

Discovering Cultural Intelligence through Colonial Fiction

Athar Murtuza
Seton Hall University

Abstract

That there exists in literature and its related disciplines resources that can highlight questions pertaining to the common good as well as what has come to be known as cultural intelligence and cultural competence is a truism on par with the opening sentence from Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.

Terms such as cultural intelligence and cultural competence are trending topic, still they are of a relatively recent vintage. But what they represent is not new. Behavior traits that lead to cultural intelligence and competence or a lack of them are, one could argue, as old as how Cain treated Abel. If one is willing see the Golden Rule as a measure of cultural competence, than slavery, segregation, Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia are manifestations of its absence. Certainly European colonialisms, were neither Christ-like nor enlightened, though they appropriated both to maintain exploitative stranglehold on the lives and livelihood of the proverbial others, the "three-fifths" human beings.

The goal of this paper is to suggest that the colonial fiction written by the likes of Rudyard Kipling, E. M. Forster, Joseph Conrad, Leonard Woolf and George Orwell, a relatively under-used resource in business curriculum at present can indeed be of value in teaching about organizational behavior and in particular cultural intelligence. The lack of cultural intelligence, so well documented in colonial fiction, can impede if not prevent the pursuit and attainment of the common good. The colonial empires are history but they can provide worthwhile lessons that can be of great use now. The literary portrayals shown in colonial fiction can have benefits by providing experiential dimension to the pedagogical and conceptual discourse of cultural intelligence.

What my paper would hope to do is to show that Rudyard Kipling's portrayal of St Paul in his work can be a resource for teaching cultural intelligence and discovering a model for *what could have been* institution- building for the Common Good. Sadly, the British Empire got victimized by its race-based apartheid, mostly lacking for the most part in charity and empathy for those it ruled over.