.
1.5 Outline of Following Chapters

First the historical and geographical setting of the novels will be presented in order to try to explain the context they were presented in. This will be followed by a closer look at their plot and structure. In order to show how the characters are introduced to the reader, the narrative techniques will be analysed and the characterisation of the protagonists discussed. The analyses of the novels will be ended by an attempt to interpret the symbolism used by Forster and Ondaatje. I have chosen to first present Forster’s novel and then my analysis of Ondaatje’s contemporary work will follow, thus presenting them chronologically. This will also enable me to comment on The English Patient with reference to A Passage to India. My analyses of the novels in chapters two and three will constitute the main bulk of this thesis.

A short discussion of the adaptations of A Passage to India and The English Patient, seen in a postcolonial light, will then follow in chapter four. The film analyses will be succeeded in chapter five by the main question of this thesis: the question of the identities of Aziz and Kip, also seen in a postcolonial discourse. The discussion of their process of becoming will include a comparison of their experience to mine. The colonial and postcolonial context of Aziz and Kip will also be compared to my Sami context. The postcolonial discussion will then, finally, be followed by a conclusion in chapter six, in which I will reflect on the significance of cultural identity, characterisation and narrative technique of the works of Forster and Ondaatje.
2. A Passage to India

2.1 The Reception

Forster’s last novel was well received on its publication in 1924 and it sold well on both sides of the Atlantic. Indian reviewers also approved of Forster’s presentation of the political situation in their country. The only people to protest were the Anglo-Indians who felt that they had not been fairly treated. Aziz’s trial was in their eyes a travesty of how such a case would have been dealt with in reality. Some of them threw their copies overboard on their passage back to India. The contemporary Indian press confirmed that Forster’s book would “provoke hatred among the British in India” (Childs 1999:347).

Forster’s contemporary from the Bloomsbury Group, Virginia Woolf wrote in 1927 in her general appraisal of Forster’s work that his were “a difficult family of gifts to persuade to live together” but his latest novel showed more clarity of purpose, concluding “it makes us wonder, what will he write next?” However, this was to be his last novel.

During the years before after the Second World War the British critic F.R. Leavis constructed a canon of “The Great Tradition” of English fiction writers who “celebrated the best values of nineteenth-century liberal civilization and criticised its worst, materialistic excesses” (Messenger 2000:81). Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad and D.H. Lawrence were included in this “Great Tradition”, but Forster was not – probably because he was a member of the Bloomsbury Group. Leavis did write approvingly of A Passage of India, though, singling it out as “humane, decent and rational, a classic of the liberal spirit and a most significant document of our age” (Messenger 2000:82).

The American critic Lional Trilling published E. M. Forster in 1944 which
encouraged Forster’s steadily rising reputation in the 1950s and 60s. He was seen as very English and according to Trilling a writer of Jane Austen school who “refused to be great”. Forster was appreciated as “a master of small-scale realism, irony and self-deprecation” (Messenger 82). The American Frederick Crews saw *A Passage to India* as Forster’s most revealing novel, exposing India in his *E. M. Forster: The Perils of Humanism*, published in 1962.

Other critics approached Forster’s writing from a Modernist point of view. The symbolic aspects of his works were stressed by E. K. Brown and J. McConkey. George Thomson focused on the importance of myth and religion and Wilfred Stone examined Forster’s use of Jungian archetypes and symbols.

I have chosen to look upon Forster’s last novel in a postcolonial light, which represents a more contemporary approach, introduced by Edward Said, among others, a decade after Forster’s death. According to Peter Childs an important early essay in terms of postcolonial theory is *The Economy of Manichean Allegory: The Function of Racial Difference in Colonialist Literature* by Abdul R. JanMohamed. He sees Forster’s novel as a symbolic kind of colonialist writing that shows an awareness of “potential identity”. JanMohamed discusses *A Passage to India* and *Kim* as the two English novels which “offer the most interesting attempts to overcome the barriers of racial difference” (Childs 1999:348).

However, the purpose of this chapter is to give a presentation of *A Passage to India* focused on the native protagonist and the context in which the reader meets him. I will begin by setting the scene historically and geographically, and we therefore have to move to India where Forster begins his novel *in medias res*. 
2.2 Historical and Geographical Setting

India had been subjected to British gaze for about three centuries when Forster’s novel was published. His novel was thus preceded by both travel accounts and novels about this mystical continent. Ruyard Kipling wrote *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888), *The Jungle Book* (1894) and *Kim* (1901). Forster also published *The Hill of Devi*, a travel account of his two trips to India, but not until in 1935, about a decade after presenting *A Passage to India* to his readers. The title of his novel could, by the way, easily be taken for being a title of a travel account, that is to say a description of a journey that really took place.

And *A Passage to India* is to a great extent a realist novel, as Forster followed the great tradition of eighteen-century realism, represented by Jane Austen among others. Realist novels may be described as follows:

Such fictions have a commanding first or third person narrator who overviews the action, a strong plot to sustain narrative interest, and coherently presented characters who have to interact with a society that is closely observed, and whose choices have clear moral consequences. (Messenger 2000:79)

However, this is not just a realist novel. There is a story behind the plot, full of “mystery and muddle”. It seems so simple at first glance, but under the surface many questions are asked. The more you read, the more elements from Modernism you discover. Forster’s use of symbols is clearly an example of such an element. Forster does not experiment as much as the younger generation of Modernist writers like D.H. Lawrence, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf, but he does question his own values and he exposes the limitations of his English world view in a colonial context. Europe as the centre of power is indeed questioned. *A Passage to India* is definitely the most Modernist of Forster’s novels.

Forster visited India twice before he published *A Passage to India*: the first time in 1912-13 and the second in 1921-22. His friend Syed Masood, whom he met in
1906, became the original of Dr Aziz. It was through Masood Forster developed his life-long interest in India. He based the setting for his novel on proper locations. The fictional names were thus inspired by real locations: Bankipore on the Ganges became Chandrapore, the Barabar Hills became the Marabar Hills and a combination of the states of Chhatarpur and Dewas became Mau (see Illustration). The time of the action of Forster’s novel spanned a period of ten years which included “the First World War, the Rowlatt Acts (extending repressive wartime measures – including imprisonment without a trial – to postwar India), Gandhi’s return from South Africa, an upsurge in Nationalist feeling in India, British promises of Independence and the Amritsar massacre” (Childs 2000:348-349). *A Passage to India* is thus deeply rooted in its history. However, Forster himself argued that his novel was “about the human race’s attempt to find a ‘more-lasting home’: that it was at its core about religion and metaphysics” (Childs 2000:349). To sum up: Forster’s concern was not primarily political, even though the content seemed to have political implications.

I believe Forster is interested in showing the difficulties of cross-cultural communication. There are only anti-heroes in his novel, as irony is Forster’s strongest weapon. He is, first and foremost, a very English writer and all of his six novels are set in a British context. India thus forms an interesting setting for him, making it possible to explore the colonial impact on British identity. The character of Dr Aziz depicts a development of a non-British character and is therefore an interesting exception worth having a closer look at in an “Oriental” discourse, as Said tells me to.

2.3 Plot and Structure

The novel is divided into three parts: “Mosque”, “Caves” and “Temple”. They correspond with the three Indian seasons of the cold weather, the hot weather and the
monsoon. “Temple” is separated both in time and space from the earlier action in “Mosque” and “Caves”. A description of the Indian landscape introduces each section, suggesting that India is the most important here and this is not a story focusing on heroes. Thus the introduction sets the tone of the whole section. By showing us glimpses, the narrator invites his reader on a journey that goes further and further into the depths of India. This is a journey or a passage in three stages corresponding to the sections and on different levels. While the plot develops and we get to know more about the main characters, more and more of this country is gradually revealed. This contributes to the progression for the reader of *A Passage to India* and the different levels confirm India’s “mystery and muddle”, the Modernist elements of the novel.

The first scene of “Mosque” is set by presenting India from the very first line in the opening paragraph:

> Except for the Marabar Caves – and they are twenty miles off – the city of Chandrapore presents nothing extraordinary. Edged rather then washed by the river Ganges, it trails for a couple of miles along the bank, scarcely distinguishable from the rubbish it deposits so freely. There are no bathing steps on the riverfront, as the Ganges happens not to be holy here; indeed there is no riverfront, and bazaars shut out the wide and shifting panorama of the stream. The streets are mean, the temples ineffective, and though a few fine houses exist they are hidden away in gardens or dawn alleys whose filth deters all but the invited guest. (31)

The reader is plunged into a dirty and not very welcoming India. Chandrapore is just a dull and dirty town on the Ganges in north-eastern India. An attentive reader might notice a promise of something in “except for the Marabar Caves”. This might make him curious and raise expectations of something extraordinary, which is quickly taken away as the narrator chooses to focus on Chandrapore and everything that this town is not. This harsh welcome is contrasted in the next paragraph with the “tropical pleasance”(31) further inland beyond the railway where the Eurasians live, which is

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presented as an illusion for the English, screening them from the real India.

Back again, in the real India, we are introduced to one of the main themes of the novel as Dr Aziz jumps off his bike outside his home and joins a discussion with his Muslim fellow countrymen about whether or not it is possible to be friends with an Englishman. Something they find difficult as Hamidullah says: “They all become exactly the same – not worse, not better. I give any Englishman two years...And I give any Englishwoman six months. All are exactly alike” (34).

On the subject of English women they all agree that “all Englishwomen are haughty and venal” (36), basing their generalisation on disappointment as “it is difficult for members of a subject race to do otherwise” (ibid.). The significance of cultural identity is evident, as this discussion can be characterised by “us” and “them” and here the English represent “the Other”. The Indians make stereotypes of the English in the same way they have been stereotyped by them. The strategy is the same. I would like to call this a copying strategy.

The privileged Dr Aziz, educated in England, remembers his English family in England, Mr and Mrs Bannister:

‘They were father and mother to me, I talked to them as I do now. In the vacations their rectory became my home. They entrust all their children to me – I often carried little Hugh about – I took him up to the funeral of Queen Victoria, and held him in my arms above the crowd.’

‘I learn now that this boy is in business as a leather merchant at Cawnpore. Imagine how I long to see him and to pay his fare that this house may be his home. But it is useless. The other Anglo-Indians will have got hold of him long ago. He will probably think that I want something, and I cannot face that from the son of my old friends. Oh, what in this country has gone wrong with everything, Vakil Sahib? I ask you’. (35)

Back in India Aziz, once so proud of his Englishness, has become just a man in the crowd to the British. He is a representative of the natives and not at the same level as the English anymore. His assimilation and education had made him believe in equality, which he then discovered only to be an illusion. This is something he sometimes finds difficult. In order to cope he has to choose sides, but he is not ready
to do it, yet. He seems to expect more both from the English and his countrymen.

After establishing a platform and introducing a theme the narrator chooses to introduce the “haughty and venal” English women. Mrs Moore has come to Chandrapore to visit her son Ronny Heaslop. She is accompanied by Miss Adela Quested, who is engaged to Ronny. The purpose of their journey to India is to confirm this engagement and give Adela a chance to see what her life as a future Anglo-Indian will be like. Adela is very eager to see the “real India” (46). She has great expectations, based on the myths and stories she has heard of the exotic Orient. Seen through my Sami and postcolonial glasses I believe that Adela already has an idea about what is “real”. She has a pre-constructed Orient in her head that has been created during many decades of colonialism.

Mrs Moore, on the contrary, seems to have come to India with an open mind. She wanders off from Adela at the English Club to find herself a little sanctuary: a mosque, one of India’s holy places. Dr Aziz is there to pray on his way home after having been unnecessarily summoned to the hospital by his superior Major Callendar. His social evening with his friends has been interrupted. He is not in a good mood and assuming that this English lady does not know how to behave in a mosque he shouts at her:

‘Madam, this is a mosque, you have no right here at all, you should have taken off your shoes; this is a holy place for Muslims.’
‘I have taken them off’.
‘You have?’
‘I left them at the entrance.’
‘Then I ask your pardon’. (42)

The tone between them changes as Aziz realises that here is someone who respects his religion. The reader is now presented with Mrs Moore’s perspective:

‘Yes, I was right, was I not? If I remove my shoes, I am allowed?’
‘Of course, but so few ladies take the trouble, especially thinking no one is there to see.’
‘That makes no difference. God is here’. (ibid.)

This intuitive English lady shows a great deal of cultural understanding. She is more
than just a British stereotype like her son Ronny. With her spirituality she blends in with India’s mystery, even though she claims to “dislike muddles” (86). This encounter is to become of vital importance to both of them. A friendship based on mutual respect has been initiated.

A Bridge Party is arranged at the club in order to please Miss Quested and introduce her to some of the locals. It is all very superficial and not a success. I feel that Forster by using irony, his sharpest weapon, manages very well to portray the stereotypes in a world of black and white to his reader. More characters are introduced as Miss Quested and Mrs Moore meet Cyril Fielding. He invites them, Dr Aziz and professor Godbole to tea at his college. Professor Godbole is a Hindu Brahmin, representing the Hindu part of India:

He was elderly and wizen with a grey moustache and grey-blue eyes, and his complexion was as fair as a European’s. He wore a turban that looked like a purple macaroni, coat, waistcoat, dhoti, socks with clocks. The clocks matched the turban, and his whole appearance suggested – as if he had reconciled the products of East and West, mental as well as physical, and could never be discomposed. The ladies were interested in him, and hoped that he would say something about religion. But he only ate – ate and ate, smiling, never letting his eyes catch sight of his hand. (89)

Dr Aziz feels a bit threatened by Professor Godbole: “his audience was splitting up” (90). I think he is afraid that the Hindu will take over as being the most “real” Indian as the Hindu also represents ”the Other” to him as a Moslem. In an almost desperate attempt to win back the attention of the English he therefore invites them “all to see me in the Marabar Caves” (91) even though he has not been there himself. When the excited Aziz is describing the extraordinary caves which he really knows nothing about to Adela and Godbole, Ronny Heaslop arrives. He is appalled to find his future wife alone with two natives:

He did not mean to be rude to the two men, but the only link he could be conscious of with an Indian was the official, and neither happened to be his subordinate. As private individuals he forgot them. (93)

The Western stereotype meets the Eastern and the cultural misunderstanding is
evident, the muddle is complete, when Aziz asks Ronny to join them:

Ronny was tempted to retort; he knew the type; he knew all the types, and this was the spoilt westernised. But he was a servant of the Government, it was his job to avoid ‘incidents’, so he said nothing, and ignored the provocation that Aziz continued to offer. Aziz was provocative. Everything he said had an impertinent flavour or jarred. His wings were failing, but he refused to fall without a struggle. He did not mean to be impertinent to Mr Heaslop, who had never done him harm, but here was an Anglo-Indian who must become a man before comfort could be regained. He did not mean to be greasily confidential to Miss Quested, only to enlist her support; nor to be loud and jolly towards Professor Godbole. (93)

The tone of the narrator indicates to the reader that a disaster is waiting around the next bend. Forster does not try to defend Ronny’s Anglo-Indian behaviour, but we are invited to understand the difficulties of communicating from both perspectives. I think he wants to show us that Aziz has no control over what is going on. He is simply acting his role, not necessarily as an Indian, but as a human being.

The atmosphere gets even more dense at the polo game when Adela tells Ronny “I’ve finally decided we are not going to be married, my dear boy” (99). However, Ronny seems to take it well and after deciding to stay friends they both feel relieved:

They were softened by their own honesty, and began to feel lonely and unwise. Experiences, not character, divided them; they were not dissimilar, as humans; indeed, when compared with the people who stood nearest to them in point of space they became practically identical. (100)

Here the two races are contrasted and I feel that the narrator is trying to make a point of it by suggesting a resemblance between the woman who wants to experience and the man who has experienced. Adela’s future in India will be as an Anglo-Indian and in the eyes of “the people next to them” they already look alike.

In the car on the way back to Chandrapore the English couple, who have decided not to get married, hold hands. Suddenly something hits their car. No one knows what it was; perhaps a hyena. This strange and in a way mystical incident makes Adela change her mind. India interferes and the couple is back together. At least, this is the impression the narrator wants to give his reader.
The first section ends in the cold weather turning hot and Dr Aziz falling slightly ill. Mr Fielding comes to see him. His visit leads to bewilderment among Aziz’s friends who do not know how to behave. They eventually leave Fielding and Aziz, who become friends. As a token of their new friendship Aziz shows a photo of his late wife to his English friend: “She was my wife. You are the first Englishman she has ever come before. Now put her photograph away” (128). Fielding leaves Aziz, not knowing what to really think of him. Aziz is overwhelmed about having an English friend in India. I think he is hoping to prove to his Moslem friends that there are exceptions.

The Ganges is described as young compared to the Himalayan India in the opening scene of the second part called “Caves”. Then the narrator describes the extraordinary caves. The reader actually learns more about them than the protagonists of *A Passage to India*:

A tunnel eight feet long, five feet high, three feet wide, leads to a circular chamber about twenty feet in diameter. This arrangement occurs again and again throughout the group of hills, and this is all, this is a Marabar cave. Having seen one such cave, having seen two, having seen three, four, fourteen, twenty-four, the visitor returns to Chandrapore uncertain whether he has had an interesting experience or a dull one or any experience at all. He finds it difficult to discuss the caves, or to keep them apart in his mind, for the pattern never varies, and no carving, not even a bees’ nest or a bat, distinguishes one from another. Nothing, nothing attaches to them, and their reputation – for they have one – does not depend upon human speech. It is as if the surrounding plain or the passing birds have taken upon themselves to exclaim ‘Extraordinary!’ and the word has taken root in the air, and been inhaled by mankind.

They are dark caves. Even when they open towards the sun, very little light penetrates down the entrance tunnel to the circular chamber. There is little to see, and no eye to see it, until the visitor arrives for his five minutes, and strikes a match. (138)

Aziz is terribly worried about the expedition to the caves in the hot weather. And it is not just the practical arrangement that worries him: “[T]rouble after trouble encountered him, because he had challenged the spirit of the Indian earth, which tries to keep men in compartments” (141) Here the narrator uses the setting as well as the characters to reflect the differences between cultures and religions in India itself. The Marabar Caves seem to represent something holy, but not to the Mohammedan Aziz. I
think he feels foreign in his own country and he has in this case actually more in common with its British visitors. By using an omniscient narrator Forster underlines the sentiments of both Aziz and the English ladies. The narrator helps the reader to understand by changing perspective:

The sky dominated as usual, but seeming unhealthily near, adhering like a ceiling to the summits of the precipices. It was as if the contents of the corridor had never changed. Occupied by his own munificence, Aziz noticed nothing. His guests notice a little. They did not feel that it was an attractive place or quite worth visiting, and wished it could have turned into some Mohammedan object, such as a mosque, which they host would have appreciated and explained. His ignorance became evident, and was really a drawback. In spite of his gay, confident talk, he had no notion how to treat this particular aspect of India; he was lost in it without Professor Godbole, like themselves. (153)

As India’s representative Aziz is assumed by his English guests to know everything about his country. The whole expedition turns into a demonstration of cultural misunderstandings of the Oriental versus the English. We follow this all the way from Aziz’s food and drink worries to the catastrophic outcome. The narrator makes this, in my opinion, almost too evident by serving the reader with stereotypes. The insecure Aziz is given the role of the exaggerated native who mistakes hospitality for intimacy. He feels uncomfortable, not just because Mr Fielding and professor Godbole missed the train, but simply this is not his India. Adela Quested is given the role of the naïve English woman, eager to experience the exotic Orient with her native guide, but unable to ask the right questions. The only person who really seems able to communicate with Aziz is Mrs Moore. He reminds her of their first encounter:

‘Do you ever remember our mosque, Mrs Moore?’
‘I do, I do’, she said, suddenly vital and young.
‘And how rough and rude I was, and how good you were’.
‘And how happy we both were’.
‘Friendships last longest that begin like that, I think. Shall I ever entertain your children?’. (155)

Mrs Moore in fact shows more depth than Dr Aziz. Her fear of the evil echo in the cave, again hinting what is to come, is followed by the turning point of the novel that eventually reveals all prejudice. Adela and Aziz go on alone, only guided by a
single native guide. Adela is thinking about marriage and love. She suddenly realises that she does not love Ronny. She cannot marry him. Occupied by her thoughts she asks Aziz whether he is married, thinking “[W]hat a handsome little Oriental he was, and no doubt his wife and children were beautiful too, for people usually get what they already possess” (163). Then she asks the fatal question that brings all the stereotypes forward again: “Have you one wife or more than one ?” (164). Aziz is appalled. He plunges into the first cave thinking “[D]amn the English even at their best” (164). When he comes out his English companion is gone. The guide explains that she has gone into another cave. This passage is told from Aziz perspective. The narrator chooses not to enter Adela’s mind. The reader gets to follow a panic struck Aziz who finds “Miss Quested’s field-glasses” outside a cave (165).

Aziz sees Adela leaving the Marabar Hills with Miss Derek who has driven Fielding there. Revealed at the sight of Fielding, Dr Aziz scrambles down the hill shouting: “Fielding! Oh, I have so wanted you!, dropping the ‘Mr’ for the first time” (166). Mrs Moore questions Adela’s sudden departure, and Aziz tries to find all kinds of explanations. He is so excited to see his new English friend. Here the narrator successfully shifts from one perspective to another to depict what is going on in their minds:

Loving them both, he expected them to love each other. They did not want to. Fielding thought with hostility, ‘I knew these women would make trouble’, and Mrs Moore thought ‘This man, having missed the train, tries to blame us’; but her thoughts were feeble; since her faintness in the cave she was sunk in apathy and cynicism. The wonderful India of her opening weeks, with its cool nights and acceptable hints of infinity, had vanished. (168)

What actually happened in the darkness of the cave Adela entered? Only the narrator knows and he chooses not to give us the answer to this question. On their return to Chandrapore, Aziz is arrested for molesting Adela. Fielding cannot believe this. He resigns from the English Club. Attitudes quickly harden between the British
and the Indian communities. All prejudice is revealed. Adela, who came down the
Marabar Hills covered in cactus thorns, has had a nervous breakdown. She cannot get
rid of the echo in her head. Mrs Moore believes in Aziz’s innocence, but she is too
weak and confused – also by this mysterious echo – and chooses to go back to
England. On the day of the trial she dies at sea, not knowing that she has become a
spiritual hope of the Indians, a Hindu Goddess: “Emiss Esmoor” (228). During the
trial Adela is led through the events that made her accuse Aziz of attacking her. She
suddenly remembers: “I’m afraid I have made a mistake…Dr Aziz never followed me
into the cave” (231) Miss Quested does the unacceptable. She renounces her own
people. She is left with no one else but Fielding to look after her as Ronny breaks off
their engagement. The whole town is a huge riot.

Aziz has finally won. His victory is celebrated by all his Indian brothers. “It
was a victory, but such a queer one”(235). The humiliation in prison and in court has
a great impact on him. After imprisonment and release he turns his back on the
English. Again, this is to be expected as it he is simply using another copying
strategy. Aziz tells Fielding, his former British friend: “I have become anti-British,
and ought to have done so sooner, it would have saved me numerous misfortunes”
(Forster 250). He decides to move where “Englishmen cannot insult me anymore”
(251).

The third part of Forster’s novel called “Temple” takes the reader further into
India, further into her mystery and muddle:

Some hundreds of miles westward of the Marabar Hills, and two years later in time, Professor
Narayan Godbole stands in the presence of God. God is not born yet – that will occur at
midnight – but He has also been born centuries ago, nor can he ever be born, because He is the
Lord of the Universe, who transcends human processes. He is, was not, is not, was. He and
professor Godbole stood at opposite ends of the same strip of carpet.

Tu karam,Tukaram,
Thou art my father and mother and everybody...’

This corridor in the palace at Mau opened through other corridors into a courtyard. It was of
beautiful hard white stucco, but its pillars and vaulting could scarcely be seen behind coloured
rags, iridescent balls, chandeliers of opaque pink glass, and murky photographs framed
crookedly. At the end was the small but famous shrine of the dynastic cult, and the God to be born was largely a silver image of the size of a teaspoon. Hindus sat on either side of the carpet where they could find room, or overflowed into the adjoining corridors and the courtyard? Hindus, Hindus only, mild featured men, mostly villagers, for whom anything outside their village passed in a dream. They were the toiling ryot, whom some call the real India. Mixed with them sat a few tradesmen out of the little town, officials, courtiers, scions of the ruling house. Schoolboys kept inefficient order. The assembly was in a tender, happy state unknown to an English crowd, it seethed like a beneficent potion. When the villagers broke cordon for a glimpse of the silver image, a most beautiful and radiant expression came into their faces, a beauty in there was nothing personal, for it caused them all to resemble one another during the moment of its indwelling, and only when it was withdrawn did they revert to individual clods. And so with the music. Music there was, but from so many sources that the sum total was untrammelled. The braying banging crooning melted into a single mass which trailed round the palace before joining the thunder. Rain fell at intervals throughout the night. (281-282)

The narrator decides to show us the real India. It is an India full of impressions and sounds incomprehensive to anyone but the Indians themselves. Or perhaps even incomprehensive to Indians like Aziz as this is a description of a Hindu ceremony.

Professor Godbole is now Minister of Education at Mau in central India and thanks to him Dr Aziz has become the personal physician of the Maharajah. It is the time for the monsoon and the climax of the celebrating of the birth of Krishna. Fielding has come on an official visit as Education Inspector with his wife and her brother. Assuming Adela is Fielding’s wife Aziz does not wish to meet them. But it is not Adela, but Stella, Mrs Moore’s daughter, who has become Mrs Fielding. Miss Quested’s “quest” for the real India ended in the Marabar caves.

Time has passed and Aziz has created a new life for himself and, in fact, a new identity as a “real” Indian. He has chosen, erased his Englishness and forgotten all English friends. But the Hindu way of seeing life as a circle and believing in destiny catches up even with a Muslim. Mrs Moore’s spirit finally catches up with Aziz. She seems in a very perceptive and mysterious way to have understood some of the complex India in the darkness of those caves. After all, she was already recognised as an “Oriental” at their first meeting in the mosque by a less knowing Aziz (42). Mrs Moore’s son Ralph is stung by a bee. Aziz is called to the State Guest House to attend
to him. He feels himself strangely drawn to Ralph, in the same way as he was to his mother:

‘Can you always tell when a stranger is a friend?’
‘Yes.’
‘Then you are an Oriental’. He unclasped as he spoke, with a little shudder. Those words – he had said them to Mrs Moore in the mosque at the beginning of the cycle, from which, after so much suffering, he had got free. Never be friends with the English! Mosque, caves, mosque, caves. And he was starting again. (306)

Aziz has struggled throughout the novel to find himself. In the third part he has finally become a real Indian, but the meeting of Mrs Moore’s son makes the old inner conflict in his mind return. One cannot escape one’s karma. Again, the answer lies with the spirit of Mrs Moore. The echo in the caves indicates that a change must take place within the mind of the characters. Adela changes when she realises that there was no one in the dark caves despite what she had thought at the time. Aziz changes in prison. But his anger and bitterness twist his mind. He sees nothing in the darkness of the caves or his prison cell and afterwards he can only see the world in black or white. He cannot see until the circle is complete. Mrs Moore shows him the way. She is the pathfinder who makes him realise that his India can be found inside himself. It is already there – above, around and inside him!

There is an atmosphere of reconciliation at the end of the novel. Ralph and Aziz row out on the great Mau tank to watch the festivities. Their boat collides with the boat of Fielding and Stella and they all fall into the water. It becomes a symbolic meeting that heals the breech between Aziz and Fielding. The climax of the Hindu ceremony becomes a second climax of the novel. A new Aziz is reborn, parallel to the rebirth of Krishna.

The new complete Aziz and his old English friend go riding the next day, but then they realise in a mysterious way that the people they represent cannot be friends: “no, not yet”(316). Even the Indian earth and sky forbid their friendship: “no, not
there” (ibid.). Here I feel that Forster’s narrator reserves himself as he both indicates a hope of liberation and at the same time cannot, or dare not, suggest it. It becomes a bittersweet reconciliation. India was to become independent just after the Second World War and Forster thus foresaw her liberation two decades before, but without being able to speak for a future either with or without the British. I believe Forster, just being a result of his context, simply had reached his “horizon of understanding”, to use Gadamer’s vocabulary. Forster’s ending has also been commented on by Edward Said and I will therefore return to it in my fifth chapter. My next step is to have a closer look at the writer’s tools, so brilliantly mastered by Forster.

2.4 Narrative Technique

Forster uses a traditional method of telling his story, typical of novelists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is that of an omniscient, all-knowing, narrator who “overviews the action, comments from any angle and can enter minds as dissimilar as Aziz’s or Ronny Heaslop’s” (Messenger 2000:56). This is a narrator with a “distinctive voice” which is “humane, cultured, sceptical and ironic”, but also capable of capturing a tone of “lyrical aspiration and wistful sadness” (ibid.). The narrator assumes the persona of a European describing India in a very detailed way, but without really understanding it, e.g. the Hindu festival in the third section “Temple”. I believe that this voice or persona is close to Forster’s own.

Who tells the story then? Well, the narrative function is obviously linked to the narrator. He communicates with the reader in his “voice”. The narrator also functions as a medium between the characters when direct speech is quoted by him. We can thus distinguish between narration and speech, the latter being what the characters say, and thus speak of different voices in Forster’s narrative. In speech the
“direct discourse” is most frequently used but there are passages of monologues in which “free indirect discourse: direct discourse without conventional orthographic cues” appears (Lothe 2000:46).

The omniscient narrator sets the tone for each section of the novel. He is present in the text, “observing, judging and commenting on the action” (Messenger 2000:57). However, our omniscient narrator is not always consequent as the reader is never able to really enter Miss Adela’s mind in order to find out what really happened in the Marabar caves. The omniscient narrator knows, but chooses when and how to tell us. This contributes to the tension and progression of the story. The perspective constantly changes depending on whose mind we are to enter. Lothe describes perspective as “the point of orientation (both in space and time) of the person (addresser) uttering them” (2000:39). The concept of perspective thus indicates “the vision through which the narrative elements are presented” (ibid.). We can perhaps speak about an angle which the narrator chooses to show someone or something from. Perspective must therefore be distinguished from the voice the narrator uses (cf. Lothe 2000:40). The narrative perspective could be either “external” or “internal” in relation to the story. An external perspective is associated with a third person narrator who tells about the events without participating in them, while an internal perspective comments from the inside of the mind of a character. I believe Forster’s narrative gives examples of both.

I totally agree with Nigel Messenger, who says that the omniscient narrator “navigates the reader through their own ‘passage to India’ seeking, but unable to decipher, some of the contradictory messages of India’s ‘hundred voices’, unable to decide whether India is a muddle or a mystery” (Messenger 2000:58). The narrator hereby controls the reader within his or her “horizon of understanding” (cf. Gadamer
1975), based on his historical, cultural, personal and contemporary contexts.

The narrator often foreshadows what is to come. This also contributes to the progression of the story and creates suspense as it keeps the reader awake and gives him expectations. The introduction of the extraordinary Marabar Caves, already in the novel’s first line, is a good example of Forster’s use of foreshadowing. The “terrifying echo” (158) of the caves is another. It makes Mrs Moore realise that marriage and love are “rubbish” (207), and thus the whole effect of the “boum” is foreshadowed. I, however, question this foreshadowing as I feel that everything becomes too evident. The foreshadowing used during the expedition to the Marabar caves has an impact on the characterisation of Aziz and Adela. They both become stereotypes with a behaviour too easy to predict; Aziz becomes the “mimic Indian” (Childs 1999:18) and Adela the naïve English woman. Some postcolonial critics even go as far as suggesting that Adela is actually asking to be raped. This will be discussed more in chapter five.

Sometimes our narrator also addresses his reader: “Visions are supposed to entail profundity, but – wait till you get one, dear reader!” (213). I think this is part of Forster’s message. In my opinion he is trying to include his reader by addressing him and thus encourage him on his own passage to India.

2.5 Characterisation

I look upon A Passage to India as, first and foremost, being a journey of the native protagonist Dr Aziz and he is therefore my main interest and focus of this thesis. Aziz’s search for his own identity goes on throughout the novel. He is the first character we meet and the last we part with after his rebirth. Aziz represents the native Muslim perspective in Forster’s novel. Professor Godbole illustrates the Hindu
perspective and in that way also represents the “Other” of the Muslim perspective within India. Aziz is an example of what E. M. Forster calls “a round character: a character who develops and changes, who may surprise us, and whose actions we cannot predict” (Forster 1971:75).

As well as the other characters, Aziz presents himself through his action and speech. He is indeed a human character and thus a contrast to Professor Godbole, who seems to be without flaws in his spiritual, almost superior way of being. To a westerner Aziz might give a foolish impression of the native, desperately trying to be English. The narrator uses an oxymoronic expression to describe him: “offensively friendly” (93). He is characterised by Adela as a “handsome little Oriental” (163). He is described as friend by both Mrs Moore and Fielding, while the Anglo-Indians like Mrs Moore’s son Ronny Heaslop, look upon him as unreliable: “he knew the type; he knew all the types, and this was the spoilt westernised” (93).

Aziz himself does not really know who he is or what he wants. He desperately tries to impress the English and does so by showing the ladies the “real” India, represented by the extraordinary Marabar Caves. This picnic which has “nothing to do with English or Indians: it is an expedition of friends” (170) is turned into a disaster: “trouble, after trouble encountered him, because he had challenged the spirit of the Indian earth, which tries to keep men in compartments” (141). It turns out to be a fatal, but also a necessary mistake. This is something he has to experience in order to find out who he is. He has to renounce the English in order to find himself. It is a painful experience, triggered by the incident in the Marabar Caves. Aziz’s mind has to be transformed before there is any sign of reconciliation between him and the English. He needs to change and he needs help doing it. I will return to Aziz’s transformation, as it forms his cultural identity and is, indeed, of vital importance in a postcolonial
Sometimes Forster uses the technique free indirect style in his narration: “a technique of narrating the thoughts of characters that blends first and third person narrative” (Messinger 2000:92). Adela is introduced by Mrs Moore in such a style:

This was Adela Quested, the queer, cautious girl whom Ronny had commissioned her to bring from England, and Ronny was her son, also cautious, whom Miss Quested would probably though not certainly marry, and she herself an elderly lady. (46)

Adela might seem a “flat character” initially, but she also develops. According to Forster flat characters are “constructed around a single area or quality” and “best when they are comic” (1971:75). The incident in the cave has great consequences for her. Something happens in the darkness of the cave, the mystical atmosphere of India affects her and makes her develop. The “boum” (159) follows both Adela and Mrs Moore, Aziz’s spiritual pathfinder. I think that before Mrs Moore dies she passes on some of her qualities to Adela, who wakes up when she is forced to remember during the trial. The young Adela and the elderly Mrs Moore make it possible for the narrator to illustrate different levels of English society set in a colonial context. The English men – Heaslop and Fielding – represent different levels of the Anglo-Indian perspective and they also help the narrator to illustrate the English social pattern.

How can the character of Mrs Moore best be described? She certainly possesses elements of a round, developing character at the beginning of the novel. Her spirituality is recognised both by Aziz and Professor Godbole. But the echo of the Marabar Caves changes her. She stops developing and her character fades away. Not the spirit of it, though. The wasp carries her spirit back to Aziz in the appearance of her son Ralph. I believe that Mrs Moore represents the muddle and mystery of India.

I agree with Edwards who finds that both Mrs Moore and Professor Godbole “seem to hover between the material and spiritual realms” (Edwards 2002:86). Not
even the narrator seems to manage to get close to the Hindu Brahmin as neither his thoughts nor actions are ever explained. It is up to the reader to interpret and for a westerner this is a difficult task. Mr Godbole remains distant in his "temple". His passage is definitely the most spiritual one, and to an initiated reader he might make more sense. To me he functioned as the opposite or "other" of Aziz, nothing more. This might have to do with the fact that I know more about Islam than Hinduism which, again, illustrates my "horizon of understanding".

The character of Ronny Heaslop, on the other hand, is much easier to understand. Because this is actually what Forster does: he tries to explain the Anglo-Indian behaviour by creating a stereotype like Ronny. He remains the same throughout the novel, that is, he is a flat character who "does not develop, and who therefore appears more as a type" (Forster 1971:75). However, Heaslop is not just a machine or a tool of the British Empire. The narrator does not treat him with contempt. He makes the reader sympathise with him and Ronny becomes human. He is merely a victim of circumstances. Edwards claims that "Forster is trying to show that character depends on circumstances: it is not separate from situation, and indeed can be partly determined by situation" (Edwards 2002:92). I agree that the context affects and the system is therefore to be blamed, but there are other ways of illustrating this than just presenting stereotypes.

The relationships between the main characters, mentioned above, are all subject to change throughout the novel. These changes are caused by different reasons, the biggest being the experience in the Marabar Caves. Forster uses this empty space, the darkness of a cave as a trigger for the events. His use of symbolism will therefore be discussed next.
2.6 Symbolism

There is “nothing” in the Marabar Caves. “Nothing, nothing attaches to them” (138).

There is only darkness and empty space under the arches of the cave. Darkness is not visible and therefore consists of “nothing”. It does, however, become something when a visitor strikes a match:

> Immediately another flame rises in the depths of the rock and moves towards the surface like an imprisoned spirit; the walls of the circular chamber have been most marvellously polished. The two flames approach and strive to unite, but cannot, because one of them breathes air, the other stone. (138)

The cave has a voice too: “boum is the sound as far as the human alphabet can express it” (159). This can either be an empty echo or a warning of something evil. By giving the cave a voice it is, in a way, personified. Nevertheless, this voice – evil or not – has an effect on its visitors. All the major characters have to react to their experience in Marabar. The caves make people question themselves. According to Edwards this suggests that “nothing is in fact all” (2002:60). I agree. Perhaps we have to face darkness and emptiness in order to react. The cave has also an effect on the reader of Forster’s novel.

Theodor W. Adorno describes the title of a literary product as “the microcosm of the work” (1992). *A Passage to India* indicates movement. The word “passage” contains many layers of meaning. One can speak of a physical passage to India, but it is also possible to suggest a movement within the mind, a spiritual passage. The main protagonists are all searching for something. Aziz wants to find out whether it is possible to be friends with the English and still be Indian. He is looking for his identity. Adela is on her quest for the “real India” and at the same time also looking for herself. Mrs Moore and Professor Godbole search for India’s spiritual meaning. They are all on their individual passages of discovery in the Indian landscape.

Forster’s rich language makes an impression on all readers. His use of images,
phrases and motifs helps him to underline his message. He called this “rhythm”. By using “rhythm” Forster keeps his reader on the track, he points him in the right direction by making it easier for him. It helps the progression as we recognise expressions we have seen before and we are thereby in a way controlled by the narrator. The repetition of following key words can be mentioned as examples of his technique: “extraordinary”, “mystery”, “muddle” and the “boum”. Thus by using “rhythm” the narrator can foreshadow the action. He indicates that there is a hidden, deeper meaning of the repeated word which awakens his reader’s curiosity and makes him go on reading. Other repetitions of echoes help to confirm the echo motif, such as “then you are an Oriental” and “God is Love” that becomes “God is Love” in the third part. The latter is in my opinion a bit far-fetched and not that easily recognised. In short: the “rhythm” helps the narrator with the progression of the story and connects the three sections to each other, but it is also an important writer’s tool, which can be used to manipulate the reader.

Speaking about connecting, it seems as if Forster uses the image of the wasp as a spiritual messenger between Mrs Moore and Professor Godbole. This little messenger and reminder, which can fly everywhere, is contrasted with the big macro-cosmos of India; the image of “the overarching sky”(32). The Indian sky both introduces and concludes the novel. I think it might suggest the arches of both a mosque and a temple, as well as arches of a cave and thus embedding all of India. And the little wasp goes on flying in it, hopefully all the way to the reader.

I will return to a more detailed postcolonial approach of Forster’s novel after presenting the contemporary novel of Ondaatje, in which the reading of Kipling’s Kim and other classics is a main element.
3. The English Patient

3.1 Historical and Geographical Setting

The political situation in the world has changed considerably since A Passage to India came out eighty years ago. India and the other former colonies of Britain are independent. We now live in a postcolonial world, with the old Empire on our doorstep in today’s multicultural society. The former Empire is now writing back, presenting its past from other perspectives. We can hear native literary voices, representing the “Oriental other”, discussing both the past and present of their home countries. The English Patient, written by Michael Ondaatje was published in 1992. Like Forster, Ondaatje shows an ambition to enlighten the challenge of cross-cultural communication between the coloniser and the colonised. The novel explores time and space in both a colonial past and postcolonial future. It was given a warm reception and got the Booker Prize, but it was not until it was adapted to the screen in 1996 that it was introduced to a wider public, who read the novel after seeing Anthony Minghella’s beautiful adaptation of it.

Ondaatje is one of the many Oriental writers who live in the west. Edward Said was also of one of them. I find it both interesting and relevant to look at Ondaatje’s novel in the light of Said’s “Oriental” discourse and try to determine how the fact that the author was born in the East, educated in the West and is writing from the West, influences his writing. This dilemma – if it is a dilemma – will be discussed further in the following chapters. Salman Rushdie claims that we have now reached the time when “the Empire writes back to the centre” (Schimanski 2001:126) and I have therefore chosen to study Ondaatje’s novel, representing the recent postcolonial trend of works of writers writing in English about the English outside England.

The frame story of The English Patient is set in the Italian villa. The English
patient’s stories are set in the Sahara in a different time and space. The stories serve as an escape from reality for Hana and her patient, but they are as important as the frame-story. Without them the patient would just be a shell, a non-existing being. In the last pages of the novel the reader meets Kip in his garden after the war. Ondaatje’s complex novel certainly explores both time and space. It is a “text woven together of many different themes, narrative viewpoints, lyrical images, and a whole flood of references” (Schimanski 2001:125). The English Patient can be related both to Modernism and Postmodernism, as it mixes the genres of the adventure in the spirit of Kipling’s Kim and the psychological novel. It is also a literary product of fiction mixed with non-fiction. Ondaatje expresses his gratitude to the Royal Geographical Society in London for allowing him “to read archive material and to glean from their geographical Journals the world of explorers and their journeys – often beautifully recorded by their writers” (305). His references to real literary and historical documents plus the use of the character Almásy, who really existed, are other examples of non-fictional elements. Before I begin analysing Ondaatje’s novel I would like to remind the reader of this thesis that I will do so reading through my Sami and postcolonial glasses and my main task is to find out how the native protagonist Kip is presented and in which context the reader meets him.

3.2 Plot and structure

Ondaatje’s novel is divided into ten chapters set within the frame narrative, the Italian villa. The story begins in the garden of Villa San Girolamo and ends in another, namely Kip’s garden. In between these gardens the reader is invited into many different kinds of space through the fragmented stories of the English patient and the analepsis, events in the past, of other the characters. Count Almásy actually becomes
a character through his stories, but his memories and dreams also have an effect on the other characters, especially Hana. She is the first character that the reader is introduced to.

*The English Patient* begins as follows:

> She stands up in the garden where she has been working and looks into the distance. She has sensed a shift in the weather. There is another gust of wind, a buckle of noise in the air, and the tall cypresses sway. She turns and moves uphill towards the house, climbing over a low wall, feeling the first drops of rain on her bare arms. She crosses the loggia and quickly enters the house. In the kitchen she doesn’t pause but goes through it and climbs the stairs which are in darkness and then continues along a long hall, at the end of which is wedge of light from an open door. She turns into the room which is another garden – this one made up of trees and bowers painted over its walls and ceiling. The man lies on the bed, his body exposed to the breeze, and he turns his head slowly towards her as she enters. (3)

Ondaatje, as well as Forster, chooses to begin his novel out in the open. The narrator creates a romantic, almost picturesque scene of gardens both outside and inside the villa. This could be the opening of a love story with the man waiting for his loved one in bed. There is, however, a sense of uncertainty as the weather is changing and the woman moves quickly. She also moves though darkness, which is often associated with something dangerous or possibly evil.

The narrator provides more information in the second paragraph. The tone changes and the loving couple have gone. Instead the reader becomes a spectator of an almost religious scene:

> Every four days she washes his black body, beginning at the destroyed feet. She wets a washcloth and holding it above his ankles squeezes the water onto him, looking up as he murmurs, seeing his smile. Above the shins the burns are worst. Beyond purple. Bone. (3)

The nurse’s aubergine coloured patient tells her stories and it is through them he becomes alive. He comes closer and the narrative changes into first person. The narrator thus shares the narrative with his reader. We are there, next to the bed, really close in order to hear the whispering of the patient:

> I have spent weeks in the desert, forgetting to look at the moon, he says, as a married man may spend days never looking into the face of his wife. These are not sins of omission but

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Already after a couple of pages Ondaatje has caught our attention. With his poetic language he bewitches his reader. It gives us a feeling of being there, with his characters. In the same way as the patient tricks his nurse to read, the reader is persuaded to do the same; page after page. While the woman reads about *Kim* we learn more about her and her patient:

This was the time in her life that she fell upon books as the only door out of her cell. They became half her world. She sat at the night table, hunched over, reading of the young boy in India… (7)

She also reads to her patient, or rather continues reading where she last stopped: “[S]he was not concerned about the Englishman as far as the gaps in plot where concerned. She gave no summary of the missing chapters” (8). The whole existence of the patient can best be described a fragmentary, so the gaps do not matter. Or rather, perhaps this nurse is trying to fill in the gaps. She helps him to put together his story, his identity, while he encourages her to get “out of her cell”.

Reading thus functions as ointment in the healing process of them both.

This nurse has seen too much. She cannot even look at herself and has removed all mirrors. She cannot bear any more and has therefore created a limited world in the Tuscany villa, where she is slowly cured by entering stories like Fenimore Cooper’s *The Last of the Mohicans*, knowing:

she would emerge from it feeling she has been immersed in the lives of others, in plots that stretches back twenty years, her body full of sentences and moments, as if awaking from sleep with a heaviness caused by unremembered dreams. (12)
The English patient is recreating his own history by using an 1890 edition of *The Histories* of the ancient Greek historian Herodotus “that he has added to, cutting and gluing in pages from other books or writing in his own observation – so they are all cradled within the text of Herodotus” (16). Johan Schimanski refers to this as Almásy’s “commonplace book” (130), in other words “a place for everything or anything, and that a text can thus be a place, that is, a territory, and that this is a book which has opened up the borders of its territory letting everything outside flood in” (ibid.). It is a borderless book, just like the desert, the space where the memories of the English patient take place. The nurse takes part of her patient’s past. Outside their villa a world war is going on while the woman and her patient hide in their world of books and memories.

The young Canadian nurse’s name is Hana. The reader is not told what the nurse is called until another character is introduced in the beginning of the second chapter. His name is Caravaggio and he knows her, being an old friend of her father. Caravaggio is an Italian-Canadian thief who became a spy and is now trying to recover after having his thumbs cut off by the Nazis. Hana is glad to see him, but at the same time his arrival brings back the old suppressed pain. She remembers the day half a year earlier at Santa Chiara Hospital in Pisa “when an official walked down the space between a hundred beds and gave her a letter that told her of the death of her father” (41). This is a pain Hana cannot cope with. This is why she cannot look at herself in mirrors. This is why she has taken off her uniform and cut off her hair in order to nurse just one patient: “[T]here was something about him she wanted to learn, grow into, and hide in, where she could turn away from being an adult” (52). Hana’s war is over.

Ondaatje does not introduce his last, and in my opinion most important,
character until his third chapter. The reader sees Kip from Hana’s perspective, first at a distance as “[T]he young Sikh sets up a tent in the far reaches of the garden” (72).

Hana pays attention to his physical appearance. She watches him wash and admires:

> his shirtless brown body as he tosses water over himself like a bird using its wing. During the day she notices mostly his arms in the short-sleeved army shirt and the rifle which is always with him, even though battles seem now to be over for them. (72-73)

The sapper and the nurse watch each other before any of them dares to come closer:

> He will turn, suddenly realizing she is watching him. He is a survivor of his fears, will step around anything suspicious, acknowledging her look in this panorama as if claiming he can deal with it all. (73)

The nurse and her patient are awakened from their world of books by the newcomer:

> "Who’s is whistling?”, asks the English patient (74). The Sikh is noisy, always humming or whistling to himself. He is also the only one still in uniform:

> Immaculate, buckles shined, the sapper appears out of his tent, his turban symmetrically layered, the boots clean and banging into the wood or stone floors of the house. On a dime he turns from a problem he is working on and breaks into laughter. (ibid.)

The young sapper brings life into the villa, but he does not enter uninvited. He is just “a tentative visitor” (75). They laugh at his cleanness:

> ‘How did you get through the war?’ Caravaggio laughs.
> ‘I grew up in India, Uncle. You wash your hands all the time. Before all meals. A habit. I was born in the Punjab’
> ‘I’m from Upper America’, she says. (76)

The Sikh sapper eventually comes closer. He moves among them and joins them for a meal, wolfing it down with his own specialities – onions, herbs and fruit:

> “Caravaggio suspected he had gone through the whole invasion never eating from the mess canteen” (86). As Kip approaches, so does the narrator and the reader is for the first time presented with Kip’s perspective:

> The landscape around him is just a temporary thing, there is no permanence to it. He simply acknowledges the possibility of rain, a certain odour from a shrub. As if his mind, even when unused, is radar, his eyes locating the choreography of the killing radius of small arms. He studies the two onions he has pulled out of the earth with care, aware that gardens too have been mined by retreating armies. (87)
Kip finds a mine in a field north of the villa. Hana has to help him to disarm it.

Her fear of death makes her realise that she wants to go on living and also the reason why:

I thought I was going to die. I wanted to die. And I thought if I was going to die I would die with you. Someone like you, young as I am, I saw so many dying near me in the last year. I didn’t feel scared. I certainly wasn’t brave just now. I thought to myself, We have this villa and this grass, we should have lain down together, you in my arms, before we died. I wanted to touch that bone at your neck, collarbone, it’s like a small hard wing under your skin. I wanted to place my fingers against it. (103)

Hana falls in love with Kip, or rather with what he represents. She is searching for something. Being reduced to nothing she wants to experience something “real”. Kip makes her wake up. He is a tempting enigma that nourishes her dreams. In fact, she has been waiting for him, together with her patient reading Kipling’s *Kim*: “in some of those long nights of reading and listening, she supposed, they had prepared themselves for the young soldier, the boy grown up, who would join them”(111).

Hana has already decided what he is before she learns to know him and therefore she will never know him. She reminds me of E. M. Forster’s Adela. With a fixed, pre-constructed image of the Oriental man in her mind Hana watches Kip in one of his vulnerable moments, with his newly washed long hair spread out to dry in the sun:

She imagines all of Asia through the gestures of this one man. The way he lazily moves, his quiet civilisation. He speaks of warrior saints and she now feels he is one, stern and visionary, pausing only in these rare times of sunlight to be godless, informal, his head back again on the table so the sun can dry his spread hair like grain in a fan-shaped basket. Although he is a man from Asia who has in these last years of war assumed English fathers, following their codes like a dutiful son. (217)

This skilful sapper Kip, who got his nick-name from the salty smoked fish, represents a whole continent, the mysterious Orient, in Ondaatje’s novel. To Hana this Sikh with his long hair is a wonderful mystery, just like a character in one of the adventure stories her patient has encouraged her to read. She wants to get close to
him, but it is not easy for either of them:

The sapper sat in the well of the window again. If he could walk across the room and touch her he would be sane. But between them lay a treacherous and complex journey. It was a very wide world. (113)

The irony here is that Kip actually represents the British, being a soldier. He is in fact the only British representative in the limited space that the Italian villa and its garden create. He has found his identity as a sapper. He has assumed an English father in his mentor Lord Suffolk and followed his code “like a dutiful son” (217). Kip is respected by the whole British army and he is treated like a king when disarming a bomb:

He knew he was for now a king, a puppet master, could order anything, a bucket of sand, a fruit pie for his needs, and those men who would not cross an uncrowded bar to speak with him when they were off duty would do what he desired. It was strange to him. As if he had been handed a large suit of clothes that he could roll around in and whose sleeves would drag behind him. But he knew he did not like it. He was accustomed to his invisibility. In England he was ignored in the various barracks, and he came to prefer that. The self-sufficiency and privacy Hana saw in him later were caused not just by him being a sapper in the Italian campaign. It was much a result of being the anonymous member of another race, a part of the invisible world. He had built up defences of character against all that trusting only those who befriended him. (196-197)

Kip, who remains “the foreigner, the Sikh” (105) among his fellow sappers that never become “familiar with each other” (110), needs a giant bomb to wake him up. And it is the biggest bomb of them all. In the last chapter called “August” the atom bombs are dropped. The reader of fiction is now suddenly faced with a historical fact, as this is the real August of 1945. And so is Kip. This reality is too much for the sapper, who has dedicated his whole existence to disarming bombs. He once told Hana about his brother who was in prison for defying the English:

“Ah, but my brother thinks me a fool for trusting the English”. He turns to her, sunlight in his eyes. “One day, he says, I will open my eyes. Asia is still not a free continent, and he is appalled at how we throw ourselves into English wars. It is a battle of opinion we have always had. 'One day you will open your eyes’, my brother keeps saying’. (217)

His brother was right. This big bomb is really an eye-opener. Kip approaches the English patient with a rifle in his hands. The world war cannot be closed out
anymore. It has entered the villa. And now the characters find themselves on different sides:

My brother told me. Never turn your back on Europe. The deal makers. The contract makers. The map drawers. Never trust Europeans, he said. Never shake hands with them. But we, oh, we were easily impressed – by speeches and medals and your ceremonies. What have I been doing these last few years? Cutting away, defusing, limbs of evil. For what? For this to happen? (285)

Kip cannot hide behind his uniform anymore. By accusing the English patient of bombing his continent he becomes Indian. It does not matter that the patient is not English: “American, French, I don’t care. When you start bombing the brown races of the world, you’re an Englishman” (286). Caravaggio knows that he is right as they “would never have dropped such a bomb on a white nation” (ibid.). Kip cannot stay in the villa any longer. He leaves “the three of them to their world” (ibid.).

Kip cannot eat or drink. He takes off his uniform and strips his tent of all military objects. He does not know what to do. Looking at a photograph of his family he questions his whole existence: “[H]is name is Kirpal Singh and he does not know what he is doing here” (287). He reminds me of E. M. Forster's Aziz as Kip also needs to be reborn. Unturbanned, with his hair in a simple topknot, wearing only a kurta, he stands on the edge of Europe. Empty-handed like a pilgrim he has to go back to his continent. Kip drives off in a rage on his motorbike, travelling against the direction of the invasion back to his country that is to become independent a few years later.

Hana has no real identity, just like her “English” patient, who eventually reveals that he is, in fact, count Ladislaus Almásy from Hungary, a desert explorer that turned into a spy-helper, working for the Germans during the war in North Africa. Through Almásy’s copy of Herodotus and his love-story with Katharine Clifton in the Swimmer’s Cave Hana’s thirst of knowledge and will to live are awakened. She reads, listens and reads in order to become someone. Her identity is growing. She
decides to give her patient an overdose, letting him stay in his past and thus sleep forever. Her final task is over and she is now ready to go home to Canada. The stories of her patient and the love of her Oriental lover Kip have helped her out of her limited world.

Kip goes back to his continent and builds a life for himself and his family. The reader meets him again in the last pages of Ondaatje’s novel. He is now “a doctor, has two children and a laughing wife” (299). Dr Singh looks back at his past, the days in Italy and Hana, sitting in his garden. He, who has “reached the age when he suddenly realizes that the sun of India exhausts him” (ibid.), seems to be able to see his old Canadian girlfriend in a mysterious way:

He sits in the garden. And he watches Hana, her hair longer, in her own country…This is a limited gift he has somehow been given, as if a camera’s film reveals her, but only her, in silence. He cannot discern the company she moves among, her judgement; all he can witness is her character and the lengthening of her dark hair, which falls again and then again into her eyes. (300)

I believe this is Ondaatje’s way of showing us that Kip has finally understood the necessity of experiencing something in life. The dangerous, horrible and beautiful days with Hana had a great impact on his future. His experience of war and love in Villa San Girolamo made him become what he is today. It feels as if he is giving Hana part of the credit for it. He is grateful to her and he has thus been able to forgive the west. The English patient needs no further care, as this is really Kirpal Singh’s story. He has become wise enough to reconcile with his past and therefore the novel ends in the present and lies in the hand of Kirpal’s daughter and the future. Ondaatje has dared to go further, he has done what Forster was not able to do. He has not just hinted the future but taken a step into it.

3.3 Narrative Technique
The beautiful, poetic language of Ondaatje leaves no reader unaffected. It is a mixture of prose and poetry. Ondaatje’s imagery paints beautiful and sometimes terrifying pictures on the mind’s eye. His narrative begins with a distanced third-person omniscient narrator, who slowly first approaches the setting, then the characters. Sometimes the reader is even invited to approach the characters on the back of a little representative of the wonders of nature:

The patient turns to face her as she comes in. She touches his foot with the hand that holds the ladybird. It leaves her, moving onto the dark skin. Avoiding the sea of white sheet, it begins to make the long trek towards the distance of the rest of his body, a bright redness against what seems like volcanic flesh. (207)

This is masterly written. By using the present tense Ondaatje invites us to watch this scene with him. We can follow the little ladybird which moves from one character to another and thus bringing something good to both of them. It becomes a symbol of the nursing Hana, who has chosen an impossible task: to nurse the dark patient and avoid the good in life, represented by the immense “sea of white sheet” (207). The dark skin is effectively contrasted with the white sheet. Ondaatje’s imagery paints a picture of the little insect, who moves like a climber on its trek towards the top of a volcano. The connotation of the use of colours is evident. The volcanic surface is still glowing, like red hot lava, suggesting the heat the patient’s dark body once was exposed to. It is an image of a climber, who is focused on her task and determined to make it to the top. Ondaatje thus opens for an individual interpretation of Hana’s role, as I believe it is, indeed, impossible to understand without interpreting.

The narrative of *The English Patient* is characterised by jumping back and forth in time. The reason for this narrative analepsis is difficult to establish. It is certainly a challenge to the reader and certainly keeps him or her awake. It contributes to the suspense, in a way, but it also makes the reader stop and think as he or she is constantly forced to interpret what is happening and what has happened.
Schimanski describes *The English Patient* as:

the product of a series of fragmented stories and descriptions, regulated by a narrative perspective which moves quickly from character to character and shuttles back and forth between the future and the past. (2001:128)

An illustrative example of this is when the reader is informed by the omniscient narrator of Hana’s pre-notion of Kip’s arrival (111) afterwards. In that way the reader is given fragmented information and has to fill in the gaps while reading. The reading becomes a challenge and it eventually might lead to the reader questioning his narrator; especially when the omniscient third person narrator speaks in the first person in the stories of Almásy. Then even the characters question it: “Who is he speaking as now? Caravaggio thinks” (244). Even though Caravaggio desperately wants to find out who the English patient really is and therefore feeds him with morphine, I too, as a reader, begin to doubt the narrator. Is he a reliable narrator? Can the reader treat the glimpses from the past, embedded in the patient’s stories, as facts? Or are they just fragments of facts spiced up, in other words, has the storyteller adjusted his message to suit his listener?

Ondaatje’s constant change of perspective depending on which character is in focus is, indeed, very challenging. I have earlier defined perspective as “the point of orientation (both in space and time) of the person (addressee) uttering them” (Lothe 2000:39) and I have compared it to an angle which the narrator chooses to show someone or something from. The narrative perspectives of Ondaatje are both “external” or “internal” throughout the story in relation to all characters but Kip. I cannot help wondering whether Kip really is representative of a so-called native perspective, showing the events from his point of view. We never get close to him as his copying strategy is to keep to himself and to keep as much as possible to himself. This is also part of his identity as a sapper. Kip watches the other characters in the
dark. They just sense his presence. He is the outsider to them, but also to the narrator. Kip’s narrative is always in the third person and even though the narrator knows he does not let his reader know the inner thoughts of the Sikh. Hana provides most of the information about her lover, through their dialogue or by letting us read her thoughts. But they are always told from her perspective, the western woman’s. Kip does not really approach the reader until the last chapter, “August”. And then his approach is a violent one. With a rifle in his hands he rushes past Hana and upstairs – “three steps at a time” – to the English patient.

I sat at the foot of this bed and listened to you Uncle. These last months. When I was a kid I did that, the same thing. I believed I could fill myself up with what older people taught me. I believed I could carry that knowledge, slowly altering it, but in any case passing it beyond me to another.

I grew up with traditions from my country, but later, more often, from your country. Your fragile white island that with customs and manners and books and prefects and reason somehow converted the rest of the world. You stood for precise behaviour. I knew if I lifted a teacup with the wrong finger I’d be banished. If I tied the wrong kind of knot in a tie I was out. Was it just ships that gave you such power? Was it, as my brother said, because you had the histories and printing presses? You and then the American converted us. With your missionary rules. And Indian soldiers wasted their lives as heroes so they could be pukkah. You had wars like cricket. How did you fool us into this? Here…listen to what you people have done. (283)

The distant observing Kip finally speaks, or rather accuses. He is present and he is close in a first person narrative, representing an “internal” perspective. I just wonder why it took him so long, or rather why the narrator did not narrate from his perspective before. The rest of the chapter is his and according to my opinion the whole story, in fact, is his. But it is not narrated from his perspective. I question this and will discuss it further and compare it to Forster’s narration in the fifth chapter.

In the mystical end of The English Patient the author himself is present: “She is a woman I don’t know well enough to hold in my wing, if writers have wings, to harbour for the rest of my life” (301). Here it is not the narrator, but the writer who is present. Or is it just another voice of the narrator? Perhaps the narrator can best be described as polyphonic: a narrator speaking in different voices. This time he speaks
in the voice of the author. I feel that Kip’s creator has a lot in common with him and therefore shares his difficulties in understanding Hana. Cross-cultural communication may be difficult even if you, like Ondaatje, can relate to both worlds: the east and the west.

3.4 Characterisation

The omniscient narrator slowly approaches all the characters, as mentioned before. The reader thus first gets a description of all of them at a distance. Their movements and looks are first described by the other characters, before the character in question speaks and acts and thus present her or himself. This creates suspense and we expect some kind of progression, development of each character. The pro- and analepsis of the action result in a fragmentary characterisation. It awakens the curiosity of the reader and sometimes fools him or her to draw conclusions that turn out to be untrue. By revealing only fragments of a character Ondaatje annoys and surprises his reader.

The four characters in the villa represent different countries and continents. The English patient, count Almáasy, represents both Britain including her Empire and Hungary on the borderline towards the East, Hana and Caravaggio represent Canada or “Upper America” as Hana puts it. Kip ironically represents both Britain, being a British soldier and India, the Orient. As mentioned above, I would have expected the narrator to narrate from a native perspective at an earlier stage, but that does not happen until the bombs are dropped.

The English patient introduces the borderless North African desert through his fragmented memories and in that way Africa is represented too. Almáasy is an enigmatic and allusive character. The more we learn about him, the more confused we get. This is partly because we are not told his whole story at once, but only given
fragments of his past. Only the narrator can decide what and how much to reveal about the patient. And slowly, slowly the pieces fit together like a big jigsaw. Sometimes they do not fit together and then the reader begins to question the narrator; is he reliable or not? Almásy seems to be obsessed by the desert and the mapping of it, even though he knows that you cannot control an area that is constantly shifting. He claims to dislike nations and yet, he still tries to map the Sahara first for the English and then, later, he gives the maps to the Germans. He gives me a rather arrogant impression. Count Almásy does as he pleases and he cannot be trusted.

Even though he is not introduced to the other characters until the third chapter I look upon *The English Patient* as being the story of the Sikh sapper Kirpal Singh, or Kip as he is called by his fellow soldiers. He walks into the villa without any introduction and is presented as the Sikh sapper. The narrator provides very little information about his background, or cultural context. Kip is characterised mostly from Hana’s perspective and the reader is then given descriptions of him washing his long hair, wolfing his food down or moving quickly and silently in the darkness. The Sikh keeps to himself and presents himself very little throughout most of the novel. He does not really step forward until the atom bombs are dropped, as mentioned before.

I personally felt that Ondaatje expected a lot of me as a reader. It was difficult to look upon the events from the perspective of this outsider as I was assumed to know at least some of his culture in order to interpret his action. I have therefore turned to the American traveller Paul Theroux for more background information. Theroux has the following to say about Sikhs, while he is waiting for the train in Amristar:

Amritsar, two taxi rides from Lahore (the connection train hasn’t run since 1947), is on the Indian side of the frontier. It is to the Sikh what Benares is to the Hindu, a religious capital, a holy city. The object of the Sikh’s pilgrimage is the Golden Temple, a copper-gilt gazebo in
the centre of a tank. The tank’s sanctity has not kept from stagnation. You can smell it a mile away. It is the dearest wish of every Sikh to see this temple before he dies and to bring a souvenir back from Amritsar. One of the favourite souvenirs is a large multi-coloured poster of a headless man. Blood spurts from the stump of his neck; he wears the uniform of a warrior. In one hand he carries a sword, in the other he holds his dripping head. I asked nine Sikh what this man’s name was. None could tell me, but all knew his story. In one of the Punjab wars he was decapitated. But he was very determined. He picked up his head, and, holding it in his hand so that he could see what he was doing (the eyes of the severed head blaze with resolution), he continued to fight. He did this so that he could get back to Amritsar and have a proper cremation. This story exemplifies the Sikh virtues of piety, ferocity, and strength. But Sikhs are also very kind and friendly, and an enormous number are members of Lions Club International. This is partly a cultural misunderstanding, since all Sikhs bear the surname Singh, which means lion; they feel obliged to join.

Special underpants are required by the Sikh religion, along with uncut hair, a silver bangle, a wooden comb, and an iron dagger. And shoes are prohibited at the Golden Temple, I hopped down the hot marble causeway, doing a kind of fire-walker’s tango, watching these leonine figures stripped to their holy drawers, bathing themselves in the tank and gulping the green water, swallowing grace and dysentery in the same mouthful. The Sikhs are great soldiers and throughout the marble temple enclosure there are marble tablets stating the fact that the Poona Horse regiment and the Bengal Sappers contributed so many thousand rupees. For the rest of the Indians, Gujaratis in particular, Sikhs are yokels, and yokes are told to illustrate the simplicity of the Sikh mind. (Theroux 1975:108-109)

Theroux’s description fits Kirpal Singh. After reading it, it is easier for me to imagine him telling stories to Hana about brave warriors with his long hair spread out in the sun to dry. He is a good soldier, representing all the qualities of his predecessors. He seems to be a sympathetic character who gets on with everybody, always whistling, smiling and laughing. Kip brings life back into the villa. He is indeed an enigma, but different from the patient as Kip lives in the present, not the past. I sometimes feel that he might be hiding behind a mask: always the outsider keeping his distance, easily recognisable despite his uniform and brown skin, turban, strange eating habits and legends of the past. The only time he takes off his mask is after his rebellion and then he reveals himself: both to the reader and to himself, with his long hair in a top-knot, standing at the edge of Europe in his special underpants, his kurta.

Kip does not only represent his people and his country, but he represents the whole Orient. He is therefore interesting both to me and Hana, but I feel that Hana stands between us. In my opinion her fantasy or construction of Kip’s character is
given far too much space. I do not think it is a coincidence that Hana is Canadian. I feel that parts of her might represent the second half of Ondaatje himself, as well as the west. After all, he has spent all his grown-up life in Canada. Or, is it Kirpal Singh himself who is closest to Ondaatje as I suggested before? Kip also represents the British, as he is coloured by the British presence in India and his training in England. In my opinion he is merely a result of circumstances, a product of his context. He is not an exception; he is just a colonial result, just like Ondaatje himself. Kirpal Singh’s violent reaction clearly points in the direction of India’s coming independence in 1947. The author provides no alternative. However, Ondaatje has placed Kip safely back in a postcolonial India in the last pages of his novel. I would like to come back to this enigmatic ending of Kip’s story which is set in another space and time in my postcolonial discussion of his identity, but before doing that I feel that a discussion of Ondaatje’s symbolism is necessary.

3.5 Symbolism

On the micro level this novel could be looked upon as an exploration of love as it describes the relationship of Hana and Kip and the violent love-affair between Katharine Clifton and Almásy. On the macro level Ondaatje’s narration explores the relationship between four characters, representing different identities in a global community, and it hints a failure of it as Kip departs. The coloniser and the colonised cannot communicate, cannot be friends – not yet, just like in Forster’s *A Passage to India*. This can be seen as a total failure of the Western civilisation, but in my opinion there is a hint of reconciliation at the end, which provides an explanation for Kip’s behaviour. He cannot renounce his own history as it is part of himself and therefore he must forgive.
The title *The English Patient* – the microcosmos of Ondaatje’s work – has many layers. Ondaatje uses irony by suggesting that “the English” need treatment and are represented by an aubergine coloured man burned beyond recognition. And he is not even English, but a Hungarian count who betrayed the English by giving maps of the North African desert to the Germans. The irony becomes threefold when Kip, who is the real representative of the English, turns against this shell of a man and accuses him of bombing his continent. The patient, for whom it is easy “to slip across borders, not to belong to anyone, to any nation” and who wants to “erase nations” (139) is to take the blame for colonising the whole British Empire. The dying patient is no longer in a position of power as it is Kip who has a gun in his hand. It is in fact Kip who is still in uniform, who is a much better representative of the Empire he accuses the patient of representing.

Both Hana and Kip use their uniforms to hide behind. They have found their identities as representatives of the allies, the western civilisation. Both choose to remove their uniforms, thus renouncing what they represent. And they both eventually find themselves. Hana cannot look at herself in mirrors and she has cut all her hair off when she decided to step out of her uniform. In the last pages of the novel Kip sees her with long hair, indicating that she has found herself. Kip has also got long hair, being a Sikh. Hana is fascinated by it. To her this is an attribute of an Oriental. To Kip it is part of himself that he lets out when he finally decides to be Indian. The bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki make him do it. These are bombs, too big for him to disarm. All that he believed in is blown up and he has no alternative but to take off his uniform and tie his hair in a simple topknot.

Ondaatje uses the landscape as a bridge between the west and the east. His novel opens in one garden and ends in another. The garden can also be found inside
the villa. It never really ends. Like the overarching sky in Forster’s *A Passage to India* the gardens tie the people together. The narrator also characterises the ancient and borderless desert in a similar way:

> The desert could not be claimed or owned – it was a piece of cloth carried by winds, never held down by stones, and given a hundred shifting names long before Canterbury existed, long before battles and treaties quilted Europe and the east. Its caravans, those strange rambling feasts and cultures, left nothing behind, not an ember…It was a place of faith. We disappeared into the landscape. Fire and sand. (138-139)

The stories of the English patient take place in the desert. They are a mixture of fact and fiction. Ondaatje is a writer of fiction but at the same time interested in reality. His characters share his great respect for history and interest in geography. The intertextual references to non-fiction and the use of historical sources, like Herodotus, give the same impression. Reading becomes a process of healing, a copying strategy that leads to more knowledge about yourself. Schimanski calls this “a way to negotiate with identity” (2001:135), and I agree. But I do not think that reading has the same effect on all of them. Hilde Stuve Kjellsmoen claims that all four characters in the villa are:

> preoccupied with words and their meaning. Literature is the most important thing that bonds them…and although it realigns them with the outside world to some extent, it also closes them off from that world and makes their monastery in Tuscany a place of retreat and healing. (1999:37)

I partly agree with Stuve Kjellsmoen. The caring nurse Hana is in desperate need of treatment herself. I believe she builds up her identity by reading. It works as healing, making her slowly recover and eventually become a whole person, fit to face the reality outside the cracked walls of the villa. Fit enough to face her father’s death. Strong enough to look at herself in a mirror again: “A novel is a mirror walking down a road. She had read that in one of the books the English patient recommended” (91). A novel mirrors life and by reading she will learn how to cope with it.

But I cannot agree with Stuve Kjellsmoen when it comes to Kip’s reading. In
my opinion he does not read with the same object as Hana. He reads to gain more knowledge about disarming bombs. He is just a British soldier – a sapper who is happy with his Englishness – when he enters the Italian villa full of books. He has already “turned away from mystery books with irritation, able to pinpoint villains with much ease…He did not yet have any faith in books” (111). “Not yet” here indicates that the narrator wants Kip to learn to read again. The narrator here assumes Hana’s perspective. She watches Kip discuss classics like Kipling’s *Kim* with the English patient. As reading seems to heal her, Hana assumes that it will do the same trick for Kip. However, seen through my glasses, reading is not the medicine for Kip, in fact. He does not use reading as a copying strategy as Stuve Kjellsmoen suggests. Seeing things from Kip’s perspective, it is evident that his long “negotiation of identity” ends with the atom bombs. This is the point of no return for him. For Kip there is only one thing to do: “turn his back on Europe. The deal makers. The contract makers. The map drawers” (284).

The English patient’s “commonplace book” (cf. Schimanski 2001) also ties up in with the theme of identity. By bringing different times into it he makes his own history, thus recreating his own past and erasing all borders. Almásy’s book, full of gaps that need to be filled in, becomes a symbol of Ondaaje’s novel. Anything can be glued into it, depending on from which perspective you look. And I think that this is part of Ondaatje’s message. Before discussing the primary texts in a postcolonial context I feel that a brief look at their adaptations to the screen is necessary. This will be done from a postcolonial perspective.
4. A Short Comment on the Narrative in the Adapted Versions Seen in a Postcolonial Light

I have decided to include a short discussion of the adaptations of these two novels in this thesis as I believe that many of today’s readers actually start off as viewers. Seeing the film has become the short cut to reading the original. And we must not forget the pedagogical importance of using film when teaching literature in today’s fast media world. The main focus of my brief analysis of the films will be on the nature on the narrative communication, or to be exact: I want to find out from which perspectives the directors choose to tell their stories. Here, again, I would like to remind the reader that this is my subjective interpretation of the films, which will be approached in a postcolonial discourse focusing on how the native protagonists are presented and in which context the viewer meets them.

4.1 A Passage to India

An adapted TV-film of *A Passage to India* came in 1965, but it did not appear on the big screen until in 1984. This was to be the last film directed by the English Sir David Lean (1908-1991). After presenting great films like *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957), *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962) and *Doctor Zhivago* (1965) his audience must have expected something spectacular from the, by then, seventy-five-year-old director. His film was well received, even though it did not include any overwhelming spectacular Indian landscape scenes of the same format as in his previous films. *A Passage to India* was to be followed the same year by another TV-film called *The Jewel in the Crown*, starring three of the same actors: Peggy Ashcroft, Art Malik and Saeed Jaffrey as in Lean’s film. The TV-series was a success and marked the start of the career of Art Malik, who became a “new Aziz” to a much wider audience.
The opening scene of Lean’s adapted version of *A Passage to India* shows a young English woman played by Judy Davis, buying a ticket for India in a rainy England. Lean has made a choice already from the first scene by setting it in England, not as Forster’s novel opening *in medias res* in India. The woman admires a poster of the Marabar Caves, but the viewer is introduced to her first, not to the caves as in the novel. We are, in other words, presented with a perspective close to Adela’s and we can speak of what Lars Thomas Braaten calls a “subjective camera” (1997:34) here, presenting the events from her point of view, already from the opening scene. The film’s narrating I is inviting the viewer to adopt the perspective of the narrated I. This is what Braaten means by “subjective camera positioning” (ibid.). Seen in a postcolonial light it is evident that Lean aims for a western audience. This is clearly Adela’s story and her experience of the “real India”. She is not capable of realising that it is actually herself – being an English woman – that keeps her from experiencing it. We could say that she is limited by her “horizon of understanding” (cf. Gadamer 1975). It blindfolds her.

We get to follow Adela and her future mother in law, played by Peggy Ashcroft, on their passage to India; first by ship and then by train. They both give an impression of being confused and helpless women, not knowing how to behave in their Empire. Lean does not introduce any major Indian character until the English women have reached their destination. He does not introduce the landscape of India either as most shots depict what is going on inside the train. We are never to look through the carriage window, expect at the platform. And then only to meet hundreds of brown faces. As the Viceroy happens to be on the same train the women are also given a royal welcome by the waiting masses. The viewer is thus given an impression of the colours, sounds and movements of the natives before he or she is introduced to
an individual native character. My impression is that Lean wants to simplify his adaptation by emphasizing the white and black stereotypes even more than Forster. While Forster introduces India and then Aziz as his first character, Lean has already set his story in an English context. Lean’s plot thus becomes rather predictable in a postcolonial context as the first words uttered by dusty and nearly run over Aziz are “[A]nd they all become exactly the same”. He and his lawyer friend Mahmut Ali, played by Art Malik, watch the cars of the English drive off in the dust. Then, at last, the viewer is presented with a conversation between Aziz and his Moslem friends identical to the second chapter of the novel. Dudley Andrew calls this way of adapting intersecting: “the uniqueness of the original text is preserved to such an extent that it is intentionally left unassimilated in adaptation” (Andrew 1992:422).

I, however, question whether Lean’s adaptation gives credit to Forster’s novel. Has the “uniqueness of the original text” really been preserved? Forster’s narrator shifts perspectives. Lean’s camera lens does not. I feel that Lean has already created a distance, impossible to overcome, from his native main character by first introducing Adela and then waiting this long, both in time and place, before introducing Aziz. He cannot but be interpreted as the mimic Indian. This is confirmed by Aziz’s ridiculous behaviour and way of speaking. I am not at all convinced by Victor Banerjee’s portrayal of him. I am, in fact, more impressed by Alec Guinness presentation of Godbole.

The scene in the mosque also adds to my poor impression of Aziz, as he is ridiculed by a whimsy Mrs Moore. Lean’s characterisation of Mrs Moore does not help either as she, seen through my glasses, shows very few signs of being an “Oriental”. Even though she steps out of the shadow, closer to Aziz, and they watch the moon together and we get glimpses of crocodiles in the Ganges accompanied by
“God save the Queen” I am not convinced by Lean’s interpretation of Mrs Moore. I am disappointed and left without the warm impression of their friendship, given in the novel. In spite of Professor Godbole’s recognition of her being “an old soul” Mrs Moore starts to fade away already from the beginning and becomes no more than a nagging mother and minor character in my eyes. I cannot understand, nor appreciate Peggy Ashcroft’s award-winning interpretation of her.

Suspense and progress are key terms in film-making. The viewer needs to be fed with information and preferably be kept in suspense. Lean builds his suspense on the expedition to the Marabar Caves and therefore most time is devoted to it. This is the climax and the point of no return in the spirit of a typical Hollywood film. Lean has here chosen to interpret what takes place in the darkness. The camera lens follows Adela into the cave, watches her strike a match and experience a huge shadow of Aziz in the opening of the cave. The camera is then situated in the cave, with Adela, looking out towards the giant image of Aziz. We thus share her frightening experience and we can hear the echo started by Aziz shouting “Miss Quested”. The “boum” is not just in the heads of Mrs Moore and Adela. The voice of “the Other” also echoes in the head of the viewer. Said explains how the Orientalist author “makes the Orient speak, describes the Orient, renders its mysteries plain for and to the West” (Said 1978:20-21). In this case I believe that it is the director’s interpretation that makes the Orient echo by presenting it the way he does: through the eyes of a panicking, English, defenceless inexperienced young woman, hiding behind her innocence.

Aziz’s imprisonment and the trial are no major events in Lean’s film. Nor is the reinstatement of Aziz’s innocence. After two hours and ten minutes the director focuses on ending his film. There is no second climax, no colliding of boats as in Forster’s “Temple”. Fielding and Stella, who never says a word, come to see Dr Aziz
who has “become Indian at last”. There is no bittersweet reconciliation. Instead Lean chooses to end his film in England with Adela reading a letter from Aziz, in which he asks her to forgive him. Thus, again, confirming that this was her story, her experience of the “real India” she was prevented to see by the director. While the Indian doctor is the last character we part with in Forster’s novel we part with a mature Adela watching the rain pouring down outside her window, in Lean’s version.

In short, I did not like David Lean’s adaptation very much. In fact, I was rather annoyed by the characterisation of Aziz and the weak whimsy impression given by Mrs Moore. There were many impressive scenes, especially of the masses of India, but I feel that the film did not capture “the muddle and mystery” of her. It served what one would expect from the medium of film, giving a description of India’s peoples and scenery on the surface, but not on any spiritual level. Not even Mrs Moore’s observations. The Indian spirit was only represented by moving curtains in the wind, a few glimpses of the Indian sky full of stars or opening with the monsoon rain bucketing down after the clearance of Aziz. His awakening in the “real India” is yet to be filmed.

5.2 The English Patient

The novel The English Patient consists of many stories within the frame story. The reader has to fill in the gaps represented by the English patient’s fragments in the process of reading. In order to understand the present you must understand the past. It must be a real challenge to a film director deciding how to show the flashbacks of Ondaatje’s characters on the screen. Anthony Minghella had to make the same choice as David Lean before presenting his award winning film in 1996: the choice of perspective. He also had to decide how to solve the problem of narrating. Ondaatje’s
use of a polyphonic narrator, constantly shifting perspective, is very difficult to recreate with a camera lens. As the author himself puts it: “[I]n a book, you can suddenly leap to another world and bring that world into the room” (Kamiya 1996). As Minghella, apart from many other film directors, actually adapted a contemporary novel he had the opportunity of working with the author. They met, rewrote the novel and in three years the screenplay was ready. The result was a beautiful visually rich film that pleased both of them. The experienced director used the cinematic language of colours, light and sound to compensate for Ondaatje’s poetic language. Dudley Andrew speaks of *borrowing* as “the most frequent mode of adaptation. Here the artist employs, more or less extensively, the material, idea, or form of an earlier, generally successful text” (Andrew 1992:422). In this case the director and the author had the advantage of actually being able to rewrite the novel together, so we could perhaps speak of an adaptation based on a combination of *borrowing* and *intersecting* (ibid.). Nevertheless, it became an award winning film, so popular that it inspired many of its audience to read the book. Among them was the writer of this thesis.

The cover of my paper back copy of Ondaatje’s novel depicts Ralph Fiennes as Almásy standing with the golden dunes of the desert in the background. Minghella has chosen to show us both the man before and the faceless patient after the accident. The patient is thus given both a face and a body. He becomes a real, whole character. We meet him already in the opening scene, sitting in his airplane flying over the golden desert. Before that the very first thing we see is a paintbrush, using the whole screen as a canvas. The brush paints black figures on the canvas, little swimmers. This is accompanied by a woman’s voice singing in Hungarian: “Szerelem, szerelem”. Then follows a moment of silence and we are presented with sand dunes shaped like a woman. We can hear the sound of an airplane, realising that we are able to watch the
desert from above. We follow the shadow of the plane, with two people in it, flying
over an endless desert. It is a beautiful breathtaking scene, which reminds us of how
small we human beings really are.

According to Hilde Stuve Kjellsomoen this is an opening scene full of
ambiguity. She is disturbed by it and feels neither familiar with the primitive way of
painting nor the song, sung in a foreign language with “tones strangely put together”
(1999:97). My reaction to this opening scene was the opposite. It reminded me of my
Sami context. I felt at home as the little swimmers on the screen reminded me of our
rock carvings of hunters up in the north and the song sounded almost like joik in my
ears, only joiked in another Finno-Ugric language. The sand dunes reminded me of
the snowy, round tops of the mountains in Sarek and the perspective seemed ever so
familiar. I felt at home and was not disturbed at all. On the contrary, this opening
scene of the film intrigued me and made me adjust both my own spectacles, and my
cultural glasses to see better.

We meet Hana on a train just after the opening scene and the camera follows
her to through minefields where her best friend is killed and then all the way to the
villa. The events that take place in the present are shown from a perspective closest to
her. Thus the frame story set in the villa becomes Hana’s story as the subjective
camera only reveals her reaction to the events in the Italian landscape.

Minghella chooses to show us two stories: one that takes place in the past and
one that goes on in the present. The two stories have a narrator each: the English
patient in the past and his nurse in the present. Mighella’s camera uses different
angles when narrating Almásy’s stories. It becomes an all-seeing narrator in the desert
scenes. Katharine Clifton is introduced to us at the same time as Almásy, thus
showing a perspective closest to him. Their love story is much more focused in the
film, as Katharine is not mentioned before chapter five in Ondaatje’s novel. Their affair in the past, filled with passion and pain, becomes a parallel to the relationship of Hana and Kip that takes place in the present. Hana’s fascination for Kip’s collarbone is transferred to Almásy, who becomes obsessed by the same area of Katharine’s body. He, who hates “ownership” (Ondaatje 1992:152), claims it as his. The adaptation becomes the epic of love and war, so praised by the film critics.

Seen in a postcolonial context, Kip’s struggle to secure an identity is hardly depicted at all. The viewer is not allowed to follow his development and his rebellion is barely visible. His disillusionment seems to come from the loss of Hardy, his fellow sapper, not from any imperialist war. We see Kip and admire his body and long hair through Hana’s eyes, and we hear him reading Kipling to the English patient, but we are never to enter his mind. In my opinion Minghella has not just “borrowed”, but made a completely new narrative from Ondaatje’s story. With his approval, yes, but this is definitely not Kip’s story. When Kip – not Hana as in the novel – is taught by the English patient how to read Kipling’s *Kim* he brings up a colonial subject:

'It is still there, the canon, outside the museum. It was made of metal cups and balls taken from every household of the city as tax, then melted down. And later they fired the canon at my people, comma, the natives, full stop.’

The Patient: ‘What exactly is it that you object to? The writer or what he is writing about?’

Kip, good-humoured: 'What I object to, really, is that you’re finishing all my condensed milk'. Then more seriously: 'And the message everywhere in your book, however slowly I read it, is that the best thing for India is to be ruled by the British’ (Stuve Kjellsmoen 1999:130).

Minghella decides not to pursue this invitation to what could have been a colonial discussion. He waves Kip’s initiative off with a joke. Literature is not used as a teacher, healer or developer to the same extent as in Ondaatje’s novel. This is, in fact, the closest we get to a postcolonial context in Minghella’s film. Kip keeps his uniform on all the time and when he finally drives off, he is not in a rage, he just simply moves on to a new mission in Venice. Maybe Minghella and Ondaatje thought
that an outsider’s individual awakening would not capture the attention of a wide audience, as love and passion are the selling arguments of Hollywood. The importance of history is also put in the shadow of Katharine’s love, when she is left alone in the cave of Swimmers with only Herodotus to write in. The “common place book” is turned into a diary and we see Katharine dramatically scribbling away in the darkness in real Hollywood spirit.

Kip never wakes up and is left to his own destiny. The film ends with Hana confirming, once again, that this was her story. There is however a child in the closing scene, comparable to Kip’s daughter, a scene very much appreciated by Ondaatje himself:

I end up with someone dropping a fork in Canada and somebody catching a fork in India. But I thought the stroke of genius in the film was that little girl in the back of the truck, this kid watching. Everything that Hana has been is passed to that little kid, and when she’s 20 years old, she’s going to remember that ride in the truck and that woman who got on the truck with her. I thought that was such a wonder, it was so brief, but that was the open door to the continuation of some kind of future. How do you do that in a book? God knows. You can’t get to that doorway. That’s an example of how film can do some stuff that books can’t. (Kamiya 1996)

I personally enjoyed the whole film, not just the opening. It was beautiful, full of colours and emotions touching me in the same way as poetry. I remember seeing it for the first time when it appeared in 1996. I remember being fascinated by the Bedouins, recognising something of my own people in them. I was impressed by Ralph Fiennes’ interpretation of Almásy and Kristin Scott Thomas’ characterisation of Katharine. They were brilliant. I never thought of identifying with Kip, though. At least, not until I read the book. Then I was not that impressed by Minghella’s adaptation anymore. Today I look at it differently. I like Minghella’s interpretation of The English Patient. I can now watch his film through my Sami and postcolonial glasses and still appreciate it for what it is. It is Mingella’s product, his interpretation of Ondaatje’s novel. I have learned not to expect an exact copy of the original written
version as the difference between the media of literature and film makes a direct comparison impossible. However, the experience of a film can be equally valuable to a literary experience as long as they both are looked upon as separate experiences of different products. Kip is still asleep and his story has yet to be filmed, and while I am waiting for it I will once more turn to the first page of Ondaatje’s novel.
5. The Significance of Cultural Identity in the Light of Postcolonial Theory

The search for identity plays a vital role to the characters of Aziz and Kip. Even though they are treated differently by their narrators, they have a lot in common. While their characters develop, their identities are transformed or changed. I believe the question of identity is a central theme in both novels and I will therefore make an attempt to describe their process of becoming in this chapter. Their rebirth will be analysed with the help of postcolonial theory. As I see many parallels to my Sami world I feel it relevant to add my personal comments to this context and thus complement the postcolonial approach with my own thoughts and experience.

5.1 Being

The question is whether we can speak about a complete rebirth. Are both Aziz and Kip really fully transformed or do they keep any traits throughout their process of becoming? After their awakening they both turn their backs on the English. Their violent reactions show clear signs of a need to go back to their roots, to their history. This need of the native to praise his history, as Aziz does when he talks to Mrs Moore about his ancestor Emperor Babur, can be found in a lot of native writing. A proud Kip tells Hana of warrior saints, but also of his older brother who broke their family tradition of joining the British army, defied the English and was therefore put into the Lahore Central prison. Frantz Fanon speaks of a second phase, where “we find the native is disturbed; he decides to remember what he is” (Fanon 1993:40), in his description of an inevitable process that native writers go through. According to my experience, this is a good way to describe the different stages most representatives of peoples who have been colonised, and not only writers by the way, go through in their quest of identity. I have gone through similar phases and I do not think that I am alone.
among my people in having such an experience. I also think that we have to become
more aware of this process of becoming in today’s multicultural society, consisting of
second and third generation citizens from former colonies who are trying to find their
identities and live their lives in both worlds.

Kip is still serving his Empire, hiding behind a uniform. In spite of his brown
skin and his turban he is assimilating, being in Fanon’s phase one. His uniform could
be seen as a “proof that he has assimilated” (1993:40). I look upon Kip’s behaviour as
his way of coming to terms with the atrocities World War II presented. This is his
copying strategy that works until he comes across a bomb he cannot disarm. Kip
needs this giant bomb to wake up and “realise what he is” (ibid.), thus entering the
second phase. After assimilating for practically all his life he realises that he has to go
back to his roots, like his brother, in order to become Kirpal Singh. He also has to
wake up in order to awaken his own people and enter Fanon’s third “fighting phase”
(Fanon 1993:41). Is Kip’s reaction really similar to Aziz’s, then? They both accuse
the English of ruling their country, but Kip accuses the English patient for bombing
his continent with a rifle in his hands, dressed in a British uniform. This is in a way a
reversed situation as the English patient really has no identity or is in a position of
power. Who is accusing whom here? Who is supposed to wake up? Clearly Kip,
himself. Aziz’s decision to renounce the English is more complete and therefore
easier for the reader to grasp. On the other hand we can see Kip’s behaviour as more
challenging to the reader.

Who else is supposed to be awakened then, or in other words, for whom were
these novels written? Forster tells his story in English. English has become a lingua
franca, building cross-cultural bridges in our postcolonial world. *A Passage to India*
is most likely aimed at a western reader as the author himself is a westerner and thus
part of his context. I think Forster wants his western reader to understand that there are cultural misunderstandings on both sides in this muddle. By using stereotypes he tries to simplify. I, however, question this simplification. It becomes too evident and Aziz turns into some kind of caricature, as seen through my eyes.

Ondaatje also writes in English, but who is supposed to read his contemporary novel? An English speaker, obviously, but I feel that Ondaatje might be aiming at a native reader; perhaps someone like himself, a person who lives in both worlds. A western educated Oriental. On the other hand, this could also be Ondaatje’s way of trying to educate a western reader. By letting a westerner have a glimpse of Kip’s perspective Ondaatje hopes to educate him or her in the same way Hana was educated. By jumping back and forth in time and constantly changing perspective the reader really has to concentrate on his or her reading and is thus educated. I do not mind being taught and I do not mind struggling a bit, but I would have liked to have more than a glimpse of Kip’s perspective, though. I would have liked to be able to read his thoughts and feel his feelings. I would have liked to come closer.

I cannot help wondering whether Forster and Ondaatje are expecting too much of their readers. Is it really possible for one individual to represent a whole country or, in this case an area as big as the Orient. How much knowledge about their India do we expect Aziz and Kip to have in order to be good representatives? I turn to the American travel writer Paul Theroux again for some information. Theroux meets an Indian professor, from the Rajastan University, on his way through India fifty years after Forster’s passage. The professor shares the following thoughts on the average Indian’s knowledge of his country with him:

The average Indian knows very little about his religion, or India, or anything else. Some are ignorant of the most simple things, such as Hindu concepts or history. I agree with Naipul one hundred per cent. They don’t like to appear ignorant before a Westerner, but most Indians don’t know more about their temples and writing and what-not than the tourists – many know a lot less. (Theroux 1975:148)
This helps to explain Aziz’s behaviour. I can also easily draw parallels to my own culture here. The visitor to Sapmi expects an overall knowledge of reindeer herding in all Samis, especially if you happen to wear your costume. If we apply the same line of thought to Kip’s behaviour it seems as if the narrator has decided to tell his reader as little as possible about Kip’s origin, as long as he keeps his British uniform on. We are only invited to share Hana’s thoughts about her Asian lover.

5.2 Becoming

Why does the colonised question his identity and why does he have to go through different stages in order to “become”? Is it because he wants to show it to representatives of the same culture or could there also be a need to explain himself to himself? What is cultural identity, and why does it seem to be so important to the colonised? In order to answer these questions we first need to define the concept of culture. I like Asle Høgmo’s definition of culture as a pair of glasses that you “experience, understand and relate to society through” (1986:11, my translation). The next step will be to define identity. The Jamaican Stuart Hall, encourages us to think of:

identity as a ‘production’, which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation...We all write and speak from a particular place and time, from a history and culture which is specific. What we say is always in ‘context’, positioned. (Hall 1996:110)

Hall’s definition helps to explain this inevitable process of becoming. Aziz and Kip both act within their contexts. Their identities are under production, formed by their narratives. The narrator decides which glasses the reader should look through and both he and his reader are, in their turn, results of their context.

It is also important to look at the wider context: namely when Forster’s novel
was published, two decades before India gained independence. It reflects India’s
diversity of cultures and the impact of the British presence. I can hear Forster
speaking for an independent India in his writing. I can also hear Ondaatje joining
Kirpal Singh in his accusation of the English and I can understand why Singh has to
be literary cleansed from his Englishness. Even a contemporary writer is entitled to
make historical comments. Ondaatje has the advantage of being able to go further
than Forster was able to. He has decided to set the last pages of his novel in a
postcolonial India where Dr Singh is safely back among his fellow countrymen.
Kirpal looks back at his past and remembers his days with Hana during the war, but
he also imagines a Hana of today. In fact, he is able to watch her across the continents
keeping them apart. This indicates that there is a future for both of them and there is a
future after them, where Kirpal’s daughter belongs. Kip has finally learned, he has
“become” what he is and was from the beginning: Kirpal Singh. Hana’s observation
of him not appreciating books or not learning from reading, “not yet”, was true. Now
the moment of truth has finally arrived, as the elderly Dr Singh realises that it is all
about being what you are, here and now. We can, in other words, speak of a
contemporary identity of Kirpal Singh, much thanks to Hana.

In my view, defining cultural identity it is not just a matter of looking back at
history. We cannot decide what is typically Sami today simply by basing our
evaluation on tradition and fixed criteria. Being Sami is also being here and now, and
perhaps it is also a matter of becoming. I totally agree with Hall when he describes
cultural identity as belonging “to the future as much as to the past” (Hall 1996:112).
We must be able to find our contemporary identities.

The Indian scholar Homi Bhabha tries to locate culture in colonial discourse
by focusing on the impact of creating stereotypes. He addresses the problem of
“seeing/being seen” (Bhabha 1994:76). The visibility of the colonial Other becomes “a point of identity” (Bhabha 1994:81). Bhabha agrees with Fanon who despairingly sighs, “wherever he goes the Negro remains a Negro” (Bhabha 1994:75). The skin colour becomes “a signifier of discrimination” (Bhabha 1994:79) A colonial fantasy is created by the coloniser and a new identity is thus constructed, or in other words a stereotype. This influences the object of this colonial fantasy and illustrates “the impossible desire for a pure, undifferentiated origin” (Bhabha 1994:81). Such a colonial fantasy was created by Adela in the darkness of the Marabar caves or by Hana, who imagined all of Asia to be in Kip. They both created a stereotype and expected him to behave in a certain way. This is why Aziz had to go to prison and why Hana cannot understand Kip’s reaction. The communication between the western women and their colonial fantasies is broken.

According to Brenda R. Silver, this colonial fantasy affects Adela to such an extent that she is asking, or in fact “wants to be raped” (Childs 1999:364). Silver bases her statement on Fanon who claims “[W]hoever says rape says Negro” (Childs 1999:368), when describing “negrophobia on the part of both white men and white women as fear of rape” (ibid.). The Indian stereotype in Adela’s mind thus simply acts in the way he is expected too in her colonial fantasy. I, however, question this stereotype-way of thinking. It presents an either black or white world where the individual has nothing to say.

“What happened in the caves?” Bhabha asks too (1994:126). Something that Adela herself defined as Anglo-Indian difficulty, he answers. She experiences cultural difference in the nonsense of the Marabar Caves. A hysteric Adela covered in cactus spines, remembers nothing but the echo. It is the echo-chamber of her memory, Bhabha explains. Adela’s mind is full of muddled thoughts of marriage and Aziz:
“What a handsome little Oriental he is” (163) and this is simply an echo started by Adela herself:

I remember scratching the wall with my fingernail to start the usual echo, and then …there was this shadow, or sort of a shadow, down the entrance tunnel, bottling me up…It all seems such a nonsense. (199)

Bhabha explains further:

It lies in the staging of the colonial signifier in the narrative uncertainty of culture’s in-between: between sign and signifier, neither one nor the other, neither sexuality nor race, neither, simply, memory nor desire. (Bhabha 1994:127)

He then concludes:

It is in this sense that the culturally inassimilable words or scenes of nonsense…suture the colonial text in a hybrid time and truth that survives and subverts the generalizations of literature and history. (Bhabha 1994:128)

I agree with Bhabha. Nothing happened in the cave but something happened in Adela’s head that was started by no one but herself, triggered by this cultural difference. This is confirmed by Forster himself, who wrote in a letter to William Plomer, ten years after the publication of A Passage to India: “I tried to show that India is an unexplainable muddle by introducing an unexplained muddle – Miss Quested’s experience in the cave. When asked what happened there, I don’t know” (Gillie1983:147).

Another cultural difference or colonial fantasy is the never failing expectation of the Lappland-visitor of seeing colourful Sami and their reindeer. This is a colonial fantasy that we have adapted by judging other activities as non-Sami or not Sami enough and presenting the old traditions as contemporary. The opening of the Olympic Games in Lillehammer comes to mind here. I remember all those millions of viewers who were served with stereotypes. The media certainly play an important role in preserving these stereotypes. A newly produced documentary on Sami life, showing reindeer herders on the white plains of Guovdageaidnu, confirms this. This production by Norwegian TV2 was shown in the spring of 2004, ten years after the
Sami presentation in Lillehammer.

Back to the colonial fantasy in the Orient that Edward Said labelled “Orientalism”. He defines it as something constructed by the west. The creation of the Orient as the “Other” is according to him necessary, so that the “Occident”, meaning Europe, can define itself (Said 1978:1). Orientalism exists first in the minds of the Westerners and then eventually also in the minds of the people of the Orient. This is achieved partly by creating academic and popular Oriental texts. These are texts that present an Orient “more real” than the Oriental reality itself.

Said talks about “the worldliness” of these texts, that is to say that the writers of these texts were not always conscious of “the way in which the empire was represented in them”(Ashcroft and Ahluwalia 1998:8).

Worldliness is therefore the restoration to such works and interpretations of their place in the global setting, a restoration that can only be accomplished by an appreciation not of some tiny, defensively constituted corner of the world, but of the large, many-windows house of human culture as a whole. (Said 2002:382)

The Oriental texts thus “demonstrate that there is no empire without its culture” (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia 1998:8). Said tries to show how the Orientalist author “makes the Orient speak, describes the Orient, renders its mysteries plain for and to the West” (Said 1978:20-21). Authors like E. M. Forster was then, according to Said, “very much in the history of their societies, shaping and shaped by that history and their social experience in different measure” Said 1993:xxiv). Said is not particularly impressed by the ending of Forster’s novel, when the whole landscape of India separates Aziz and Fielding from friendship.

Forster confirms the history behind, the political conflict between Dr Aziz and Fielding – Britain’s subjugation of India – and yet cannot recommend neither decolonisation nor continued colonization. “No, not yet, not here,” is all Forster can muster by way of resolution. (Said 2002:313)

We are left at the end with a sense of the pathetic distance still separating “us” from an Orient destined to bear its forgiveness as a mark of its permanent estrangement from the West…This style, this compact definition, is what the Orient will always come up against. (Said 1978:244)
I partly agree with Said. I would have preferred a less ambiguous ending. Today, eighty years later, it seems as if Forster did not dare to express his opinion. Instead he chose to fade away, just like Mrs Moore, and left the reader with a pessimistic impression of no solution in sight. But, is it really fair to expect more of him? Forster was also part of his context and maybe hinting was a big enough step at that time. I think Forster had simply reached his “horizon of understanding”.

Said also thinks it is about time to “challenge the fundamentally static notion of identity which has been the core of cultural thought during the era of imperialism” (Said 1993:xxviii). His point here is that:

> no culture exists in isolation…[H]istorically, every society has its Other: The Greeks had the barbarians, the Arabs the Persians, the Hindus the Muslims…But since the nineteenth century consolidated the world system, all cultures and societies today are intermixed. (Said 2002:396)

Applying Said’s thoughts to my context implies a development of our identity. We must be able to go beyond the Sami stereotypes shown at Lillehammer without being accused of renouncing our cultural identity. We have gone much further since the hunger strike outside the Norwegian Parliament and the Alta demonstrations in the early eighties. We are no longer in the phase of rebellion. It is time to show something else; both to ourselves and the postcolonial world around us. I agree with the Sami researcher Vigdis Stordal, who after observing the Sami society of today concludes: “we understand that the question is not either-or” (Gaski 1997: 151). Our contemporary identity is no longer either or; I believe it is in between, as Bhabha puts it. Said speaks of multiple identities, which function as sources of discovery as they enable him to see things from different perspectives. Being in “a lifelong exile” in the USA, always “out of place” or “the outsider” himself, he claims to be able to see things in a larger context:

> I am a Palestinian Arab, and I am also an American. This affords me an odd, not to say, grotesque, double perspective. In addition, I am of course an academic. None of these identities
is watertight; each influences and plays upon the other. (Said 2002:379)

Said opposes a monolithic concept of identity and simply concludes “we are all many selves fixing things today”. I cannot but agree with him. It is also up to us to show our “selves” to the public and encourage the media to show other parts of our culture.

What about Kip’s creator Michael Ondaatje, then: is he a representative of an “Empire that writes back” that Rushdie talks about? Does Ondaatje’s novel present the perspective of the colonised? I have earlier mentioned the ending as being set in a postcolonial world, presenting a character that has passed the stage of rebellion and come to terms with his identity and I have concluded that this is really Kip’s story. The answer to my question must therefore be yes. But there are elements of the character of Kip that can be defined as “oriental”, using Said’s definition of Orientalism. Elements that represent a western perspective and make Kip a typical representative of his continent. He acts the way we expect him to as his actions are narrated from Hana’s and the other westerners’ perspective. Kip is not aware of the way which the Empire is represented in him, or at least he shows very little before he is awakened by the atomic bombs. I sometimes ask myself while reading the first nine chapters, whether Kip’s creator, Ondaatje, is fully aware of how much the Empire is represented in himself as an author? His narrator hints at Kip’s own unawareness by letting the patient comment on it:

Kip and I are both international bastards – born in one place and choosing to live elsewhere. Fighting to get back or to get away from our homelands all our lives. Though Kip doesn’t recognise that yet. That’s why we get on so well together. (177)

Ondaatje’s ending reassures me though, and it makes me feel as if this is not an ending but a beginning. A beginning of another “self” of Kirpal Singh, cleansed from all Englishness.
5.3 Being and Becoming

The identities of Aziz and Kip mature. Circumstances force them to change. Hall and Fanon argue that it is the idea of “the otherness” that affects the colonised. There is always a dominating European presence and this inner conflict between the refusal and recognition with and against présence Européenne affects the identity of the native (Hall 1996:118). These protagonists go through something in order to become, or recognise themselves. Both novels end pointing at a future for these Indian doctors. Stuart Hall speaks of identity both as “being” and “becoming”. He agrees with Fanon that the western European presence will always be a part of the colonised. The stereotypes will always exist, both in the minds of the oppressors and the oppressed.

Both Forster and Ondaatje discuss the Englishness of their native protagonists. This is also the subject for other Indian writers, writing in English: “review and satire in terms of imperialism (as in Gita Mehta’s Raj or Shashi Tharoor’s The Great Indian Novel) or in terms of the aftermath of imperialism (as in Ruth Prawer Jhabvala’s novels or parts of Naipal’s An Area of Darkness)” (Childs 1999:23). Today the “redefinition of Westernised Indian identity” (ibid.) is discussed in eg. Anita Desai’s novels, Upamanyu Charreje’s English, August or Vikram Seth’s A Suitable Boy. Aleid Fokkema critically claims that “Indianness is constructed as a counterpart of Englishness” (Childs 1999:24) and that is actually what has, and is, happening in our postcolonial world as “Indians and Euroamericans have continued to try to find their identities in and against each other” (ibid.). Said points out that not only the Indian character is a constructed one, but also the English themselves become a type, the White man, with a fixed set of judgments, gestures and language:

speaking in a certain way, behaving according to a code of regulations, and even feeling certain things and not other. It meant specific judgments, evaluations, gestures…Being a White man, in short, was a very concrete manner of being-in-the world, a way of taking hold of a reality, language, and thought. It made a specific style possible. (1978:227)
I can easily relate to Said’s observation. We even have special words for a non-Sami woman: rivgu and a non-Sami man: dáza. These words are associated with certain looks and a typical “non-Sami” behaviour. This description of a typical and expected behaviour is what Forster used in creating stereotype characters like Ronny and Aziz. By using irony he made his message clearer. Ondaatje presented his message in another way, but with the same effect. Seen through my glasses it all boils down to finding some sort of balance in order to be able to come to terms with yourself and your history and then “become”. The length of this journey of self-discovery may vary and it is often painful, but inevitable. I am convinced that both Forster’s Aziz and Ondaatje’s Kip have to go through their ordeals in order to come to terms with their identities. There are no shortcuts in this inevitable process and I believe that this is what Forster and Ondaatje are trying to show their readers. And they do it well. It was easy for me to identify with Aziz or Kip as I found many parallels in their struggles to my own. Perhaps the ancient Marabar Caves and Herodotus showed me the way too as I believe we need to look at what has been in order to become. We need a foundation to build on, a foundation based on our history, our roots. But then we need to follow Said’s advice and move on, fill in the gaps, or glue in the events that take place here, now and then. We need to be in order to become, but we also need to look ahead. We need to adjust, to adapt to the circumstances, to our new context. Not until we have completed the process are we able to add another “self” to our “selves”, as Said puts it. But we might not be able to go through all this on our own. We may need some help on the way.

5.4 Fruitful Encounters with the Other

Both Forster and Ondaatje describe relationships between characters from the west
and the east. In Forster’s novel the western characters travel east in order to experience “the real” Orient. Encounters with representatives of the east are therefore necessary and are thus arranged. These encounters then result in something. It serves as education for some, like Mrs Moore, or it is a disappointment for others, like Adela or Aziz. Mrs Moore is in my opinion a good representative of what Syed Manzurul Islam calls a “nomadic traveller”, whereas Adela is not.

According to Islam “nomadic travel” is the only way of travelling that deserves to be called travel as it has “to do with encounters with otherness that fracture both a boundary and an apparatus of representation: it is a performative enactment of becoming-other” (Islam 1996: vii). A nomad’s life has got to do with facing and coping with the unexpected as he is constantly on the move. I think of my grandfather, born in 1898, who followed his reindeer from their winter-grazing in the pine forests of northern Sweden to the summer-grazing area in the fjords, crossing borders and adapting not just to the weather conditions and the landscape but to the people on the Norwegian coast. I look upon my own people as being indigenous survivors who are quite well off in our modern world due to our ability to adapt, not just to the farmers and fishermen in the past, but also to the demands of today’s tourist. It is the permanent condition of being in motion combined with a willingness to go into different worlds that has taught us. This is a copying strategy of adapting, a “learning by doing” approach, now used more and more in Scandinavian schools where it has been labelled project work. Said also uses the image of a nomadic traveller when he approaches the academic world: “the traveler crosses over, traverses territory, and abandons fixed positions, all the time”. He sums up: “To join the academic world is therefore to enter a ceaseless quest for knowledge and freedom” (Said 2002:404).
The English patient tells his nurse about the nomads of the Sahara, who saved him. He expresses respect for their knowledge and he sometimes wishes to be like them, borderless. He is attracted to the desert because of this and could also be described as a nomadic traveller, being a migrant himself. He notes down his observations about winds in his travelogue, his copy of Herodotus (cf. 18). Almásy acts like a traveller who is willing to learn and to adapt, but at the same time he also tries to control this sea of constantly changing sand dunes, thus forgetting what the Bedouins have taught him. He looks upon the Sikh sapper as a British soldier and admires him for his skill of disarming bombs. I think Count Almásy is neither a true nomad nor an Oriental like Mrs Moore. He is more like her son Ronny, but with more finesse. I look upon him as a controller you cannot trust. Hana, who takes part of her patient’s mind-travelling, shows more nomadic signs, as she learns and develops from her patient’s experience of the encounters with the Other.

In short: fruitful encounters help the progress of becoming. Aziz and Kip are both accompanied by white western women. The encounters with these women change them and made them who they are today. They were in other words forced to adapt to the circumstances initiated by the encounters with the Other. Here it is essential to look at the whole context, namely the importance of the setting. There seem to be some kind of uncontrollable borderless space that triggers the characters’ reactions, in addition to them encountering each other. This could be the darkness of a cave that consists of “nothing” or “nonsense”, or the embedding landscape represented by hills, gardens or a desert. The latter also consists of “nothing”. The encounter with this borderless space seems to lead to some kind of development within the characters in both novels.

Ondaatje represents one of the many contemporary writers from countries that
were once British colonies. He is living in exile, which was not voluntary from the
beginning. Said reflects on the state of being in exile as “strangely compelling to think
about but terrible to experience” (Said 2002:173). Far-away from home in a place that
has become his home. I agree that is clear that the European presence will always
influence the identity of the colonised, no matter where he or she lives, but not
necessarily in a negative direction. In both cases the characters’ encounter with the
west led to a development. The nature of this change depends on which perspective
you see things from. It is up to the reader to be aware of which glasses he or she is
wearing, and then it is also up to him or her to grasp the context, being a constructed
exotic Orient or not. I believe that we, as well as Ondaatje’s characters, have to
educate ourselves in order to become critical readers. We have to try to reach beyond
our “horizon of understanding”, or at least, be aware of its existence. We have to
practise to see things through different pairs of glasses, that is from different
perspectives and in that way expand the concept of identity.
6. Conclusion

After having close-read *A Passage to India* and *The English Patient* I think it is necessary to say that narrative communication depends a lot on the narrator and his narrative technique. I have shown how Forster and Ondaatje tell their stories by approaching them with the reader’s reception in mind. I have also explained why Aziz and Kip are treated differently by their narrators by looking at them and their creators in a postcolonial perspective. The significance of identity seems to depend on which perspective the reader is allowed to see things from, and that depends on the nature of the narrative and the context it is set in. In order to elaborate on this I will have to recapitulate the main questions of this thesis: how are the native protagonists of *A Passage to India* and *The English Patient* presented and in which context does the reader meet them?

I started this thesis by claiming that the real reader of a text is controlled by the narrator who uses the “implied reader” to point the real reader in the direction of his interpretation of the text. I also said that context was a key-word for me whenever reading or writing something, as I believe the text itself must be put in a context in order for the reader to receive the writer’s message. As a journalist I think that both Forster and Ondaatje are fully aware of this, but how have they managed to point their readers in the direction they wanted, in other words what tools have they used to control us? I would like to go back to where we started, that is with Genette’s definition of narration, before summarising their narrative techniques:

*Narration* refers to how a text is written and communicated. The process of writing, of which narration is a trace, carries with it a number of narrative devices and combinations, which all contribute to constituting discourse. (Lothe 2000:6)

How are the texts of Forster and Ondaatje written, then, and what kind of narrative devices have their authors used to communicate with me as a reader? I will try to summarise some similarities or differences in their ways of communicating. The
narrative techniques of Forster and Ondaatje are similar as they both use an omniscient narrator who tells from different perspectives. Forster’s narrator constantly shifts perspective, while Ondaatje uses a polyphonic narrator that first approaches the landscape, then the characters. In both narratives it is the narrator who decides what to reveal about the characters by narrating from different perspectives, thus advocating different points of view.

What structural devices do these authors use, then? Forster divides his novel into three sections, corresponding with the Indian seasons and spiritual places. The further we travel into India, the more mystical the country appears and the more the reader has to pay attention. The structure thus keeps the reader awake and at the same time he or she is educated. Ondaatje has a frame-story set in the Tuscany villa which is mostly narrated from Hana’s perspective, but his novel really consists of several stories set in different times and spaces; it is indeed an ultimate exploration of space and time. The stories from the English patient’s past are mixed with fragments of the past of the other characters. The latter also contributes to their fragmentary characterisation. Ondaatje’s use of structure has the same effect on the reader as Forster’s, and here we can actually speak of a parallel development of the characters and the reader. We are educated together as we, as well as Hana, have to learn how to cope with the constant analepsis in the plot.

How can the use of language in these novels best be described? In one word I would say masterly, as it indeed impresses me. As mentioned before I am particularly interested in the conative function (cf. Jakobson) of it as my approach to the texts is reader-orientated. Forster uses “rhythm” to guide his reader through India while Ondaatje uses a condensed poetic language that is coloured with a breathtaking imagery. Irony is used by both of them. Forster characterises the English and the
Indian stereotypes and hereby invites the reader to react to them. By using irony as his strongest weapon he offers the reader an explanation of their behaviour and at the same time manages to stab British colonialism in the back. Ondaatje uses irony in a similar way, naming his novel and count Almásy *The English Patient*. As mentioned before, he has the advantage of knowing the outcome of World War II and the future destiny of India and is therefore able to go further than Forster was able to. He does not just offer an explanation, but a solution as well. Kip’s rebellion becomes ironic as he is actually the best representative of the English, dressed in uniform and in control with a gun in his hand.

I think that both writers use stereotypes of the pre-constructed Oriental and the stereotype English in their characterisation of the main characters in order to get their message across to the western reader more easily. Acting as a stereotype becomes a copying strategy for Forster’s characters as Bhabha points out. It is also a copying strategy for Kip, who is assimilating to survive as an outsider. He builds his identity as a sapper, instead. This is a good copying strategy until the circumstances force him to react. Again, this is historical fact both Ondaatje and his reader are aware of. Kip’s stereotype-like behaviour has to change and the novel becomes his story, not the English patient’s, as it ends in the present pointing at a future.

As we have seen there are many symbols in Forster’s narrative. The search for the “real” India is perhaps the biggest of them. The voice of India echoes in the caves and in the heads of the English ladies. Above them is the Indian sky which embeds all her mystery and muddle. Books are important symbols in Ondaatje’s novel. Literature functions as healer, teacher and developer in it. Reading becomes a copying strategy for his characters and it is also transferred to the reader, thus creating a parallel development of them. The role of history is emphasized by the patient’s copy of
Herodotus, his commonplace book. The patient creates his own history; he adapts it to his own interests by gluing in suitable events. The shrewd count bewitches his nurse with his history in the same way as Ondaatje bewitches his reader with his. Almásy’s book becomes a symbol of the whole novel and that is why some of us might not even recognise it as Kirpal Sing’s story.

Openings and endings are of vital importance in both novels. Forster both opens and ends with India and thus indicates its significance by putting it in front of his characters. Ondaatje uses the landscape as a bridge-builder instead. He opens his frame-story in a garden and ends his novel in another. Hana creates a limited world of books and stories in the past in the villa, because she cannot face reality which consists of the war and her father’s death. In the end her space has grown, it is immense, as there is a connection between her continent and Kip’s, indicating a wholeness of them and the world.

A kind of borderless space, which is difficult to define, seems to work as a trigger for events in both novels. The darkness of the cave becomes a point of no return for Aziz and Adela. It affects Mrs Moore as well. It makes everybody asks themselves: what happened in the cave? This is the key question of the whole novel and has therefore been discussed by its critics. According to Silver, Adela asked to be raped by simply entering the darkness, while Bhabha explains it as colonial fantasy or cultural difference. I agree with the latter.

This leads us to the concepts of culture and cultural identity, which has been the main focus of this thesis. Both Aziz and Kip go through the painful but inevitable process of becoming, described by Fanon’s three phases. They first assimilate, then something happens that makes them ask themselves: who am I? Aziz’s process starts in the cave while Kip’s is triggered by the bombs. This eventually leads to their
transformation or rebirth. The western women – Adela, Mrs Moore and Hana – are also part of their process. They are affected by it as I believe that a development does not only take place in the mind of the colonised. I look upon these encounters with the Other as being necessary and therefore fruitful. They bear fruit both for the colonised and his coloniser. The nature of the European presence can be discussed. Is it good or bad? Does it ever stop? I choose to answer by using Hall’s definition of cultural identity as a process, which is always in context. Our identity is not fixed, it develops throughout our lives and it is affected by the circumstances, the context. I would like to join Said in his challenge of the conception of culture as something static.

How much does our pre-knowledge or horizon of understanding influence us as readers or viewers; what role do our values, our expectations play? Høgmo speaks of cultural glasses that we see and evaluate the world through. I think it is about time to realise that it is possible to possess and use several pairs of glasses. We can speak of multiple identities, or “selves”, as representative of a lot of us. Today’s society consists of a mixture of cultures. Cross-cultural communication is not easy, but it should be treated as an asset which enables us to see things from different perspectives. We cannot speak about our values anymore without defining them first. Ondaatje’s ending becomes a new beginning for Dr Singh and his daughter. He has showed us by adapting to new situations like a nomadic traveller that it is time to reconcile, to leave the stereotypes behind and move on. Progress is inevitable, but this is a progress of awareness I am speaking about.

Plot is according to Peter Brooks “the dynamic shaping force of the narrative discourse” (Brooks 1984:13) as I mentioned in my introduction. Plot also includes “the relationship between the textual form and content and the readers vital role in understanding the narrative” (Lothe 2000:7-8). I have preferred to use the term
**context** as I wanted to examine the context of the narration. How important is the context these stories take place in? The wide context such as the time of publication and the choice of reader seem to be obvious factors determining or shaping the narratives. The importance of the setting and the use of stereotypes in both novels have been mentioned earlier. My main point here is that it is the writer’s choice of narrative technique which helps to form the context and the reader’s choice of approach affects his or her interpretation of the text.

It is time for the Empire to write back, claims Rushdie. Why? I ask myself. Is it just an attempt for authors like Ondaatje to expose the past in a different light? Is this what Ondaatje wants to do? Yes, partly, but I also believe he needs to explain the past to himself as well. It could be a writer’s dilemma to be born in the east but live in the west. A dilemma, just as it was for Aziz when he was expected by the English ladies to know all about his country. Just as it is for my mother’s generation who carry a heavy rucksack of bitterness based on the past. It is difficult to know where you belong and which perspective to choose. Both adaptations underline the significance of the director’s choice of perspective. This affects the whole narrative, which cannot be anything but the director’s interpretation.

But it does not have to be an either-or choice. I feel that Ondaatje wants to bewitch us with his language as I spot an ambition in his narrative to erase the borders between the different literary genres. Forster had the same ambition. I have a feeling he was deeply inspired by G.E. Moore, who supplied Mrs Moore with her spiritual traits. After all, he claimed that his novel was “about the human race’s attempt to find a ‘more-lasting home’: that it was at its core about religion and metaphysics” (Childs 2000:349).

To conclude: yes, the writer can control his reader by skilfully using his tools,
but it is also up to the reader to educate himself as a reader, to reach beyond his horizon of understanding as Gadamer calls it (1975). Novels like Forster’s and Ondaatje’s can help us in our future cross-cultural communication as we learn about others, as well as about ourselves.

Another representative of writers from countries with a colonial past writing in English is the South African writer J. M. Coetzee. When he came to Stockholm in order to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature in December 2003 he gave an extraordinary Nobel lecture, entitled “He and his man”. Instead of delivering a speech Coetzee actually presented another piece of fiction, which included aspects of Robinson Crusoe, Daniel Defoe, Friday and Coetzee himself. According to Lothe the issue of identity is present in all of Coetzee’s writing, being himself bilingual and therefore in possession of a double identity as a speaker of both English and Afrikaans. Coetzee is both a representative of the west and “the Other”. His new story “He and his man” personifies the relationship between the west and “the Other”. It is indeed set in a postcolonial context according to Lothe⁴. I agree with him. It is easy for me to relate to Coetzee’s writing, even though it is a challenge. Through all this intertextuality I can hear a voice trying to explain his identity or his struggle with it:

How are they to be figured, this man and he? As master and slave? As brothers, twin brothers? As comrades in arms? Or as enemies, foes? What name shall he give this nameless fellow with whom he share his evenings, and sometimes his nights too, who is absent only in the daytime, when he, Robin, walks the quays inspecting the new arrivals and his man gallops about the kingdom making inspections? (Coetzee 2003)

If we then go on reading, pursuing this line of thought, I feel that the ending of Coetzee’s story to some extent resembles Forster’s bittersweet ending:

Will this man, in the course of his travels, ever come to Bristol? He yearns to meet the fellow in the flesh, shake his hand, take a stroll with him along the quayside and hearken as he tells of his visit to the dark north of the island, or of his adventures in the writing business. But he fears there will be no meeting, not in this life. If he must settle on a likeness for the pair of them, his man and he, he would write that they are like two ships sailing in contrary directions, one west, the other east. Or better, that they are deckhands toiling the rigging, the

one on a ship sailing west, the other ship sailing east. Their ships pass close, close enough to hail. But the seas are rough, the weather is stormy: their eyes lashed by the spray, their hands burned by the cordage, they pass each other by, too busy even to wave. (ibid.)

The landscape, represented by the wild sea, separates them and they sail away in different directions. “No, not yet…no, not there” (Forster 2000:316). The struggle goes on in Coetzee’s mind. But he is not alone as I believe that we cannot speak of a pure west or east anymore. The jewel of the Empire, so loved and honoured by Churchill, has not gone, but it has moved closer “closer to home in the English countryside” (Childs 1999:21). Our postcolonial world of today is full of migrants like Said “between the self and its true home” (Said 2002:173), that is in exile and constantly on the move. The challenge now, is to be able to find and accept both yourself and others, or rather your “selves and others”. It is time to take off the heavy rucksack and cope without it, as you are.

Aziz and Kip both ask themselves: who am I? They are in a state of confusion and need to wake up, stop and reflect in order to become aware of their identities.

“You can’t get to that doorway”, Ondaatje says. I feel that he has, in fact, got through to his doorway. It is already there, in the hand of Kirpal’s daughter. Perhaps the doorway, or gate, is just in his head, as in “The Gate in His Head”:

My mind is pouring chaos in nets onto the page. A blind lover, don’t know What I love till I write it out. And then from Gibson’s your letter with a blurred photograph of a gull. Caught vision. The stunning white bird An unclear stir.

And that is all this writing should be then. The beautiful formed things caught at the wrong moment so they are shapeless, awkward moving to the clear. (Ondaatje 1973)

Ondaatje has written it out for me, at least. He has showed me the way, just like Mrs Moore did to her dear friend Aziz. By introducing me to Kip and Aziz and letting me getting to know them their creators have taught me to see things from different
perspectives. They have trained me to question the narrator. I have become a more critical reader by learning about their tools. I have become aware of the duality in myself.

Edward Said says that duality is not a negative thing. It can be a source of discovery as you are then able to see things from different perspectives. Said sees the postcolonial world as “moving”. To be on the move like a nomad means adapting without having just one place to long for, but many. “Is it important to have a place?”, Said simply asks. Our late master Aíillohas, Nils Aslak Valkeapää, asks a similar question: “how can I explain that my heart is my home, that it moves with me?” (Valkeapää 1985). I feel that by asking such a question, he is telling me be to be myself, wherever I am and whatever I do. I am aware of the fact that I have my pre-knowledge, or glasses that I see the world through, but I think it is possible to go beyond my horizon of understanding by simply becoming more aware of the thousands of other pairs of glasses people look upon the same world through. My forefathers have shown me how to do it by adapting without forgetting their origin.

Aíillohas did not oppose development. Nor did Edward Said. E. M. Forster did not dare to suggest a solution, but I do feel that he also pointed at a development in the future, which was rather daring considering both time and context. Ondaatje has found his doorway to the future through Singh’s little girl. In my opinion A Passage to India and The English Patient are journeys of discovery both for the characters and the reader. There must be a parallel development of the reader, as it is up to him or her to look beyond the stereotypes and appreciate these texts as journeys of self-discovery.

Aíillohas’ relative Niko Valkeapää is one of the most popular Sami contemporary artists of today and winner of the Norwegian Troubadour, “Spelleman”,
Award of 2004. He says in his lyrics of Stirdon (Paralysed), which circles on most
CD-players in Sapmi at this moment, that there is something out there that attracts us
and affects us, even when we are out on our plains of white snow. I feel that both
Niko and Kirpal Singh’s daughter belong to the future. They are affected not just by
the European influence, but by the world around them wherever they are. Forster’s
“no, not yet” has come and it is here to stay in our postcolonial world and this thesis
therefore ends with my translation of Niko’s song:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stirdon</th>
<th>Paralysed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stuurra</td>
<td>The big</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eappela áigi márkan báikkis</td>
<td>Apple time in the city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geahcan</td>
<td>I watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ruhta</td>
<td>money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boaldin maid neoncuovggaiv vuolde</td>
<td>also burning under the neon lights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goittoge</td>
<td>However</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dat geasuhit</td>
<td>it attracts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dat váikkuhit</td>
<td>it affects</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midjiide</td>
<td>Us</td>
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<td>min eallimii</td>
<td>our lives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gavja</td>
<td>Dust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sáttu</td>
<td>sand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gandahar nissoniid burkkat</td>
<td>the burkas of Gandahar women</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hájat</td>
<td>Smells</td>
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<tr>
<td>biepmut</td>
<td>food</td>
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<td>ivnvit. Gávpejasat vuvdet</td>
<td>colours. The salesmen sell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goittoge</td>
<td>However</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dat geasuhit</td>
<td>it attracts</td>
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<td>dat váikkuhit</td>
<td>it affects</td>
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<td>our lives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cuohccun</td>
<td>I stand</td>
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<tr>
<td>varis</td>
<td>among the mountains</td>
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<tr>
<td>jávrrett, mat selgot beaivváizis</td>
<td>lakes, that glimmer in the sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gárddis</td>
<td>In the reindeer corral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bohcoc cot</td>
<td>reindeer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gevja, mií loktana áibmi</td>
<td>dust, that rises up in the air</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goittoge</td>
<td>However</td>
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<tr>
<td>dat geasuhit</td>
<td>it attracts</td>
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<td>dat váikkuhit</td>
<td>it affects</td>
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<td>Midjiide</td>
<td>Us</td>
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<td>min eallimii</td>
<td>our lives</td>
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Guovdageaidnu: DAT.
