

## CONCLUSION

Studying the conception and perception of India as a “place” has conjured many visions of a “real” India from both the colonizer and the colonized perspective. This stark reality coupled with a real and ever-present colonial power of England at the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century set the stage for an Indian identity crisis. As shown, the perception and construction of “place” for both colonizer and colonized are vastly different. The experience of colonization affects not only those who are colonized but also influenced the colonizers: “These binaries are about the past and the present, about ‘us’ and ‘them’, and each of these things is seen by the various, and usually opposed and separated, parties” (Said, Culture xxiii).

Near the beginning of Forster’s novel when Adela and Ronnie are walking around the college grounds, Adela asks Ronnie to identify a certain bird that she is watching. Before Ronnie can answer, the bird disappears into a tree and therefore he cannot identify it. The narrator offers, “[n]othing in India is identifiable, the mere asking of a question causes it to disappear or to merge in something else” (Forster 91). Whether Adela is asking questions about India, the exact nature of the Marabar Caves or the identity of a green bird, there is no clear-cut answer available. India is an ever-changing place in constant motion. Adela is looking for someone to put India in a box and then dissect it for her. Indian culture cannot be truly understood by a simple journey through a land.

Adela Quested in E.M. Forster’s A Passage to India, attempts to ‘buy’ India. Forster’s fictional characters are attempting to locate and envision what comprises the “real” India. Miss Quested was in search of an authentic India and was lured by her

construction of the exotic “other.” Throughout the novel, there is a constant echoing, “No one is India” (76), “Nothing embraces the whole of India, nothing, nothing” (160), “There is no such person in existence as the general Indian” (296). This echoing of no one is India proves that India as a place is unattainable due to the constant fluidity of change.

The search for the authentic India cannot be found in Forster or anywhere else. One can see that a sense of place, as belonging, is dependent upon self-definition. The difficulties of sustaining an agreed-upon perspective are problematic not only with colonizer and colonized, but are also characteristic of India itself. As the narrator in Forster’s novel echoes, “Nothing in India is identifiable,” substantiates that a sense of place is neither stable nor unconstructed.