

**SKEPTICISM AND DOUBT: A STUDY OF INTERPERSONAL  
RELATIONSHIPS IN E.M. FORSTER'S *A PASSAGE TO INDIA***

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**ABSTRACT:** *Through a close reading of E.M. Forster's A Passage to India (1924), this paper seeks to expose the various personal relationships depicted in the novel. It also sheds light on the two nations described, the colonizer, represented by the British, and the colonized, represented by the Indians, and their attitudes towards each other. The analytical approach will be adopted throughout the paper. The paper tries to answer a vital question, posed by some Indian characters at the beginning of the narrative: Whether the British and the Indians can be friends. To achieve this end and to answer this question, the main focus will be on the exploration of different relationships developed throughout the text. Some critics have remarked that Forster was over-critical in his portrayal of the Anglo-Indians. Many Englishmen were annoyed and even offended with Forster for writing such a book. But impartial people never take such criticism seriously. A Passage to India is a superbly realistic novel with some unrealistic flashes here and there. The novel reflects the courageous vision of the unembarrassed and unprejudiced observer of the Indian National Scene. Where he deviated from facts and succumbed to exaggerations, the reasons are not to be sought very far. One reason may be that he was carried off his mental balance through an over-dependence on fictitious rumors set afloat by the rulers. Most of the relationships failed miserably because the soil was not fertile for them to flourish. The result of the research concluded that individual human efforts are bound to fail in the face of the inevitable march of events over which human beings have no control. Friendship is only possible among equals, and the British and the Indians were not equal at the time when this novel was written.*

**KEYWORDS:** A Passage to India, British, Forster, Indian, Friendship, Relationship, Colonizer; Colonized

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## **INTRODUCTION**

According to Ghanbarinajjar (2013), "People of minority use literature and art to show the historical evidences, to express their feeling toward the oppressors and at the same time to present their hope and dream for the future" (p. 3). This is what E.M. Forster did in the writing of his major novel *A Passage to India* (1924). Forster can be considered a minority, since he was with the oppressed against their oppressor. It can be assumed that he represents the minority, while the British represent the majority. Based on his own personal experience after visiting India in 1911, and befriending Sayed Masood, an Indian Muslim living in Britain, Forster's novel *A Passage to India* reflects the conflict between the British and the Indian cultures. The novel does not deal with just one single theme, but it has for its basis several themes, blended in such a subtle manner by the author that the readers assimilate them without being conscious of their distinctness or individuality. The book has built itself on the firm foundation of interrelationships of several sorts, necessitating a clash of interests, thanks to differencing social and cultural inheritance and upbringing as well as diversity of status and position in society. In addition to the themes of universal love and separateness, personal

relationships are another major complicated theme the novel explores at depth. In this respect, Ghanbarinajjar's (2013) point of view might be worth mentioning here, according to him, "The notion of discrimination and Othering acted upon people with different religious belief or race is as old as the human race itself" (p. 1).

The personal relationship issues centers round the knotty problem of Indians and Englishmen becoming friends. Kettle (1953) is of the opinion that the subject of the novel is stated very clearly at the beginning of Chapter Two, "the first consisting entirely, and most economically, of backcloth" (p. 4). The two Muslims, Hamidullah and Mahmoud Ali, with whom Aziz is dining, were discussing as to "whether or not it is possible to be friends with an Englishman" (p. 45), this is precisely what the novel is about, and it is typical of Forster to make no bones about stating his theme. At the beginning of the novel, Dr. Aziz is hateful of the English people, wishing only to ignore them or treat them comically. The possibility of friendship with Fielding is initiated by Aziz meeting with Mrs. Moore at the mosque, which is symbolic of brotherhood and love. To consider what Al Areqi and Al Bahji (2014) have said about the mosque would be worthy; hold the view that "Forster has given a priority to the Mosque as a holy place for Muslims. It leads to the first meeting between Dr. Aziz and Mrs. Moore, to that sort of tolerance and respect between colonized and colonizers" (p. 60).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Through the first half of the novel, Fielding and Aziz represent a healthy model of liberal humanism. According to Rao (2014), "the college principal represents Forster in the novel. His approach to life is extremely humanistic and liberal. Sane in his views and sweetly reasonable in his argument, Fielding is completely free from racial prejudice" (p. 159). In Forster's point of view, good and worthy individuals are those who speak frankly and support each other. And the relationship between the British and the Indians could be successful, had it been like the one between Fielding and Aziz. This fact has been stressed by Shaheen (2004), who is of the opinion that:

As Forster is well known for being a liberal humanist, any discussion of his politics is bound to include this long-life tradition.

Chapter 5 attempts a fresh look at Forster's liberal humanism without reducing its contextual reality into a form of ethics. (P. 22)

This suggest that all types of conflicts has been touched upon by Forster, which caused the failure of most personal relationships, such as that between the Indians and Anglo-Indian bureaucrats, that among the several communal groups, among the natives themselves and also among the English people, who were not less divided than their Indian counterparts. The governed and the governing class, the religious beliefs and social taboos, rivalry among the servants and several other factors are admirably portrayed realistically in the narrative.

The eternal problem of the Occident and the Orient will remain unsolved. Rudyard Kipling and other writers have often spoken and written that "East is East, and West is West and never shall the twain meet." "Dehumanization, an influential strategy for codifying the Orient to the status of inferior 'other', informs the colonizer's writing about the colonized" (Moosavinia, Niazi and Ghaforian, 2011, p.105, as cited in Ghaderi, Yahya, and Sivagurunathan, p, 45). The

aforementioned words suggest the discrimination exercised by the colonizers, and their attempt to always consider the Orient inferior, or second-hand citizens.

The differences in the cultural traditions of the two geographical areas act as a great barrier between them, making the personal intimacies of the members of the two regions highly unfeasible despite the endeavor of persons of far-sighted broadmindedness on either side. As circumstances existed at the time of the events of the novel when India was under the domination of the British people, the bridging of the yawning gulf between the two had been beset with hundreds of hurdles. The reason for this is that colonialists try to erase the history of the natives; this can be illustrated by the following quote: “Colonialism in some sense prevents native history from happening, just as it is the very history that is happening to the natives” (Eagleton, 1996, p.128, as cited in Al-Abbood, 2012, p. 124).

## **METHODOLOGICAL AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK**

Mrs. Moore and Miss Adela came to India with the purpose of discovering what is called “the spirit of India” Ghose (1998, p. 3). Both the ladies came in personal contact with some of the Indians. They were shocked to know that most of the British officials thought it below their dignity to talk to and blend with the Indians. Fielding was anxious to form friendship with the Indians. The other British men and women, keen to be friendly with the Indians were Mrs. Moore and Miss Adela Quested. Fielding became the friend of Dr. Aziz, and even went against his countrymen to defend Dr. Aziz. Personal relationships are determined by the environment and circumstances. Forster has taken great pains to discuss this problem. It forms an important aspect of this novel, as will be seen throughout the discussion and analysis of the novel in this paper.

The current study is based upon the belief or thought that in his novel, *A Passage to India*, Forster portrays the dark side of humanity which cannot endure long-lasting healthy relationships. Since circumstances do determine human relationships, the novel under discussion proves that friendship is only possible among equals, and this equality is absent in the novel. Das (1977) argues that “Forster’s India is an attractive country, but not to foreigners, especially those who try to dominate it and subdue its people” (p. 11). This point illustrates the idea that, even if friendships exist, they will never last, and this seen in the friendship formed between Aziz and Fielding, two men who belong to two different and unequal nations and each is representative of one side, the colonizer and the colonized.

All characters get disappointed because the community displayed in the novel is split between the colonizers and the colonized. According to Rani and Jamil (2015), “Forster is a colonialist author, who has composed from the colonialist viewpoint of predominance and the novel is a colonialist representation of India” (p. 3). Personal relationships, as marred by doubt and skepticism, have been used as the conceptual framework of this paper. The research is qualitative and descriptive in nature. Forster’s *A Passage to India* has been taken and analyzed critically under the lens of historicism, which covers various facets like biographical, psychoanalytical, linguistic and cultural criticism.

The research investigates on how the novel explores cultural differences, which shape and determine the different relationships in a society, formed by two nations. The case here is that of the Indians and the British. It also attempts to analyze how the author viewed different

personal relationships, even among the people of the same culture. Other issues such as class system, race, and nationality have also been explored in this paper.

### **Analysis**

Evidently Forster had the pessimistic belief that “intimate personal relationship of ideal nature is an impossibility” Forster (1954, *Aspects of the Novel*, p. 2). In the case of the persons of different nationality and geographical or racial background that fact alone is enough to cause a cleavage. It may be due to communal discord in the case of the people of different religious beliefs. Individual idiosyncrasies may play havoc in the case of members of the same communal, racial, linguistic or religious nativity. But fortunately, we are able to find a number of successful marriages and personal friendships among members of groups and classes of diverse and diverging characteristics, which give hope for humanity. Some important relationships will be considered throughout this paper. But most of them do not last because either of some flaws in the characters themselves, or because the circumstances did not help, since the soil was not fertile when *A Passage to India* was written. In this regard it is worthy to consider Abu Baker (2006, p. 70, as cited in Al Areqi & Al Bahji, 2014) pointed out that “Forster’s India is hostile to foreigners and attacks its colonizers furiously, so as to force them to leave. Despite the British attempts to ‘tame’ India, it remains a wild country,” which resulted in forcing the British to leave India forever. This point is still valid, even today India is a country that doesn’t accept hostile nations because of the nature of its people, who are very peaceful and do not allow foreigners to interfere in its domestic issues.

Rani and Jamil (2015) are of the opinion that “British colonizers realize us that it is not a true concept that the colonized and colonizers could develop a positive relationship between each other” (p.2). This is because the colonizers have been taught to be rigid and unfriendly at schools in their native countries, such as the case with Ronny Heaslop, who came to India with no good intention, and he never tried to understand the Indians or uncover their hidden and mysterious hearts. This whole conflict and impossibility of friendship is depicted through the relationship between Dr. Aziz, an Indian Muslim and Cyril Fielding, an Englishman. The two men may represent the two nations, the colonizer and the colonized, the ruler and the ruled. “The book demonstrates the prejudice and disdain among the two parties, and depicts the reasons of the disappointment and the failure of the relationship,” (p. 2), added Rani and Jamil.

Al Areqi and Al Bahji (2014) state that “Dr. Aziz is the most significant character discussed in the novel and his relationship with Muslim and non-Muslim in his country is argued in the narrative as well as his relationship with the British metropolitan power in India” (p. 55). Therefore, one should consider Aziz’s relationships with various characters in the novel. And the first character should be that of the old British lady Mrs. Moore.

A casual meeting of Aziz and Ronny’s mother Mrs. Moore does leave a lasting impression on both. The old lady begins to call the Indian her true friend after the second meeting in the caves. In Al Areqi and Al Bahji’s point of view (2014), “Mrs. Moors presents the brilliant side of the colonizers” (p. 60). That notion is what makes the Indian Muslim think of befriending the woman. The friendship between Mrs. Moore and Dr. Aziz is one of most enduring relationships in the novel. Mrs. Moore had first met Aziz in a mosque where he had gone to drown his sorrow over the humiliation he suffered at the hands of his boss, Major Calendar. She looked upon Aziz as representing India. Her warm behavior towards Dr. Aziz brought them very close to each other. Aziz realized that she was not the type of other British ladies. She had a soft-corner for the Indians. She tried to bring the Indians and the Englishmen nearer o each other. It was

on her insistence to meet the Indians that Mr. Turton, the Collector, arranged for the Bridge Party. In a shrewd political move, he arranges the party and invites some Indian leaders and officials for a get-together in order to “bridge the Gulf between the rulers and the ruled” (p. 7). Aziz does not attend this as it was held on the very anniversary day of the death of his wife. Nawab Bahadur, a rich philanthropist leader of the Muslims, attends the party. The Indian women who attend the party are two reserved and shy to take any active part in the proceedings. Mrs. Bhattacharya invites Mrs. Moore and Miss Adela Quested to their house, promising to send the carriage to fetch them, but somehow forgets everything. Thus the party failed to achieve its objective due to the lack of seriousness and trust in both parties to narrow the gulf of separation and become friends.

The meeting at the mosque was the only encounter between Mrs. Moore and Aziz worth any significance. After this encounter, they meet twice, one at Fielding’s tea party and later on at the picnic in the caves. But these two meetings did not enhance their intimacy any further. However, the “secret understanding of the heart” (p. 45), which took place at the mosque was further developed at the subsequent meetings and their friendship was cemented.

The visit to the caves, however, proved to be disastrous. Mrs. Moore went through a terrible experience. She became bitter and disillusioned. Her bitterness and disillusionment extended even to personal relationships. Dr. Aziz was accused of molesting and attempting to rape Miss Adela Quested at the caves, or in one of the darkest caves. He was put on trial. Mrs. Moore, still in the grip of emptiness and negation, and who did not believe him to be guilty of the charge of attempted molestation of Miss Quested, did not take the trouble to attend the trial or give evidence in favor of her friend. Yet her unseen presence had a mysterious effect on the trial proceedings; in her frustration, because of the persistence of the English people in proceeding with the trial, she requests that she may be sent back to India. But the reference to Mrs. Moore at the trial and the reaction of the Indians to the extent of paying tribute to her in chorus with the cries of “Esmis Esmoor” (p. 270), has much significance in this context. The unfortunate death of Mrs. Moore on her way back to England is a trick of fate in making this reverential relationship of Aziz and Mrs. Moore come to a futile end. Adela changed her evidence and Aziz was released. The strong bond of their friendship could be seen in the influence she exercised over Dr. Aziz, even after her death. He changed his mind and had forgone the compensation he had demanded of Adela when he was reminded that Mrs. Moore would not have approved of it because Aziz has a great respect for her. Thus, even after death, some sort of a personal relationship was maintained between them.

There is evidence to suspect that Cyril Fielding in *A Passage to India* was Forster himself in a veiled form, and Dr. Aziz was the reflection of Syed Ross Masood, a great friend of Forster’s. The two in the story try to be friendly with each other. In portraying the development of their friendship, the author has demonstrated his remarkable skill in characterization. Forster has endeavored to explore the possibility of human contact and personal relationships between two individuals of different languages, complexion and cultural upbringing. Although the failure of their experiment demonstrates the impossibility of a permanent intimacy between the Indians and the English with due adjustments and mutual understanding, yet in the early stages, their intimacy is fairly deep and would have continued in the same strain, except for certain misunderstandings due to the peculiarity of the political environment. (In fact after the independence of India, many ideal friendships between the Indians and the Englishmen have developed in an effective manner).

The relationship between Aziz and Fielding is as unique as that between Aziz and Mrs. Moore. In spite of the barriers of race and character, the two men succeeded in creating a “rapport that stood out as an evidence of the power of goodwill and kindness” (Frederick, 1962, p. 9). Though the differences between the two men were great, they managed to become good friends, so much so that Fielding stood up in the defense of his friend against his own countrymen during the trial, risking the alienation of the sympathy of his own people, the other Englishmen. Fielding was a member of the ruling British class and Aziz found it difficult to be friendly with these people. Yet both of them managed to get along with each other for the most part. Aziz appreciates the warm-heartedness of Fielding with no inhibitions due to conventional strictures. They trust each other and their affection triumphs in so far as Aziz readily shows his wife’s photograph to the English Principal.

Fielding and Aziz are a study in contrast. It is surprising how people of such contrasting temperament managed to get along so well. It is true that there were ups and downs in their relationship, but on the whole, this relationship can be called successful. Fielding was a genial, but reserved man. Though he was full of goodwill and consideration for other people, he still shields away from a too intimate involvement with them. Aziz, on the other hand, was impulsive, unreserved and given to extremes of love and jealousy. These different traits in their personalities and the stress of circumstances did strain their friendship at times, but not for long. The relationship forged in goodwill and kindness continued till the end, though Aziz declared that friendship between an Indian and a British was not possible as long as the British were the masters and the Indians were subjects. This is what Dr. Aziz hinted at to Fielding that all attempts at friendly relations between them were bound to fail unless and until India became free. But the circumstances were such that even after the freedom of India, it was doubtful whether the two races would enjoy amicable association and frequent close contacts. Skinheads and Powells would not allow it to take place. As the story is developed by the author, certain incidents occur which vitiate the purity of their friendship and topple it. Thus this relationship between these two gentlemen failed miserably and some adverse factors pulled them apart at the end of the novel due to several reasons. First, Aziz believed in the rumors that Adela and Fielding had an illicit relationship and that the relationship was at the basis of the principal’s endeavor to dissuade Aziz from demanding the compensation of twenty thousand rupees from Miss Quested. Thus the mistrust of the Oriental which the Westerner could not comprehend paves the way to undermine a friendship that had a promising start. The marriage of Fielding with Stella, the sister of Ronny, for whom Aziz had feelings of animosity, was another cause of the failure. Second, Aziz turned into a nationalist after he has been accused by Adela of trying to molest her chastity. Finally, Fielding became a government servant, which made Aziz decide to sacrifice his friendship with him. The following conversation between the two men best illustrates their different attitudes towards emotions and friendship:

“Your emotions never seem in proportion to their objects, Aziz.”

“Is emotion a sack of potatoes, so much the pound, to be measured out?

Am I a machine?” (p, 261)

This exchange occurs as the relationship between Aziz and Fielding begins to weaken and dwindle, as Fielding began to respect and advocate for Adela. Although Aziz and Fielding have many misunderstandings at this time, their main conflict focuses on the compensation Aziz wants from Miss Quested, who tried to distort his reputation by falsely accusing him of trying to rape her in one of the dark caves. All that Aziz wants at this time is to damage Adela for her

behavior, while Fielding thinks that she should be rewarded for her bravery after she changed her testimony. Thus we see the two men holding two different views regarding emotions. Fielding can be described as logical, while Aziz is emotional and led by instinct. Both men often have polite and respectful conversations, but this quotation suggest that the two are becoming hostile, or the two men can never agree on one thing from now on. The trial makes Fielding less patient and more intellectual, and this can be a reason for the breakdown of their relationship. This quotation also sheds light on the British Raj (rule) over India. Britain's control of India started with the British East India Company. This makes Britain appear a profitable and capitalist system, which values materialism over spirit, which Aziz often objects. Said (1979, as cited in Rani and Jamil, 2015) claims that the colonized people are "somebody judges as in a court of law. Something one studies and portrays as in educational module, something one orders as in school or jail, something one delineate as in a zoological manual" (p. 2). The words suggest that the colonized people are never treated as humans by the colonizers, and this prevents the development of any kind of love between the two parties.

At the end of the novel and after the last meeting in the state of Mau, Fielding and Aziz meet again when the latter emphatically affirms that a friendship between an Indian and an Englishman would be possible as long as India remained a dependent nation. During their ride into the jungle, their two horses taking two different directions, which is symbolic of the failure of their friendship to continue, in this connection, Aziz says: "not here, not now" (p. 300), to suggest that the two men cannot be friends until they are equal, and they cannot be equal while India is colonized by Britain. Friendship according to Aziz is possible only among equals.

Each one of the characters in the novel, every theme and every image in it contributes to the central theme of the novel. But no other character than Miss Adela Quested was the cause of the strains and problems imposed on Aziz-Fielding relationship. Aziz and Fielding were put to a severe test due to her. She had started on a good note. Her relation with Dr. Aziz, as has been pointed out by Stone (1966), "was amicable at the beginning, but this relationship was not able to stand the stress of the times" (p. 8). India had an adverse effect on her. Her experience at the Marabar Caves was traumatic and under the influence of this experience she acted in haste and spoiled her relationship with Aziz. She turned Dr. Aziz into her bitter foe and was perturbed when Aziz demanded compensation from her for falsely implicating him in a charge of rape. She felt hurt as it was really because of her that Aziz was cleared of the charge. She had changed her evidence at the last moment and thus saved Aziz. Adela might have saved Dr. Aziz under certain extraneous forces. She might have saved him because: Firstly, Fielding and Mrs. Moore maintained that Aziz was innocent. As a good English lady, she was more under their influence because she held them in high esteem. Secondly, she might have had a soft corner for the handsome Indian who attracted her physically as well as mentally. Thirdly, Dr. Aziz had been so nice and kind to her that on second thoughts, she had felt sympathy for him and saved him. After all he had done so much for her. Fourthly, her dream of understanding India had shattered before her very eyes. She had wanted to save this dream. Whatever may have been the case; all these are conjectures and can be disputed and tested. Nothing seems to be clear and definite. The happening at the cave is shrouded in mystery and Dr. Aziz must be given the benefit of the doubt. It seems more likely that Miss Adela Quested had been a victim of hallucination. In the absence of evidential circumstances, and Adela's evidence in his favor demolishes the case and we find no cause for thinking otherwise.

But the fact remained that it was because of her that Aziz had to undergo all that trouble, and so he was naturally angry with her. A beautiful relationship was thus broken due to misunderstanding and haste on the part of Miss Adela Quested.

There could be ideal personal friendship between two Englishmen, but the author has not cared to portray any such relationship. As for the love between two persons of opposite sexes, there is no graphic narration at all in the book. The romantic plot of *A Passage to India* is not of the same type as in the conventional novels. Adela Quested and Ronny Heaslop were engaged to marry but the marriage did not materialize, she visits India to facilitate the engagement to develop it to a state of consummation in matrimony, but the events are such as to deal a deathblow to it, and towards the end of the novel they parted from each other with hardly any heart-ache on either side. According to ..... Beer (1986), "there was not much warmth of feeling in this relationship, and it was guided more by the intellect than by the heart" (p, 6). Adela observes from a close quarters Ronny's self-complacency, censoriousness, lack of subtlety, haughtiness and other frailties. Ronny is annoyed of Adela's overzealousness to fraternize with the Indians. They thus have no mutual love and much less any sort of romantic attachment. Adela is a woman of practical sagacity and matter-of-fact shrewdness. According to her, the success of a marriage does not necessarily depend upon love as idealists view it. A romantic love cannot take a couple beyond the few nights of the honeymoon. Other factors contribute to the success of marriages, and the various events that happen terminate the possibility of the marriage between Ronny and Adela. Of course, the incident at the Marabar Caves and the development of events thereafter also contributed to the sundering of this relationship. However, we have a feeling that this relationship would not have lasted in any case.

Forster has depicted the relationship between Fielding and Adela which started as one of guardianship, became an illicit relationship and marriage by turns in the hands of rumors-mongers and which ended in being airy nothing when Fielding explains that it was Ronny's sister that he had married. However, this relationship is of some importance. Both these characters (Adela and Fielding) were rationalists and their attitude towards India was very much the same. Due to their identical views, they became so friendly that Aziz imagined them to be in love or worse still to be merely sexually involved. To illustrate this point of view, the following words from Chapter XXIX are worthy to be quoted:

Were there worlds beyond which they could never touch, or did all that is possible enter their consciousness? They could not tell . . . Perhaps life is a mystery, not a muddle. . . Perhaps the hundred Indias which fuss and squabble so tiresomely are one, and the universe they mirror is one. They had not the apparatus for judging. (P. 331)

In this quotation we notice the reactions of Fielding and Adela to her terrible experience at the Marabar Caves. The quotation suggests the inability of the rationalists British to understand India. Both try to approach the problem in a logical manner, trying to explain the reasons for what happened in the caves. But the explanations they provide do not make any sense. The confusing incident at the caves can best be understood as a symbol for India, which is a country that confuses its visitors by its diversity. The echo in the caves cannot be understood unless a foreigner understands the mystery of India. This quotation also shows Fielding and Aziz becoming more attached to each other through a similar experience. Fielding begins to respect Adela for her frank objectivity and her willingness to admit that she is unable to explain what happened in the caves. Through dialogues like this one, Adela and Fielding become closer by

realizing the fact that India is a strange country that is difficult to understand. Aziz feels that both Adela and Fielding become friends, which makes this Indian Muslim, start to avoid and resent Fielding.

The marriage between Fielding and Stella, despite the difference in ages, takes place for reasons which the author has not cared to offer. But its results become patent. One of them is the ultimate estrangement between Aziz and Fielding because Stella happens to be the sister of Ronny against whom Aziz had a grievance. Their marriage becomes a sacrament no doubt despite the mystical imaginative nature of Stella and the rationalistic down-to earth outlook of the College Principal.

[Mrs. Moore] felt increasingly (vision or nightmare?) that, though people are important, the relations between them are not, and that in particular too much fuss has been made over marriage. (P. 170)

The above words are uttered while they were travelling on board of a train to the Marabar Caves. After listening to Godbole's religious song, Mrs. Moore felt a spiritual presence larger than Christianity. This spiritual presence makes the woman think that human relationships are meaningless and short-lived, the same feeling Adela experienced during the trial, which makes her change her mind and save Aziz. The quotation also indicates Forster's criticism of marriage. This is communicated through Mrs. Moore and Fielding, who can be considered mouthpieces for the author himself. Marriage according to them does not cause happiness or lead to an everlasting relationships. To illustrate this, one should consider Adela's and Ronny's marriage which fails even before it materializes, and the marriage of Mr. McBryde, through unfaithfulness. To conclude this argument, Forster believed that marriage can sometimes lead to trouble and confusion.

Mrs. Moore and Professor Godbole are the two mystics in the novel. The critics like Kettle (1953) have found something "misty" (p. 2) in their curious relationship. Both the characters are religious and have a mystical yearning towards a divine order, transcending the divisions of the earth. As Brown (1950) puts it, both are "not only alike but mysteriously alike" (103). They only met once at Fielding's tea party, but a spiritual affinity is established between the two which is highlighted by the exalted talk they have about the wasp and the oneness of all God's creation. The relationship between these two characters helps to introduce a vision of inclusive order to the world of muddle and negation of the novel.

Aziz is the representative of a staunch Muslim and Godbole of a staunch Hindu. "Each venerating his religion even to the extent of being fanatically bigoted" (Jeffreys, 2005, p. 17). But the common enemy of the British Bureaucrat has blunted the edge of their bigotry very much. Godbole uses his ministerial influence to secure a decent job in the state of Mau where there is no Hindu-Muslim clash of interest. Apart from this, Forster has not credited Aziz with any ideal personal relationship with anyone. His friendship with his Muslim brethren does not go beyond one of communal fraternization.

Different meetings were arranged at different times to narrow the gulf between the two races-the English and the Indians. Fielding gave a tea party to Miss. Adela and Mrs. Moore, Godbole sang a religious song. Godbole placed himself in the position of a milk-maid. He prayed to Lord Krishna "come, come, come to me" (p. 320). God refused to come. Mrs. Moore asked him whether God would come in some other song. But God neglected to come throughout the novel. Godbole was enigmatically polite and less vociferous during the party. Ronny takes

away Miss Quested and his mother from Fielding's party and warns them of Hindu-Muslim riot during Moharrum. It is worthy to mention that the main communities of India were a bit hostile to one another; they were not cordial on because each was fanatically devoted to its own customs and conventions, beliefs, basic notions and cultural inheritance. The scene in India at that time was nothing but a nightmarish spectacle of social conflict and individuals without the readiness to understand one another. To illustrate from the novel, Dr. Aziz himself was as much anti-Hindu as he was anti-British. The Hindus did not freely mix with the Muslims. The Orthodox among them were still averse to a close alliance with each other. Riots on religious festival days were very common. The different castes among the Hindus suffered from internal rivalry, so much so that they never agreed on any common program for public good, irrespective of their castes and denominations. As Forster puts it: "The fissures in the Indian Soil are infinite. Hinduism so solid from a distance is riven into sects and clans" (p. 198).

Of course the later events have disapproved many of these conjectures and fears, and India has emerged as a big secular, democratic republic despite social, religious and communal differences. But the tinge of communalism has not completely vanished as yet. There is a clear hint of this in the novel. But when it comes to their relationship with foreigners, Hindus and Muslims unite in order to defeat their common enemy, as has been seen during the trial of Dr. Aziz. During the trial of Aziz, all the Indians united against the British to defend Aziz. After the trial, Aziz preferred to move to an Hindu state, where the British had no control, thus preferring to live with the Hindus, rather than remain in Chandrapore, the city controlled by the English officials. The professor's song on Krishna assuages the strained feelings of the people here. As has been seen, again the tea party failed to bring the two nations together, and the reasons are because the Indians were suspicious and the British were haughty, arrogant and not serious. The main reason for the two nations not becoming friends is the lack of mutual trust. The following quote from Chapter VII is worth mentioning:

Fielding did not even want to [correct Aziz]; he had dulled his craving for verbal truth and cared chiefly for truth of mood. As for Miss Quested, she accepted everything Aziz said as true verbally. In her ignorance, she regarded him as 'India,' and never surmised that his outlook was limited and his method inaccurate, and that no one is India. (P. 221)

The above words highlight a major distinction between the English people and the Indians. The Indians value emotions over intellect, for example Aziz often lies even to his friends, and mostly to the British. The reason for his telling lies might be because the lies he tells are considered truthful to him, or because he wants to keep the conversation going on by uttering untrue words. Likewise, Nawab Bahadur speaks elaborately and incoherently to appear intelligent. While the English on the other hand do not utter untrue words. They are frank and speak naturally. The quotation also suggests that Fielding can understand the Indians and deal with them according to their standards and natures. The reason is that he could understand the other culture, while most of the British failed to do so. This passage also suggests that Adela's failure to understand Indian and the Indians merely because she wanted to do that and to evaluate the Indians on her own terms. One can say that Adela's relationship with Aziz is materialistic in the sense that she wants to know the "real India," thinking that it exists in one man, and that one man is Dr. Aziz. She failed to comprehend the truth that India is represented by all the Indians, not only by Aziz, and because she doesn't try to mix with them in order to understand India, she failed on her mission and went back to England in a desperate situation.

The meeting at the Marabar Caves proved to be the most disastrous. The English were disturbed; the Indians were upset; the dreaming and the loving hearts like those of Fielding and Mrs. Moore were confused. As a matter of fact, the whole atmosphere of Chandrapore, the mini-India, was badly perturbed. This point is emphasized by Parry (2004), who says that:

The aspiration of man to understand himself and his universe has resulted in various systems of belief and codes of behavior, but also in alienation from his fellowmen within other cultures, and therefore, in a more complex bewilderment about his social and spiritual identity. (P. 208)

This is the paradox explored in *A Passage to India*, explored by examining the areas of relationship and dissonance between the ancient and enduring patterns of Indian civilization and the more “advanced” patterns of the West.

The Indians thought that the Englishmen, being highly paid and enjoying almost all comforts of life were happy in India. In fact, they were not happy. Khan (1993) believes that the British in India represented imperialism that was based on violence, fraud, heartlessness and cruelty. Ronny Heaslop presents an official’s point of view admirably. He says “I am not a missionary. I am not a vague, and sentimental literary man. I am just a servant of the Government. We are not pleasant and do not intend to be pleasant” (p. 102). Every Englishman believed that the Indians were criminal by nature and untrustworthy. In such a situation, personal relationship between the Indians and the Englishmen could not germinate.

Forster through the mouth of Aziz declared that there could be no friendship between the Indians and the Englishmen, as both stood diametrically opposed. The British were the masters of India looked upon themselves as belonging to a superior race. All the Indians in their eyes, belonged to an inferior race. Evidently, there could be no friendship between superiors and inferiors. Moreover, the Englishmen had supposedly taken on their shoulders the burden of civilizing the natives who had an inferior civilization. The following quotation from Ghaderi, Yahya and Sivagurunathan (2012) illustrates the idea how the British considered their mission of civilizing the native as holy: “Employing the Orientalist trope of Indian women as selfish, oppressed and objectified, Fanny’s journal emphasizes the urgent need for imperial intervention on their behalf” (p. 44). Not only did Forster and Lawrence share this negative general reaction against contemporary civilization, but they also had a common positive theme, for the novels of both are really exercises on the motif of “right personal relationship.” A favorite phrase of Forster.

All these notions were erecting a formidable wall between the two communities; Mrs. Moore tried her best to cross this wall of mutual suspicion and superiority complex. She crossed but could not break it. The hatred generated by the representatives of the British imperialism proved too stubborn to be subdued. Aziz thought of the Englishmen as his bitterest of enemies and wanted to blast every one of them. The friendship between the Indians and the Englishmen would be possible only after the British left India. Abbood (2012) has argued that “Native culture, because it is prevented by colonialism from freely developing, becomes no more than archaic, inert institutions, functioning under the oppressor’s supervision and patterned like a caricature of formerly fertile institutions” (p. 126). This might be a valid reason for the natives’ fight against their oppressors so as to protect their culture from being erased or altered by the new and alien culture brought by colonialists.

## CONCLUSION

Thus, as has been seen above, most of the relationships in *A Passage to India* failed miserably because the soil was not fertile for them to flourish. The result of the research proved and illustrated the idea that individual human efforts are bound to fail in the face of the inevitable march of events over which human beings have no control. Friendship is only possible among equals, and the British and the Indians were not equal at the time when this novel was written.

So, this is the problem of personal relationships that is important, but more important are the circumstances in which the individuals are placed. Individual human efforts are bound to fail in the face of the inevitable march of events over which human beings have no control. Some biased critics have remarked that Forster was over-critical in his portrayal of the Anglo-Indians. Many Englishmen were annoyed and even offended with Forster for writing such a book. But impartial people never take such criticism seriously. *A Passage to India*, according to Ganguly (1990), is “a superbly realistic novel with some unrealistic flashes here and there” (p. 3). The novel reflects the courageous vision of the unembarrassed and unprejudiced observer of the Indian National Scene. Where he deviated from facts and succumbed to exaggerations, the reasons are not to be sought very far. One reason may be that he was carried off his mental balance through an over-dependence on fictitious rumors set afloat by the rulers.

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