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Englishness in E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India*

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ABSTRACT: This paper deals with E. M. Forster's (1879 - 1970) *A Passage to India* (1924) through the theories of postcolonial critics, such as Robert J. C. Young (1950-) and Edward W. Said (1935-2003) to examine colonial impacts on Indians' life. Forster portrays the colonizer's ideology of superiority of White race and its culture and the constructed inferiority of India and Indians in his novel. This paper also shows how the British officials in India invariably consider and treat Indians stereotypically as 'other.' *A Passage to India* like every colonial discourse privileges the Europe and the European as 'Us', while the Indians and their culture are presented as inferior and 'Other'. It highlights the impact of 'Englishness' on the indigenous culture and identity. Moreover, this paper argues that *A Passage to India*, as a colonial discourse, solidifies and reinforces the stereotypical images of India and Indians. It also exposes the British inherent preconception toward Indians. Finally, the paper highlights the portrayal of the internal divisions and challenges among the Indians in relation to social and religious grounds. In other words, this procedure justifies and perpetuates the presence of the British Raj in India.

***Keywords*:** Englishness, Other, Superiority, Inferiority, British Raj

INTRODUCTION

A Passage to India, published in 1924, was E. M. Forster's first novel in fourteen years, and the last novel he wrote. When *A Passage to India* appeared in 1924, it was praised by reviewers in a number of important British and American literary journals. Despite some criticism that Forster had depicted, the book was popular among readers in both Britain and the United States. The year after its publication, the novel received two prestigious literary awards the James Tait Black Memorial Prize and the Prix Femina Vie Heureuse. More than seventy years later, it remains highly regarded. Not only do many schools of art, critics and other writers consider it a classic of early twentieth-century fiction. Subtle and rich in symbolism, the novel works on several levels. On the surface, it is about India and the relations between British and Indian people in that country. It is also about the necessity of friendship, and about the difficulty of establishing friendship across cultural boundaries. Forster's narrative centers on Dr. Aziz, a young Indian physician whose attempt to establish friendships with several British characters has disastrous consequences. Throughout the novel, Dr. Aziz is accused of attempting to rape a young Englishwoman.

Forster was born in 1879 and educated at Tonbridge School and then at King's College, Cambridge, where he was later made an honorary fellow. Through contacts made at Cambridge he came to be associated with the Bloomsbury Group. He travelled in Europe, lived in Italy and Egypt and spent some years in India where he was for a time secretary to a Rajah after World War I. In his novels, Forster's dominant theme is the habitual conformity of people to unexamined social standards and conventions, and the ways in which this conformity blinds individuals to recognition of what is true in what is unexpected, to the proper uses of intelligence and to their own resources of spontaneous life. Forster also shows how English traditions have on the one hand nourished complacency, hypocrisy and insular philistinism and how on the other hand, humility, honesty, and skeptical curiosity.

Forster portrays, in *A Passage to India*, the colonizer's ideology of the superiority of White race and its culture and the constructed inferiority of India and the Indians. He portrays the Indians and even the Indian landscape as lesser and presents the 'Englishness' as a superior and the English people as better administrators and responsible

individuals. The Indians are presented as superstitious, diffident, irrational and excitable. This means to justify and perpetuate the presence of the British Raj in India.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Frantz Fanon (1925-1961) denatures race by examining the role of colonial cultures in maintaining and legitimating the racial hierarchy. He shows how culture operates as the instrument through which the normalization of the social construction of race as a system of hierarchical power relations occurs. Through the culture industry, skin pigmentation became deeply imbued with hierarchical meaning. In the colonial world, this system of signification became a system of power legitimating white supremacy. One might apply Fanon's theories to Forster's *A Passage to India* which concentrates on the effects of stereotyping on the natives.

He argues that two kinds of fictional identities are imposed on the colonized people, one by the colonizer through stereotyping them and the other by the colonized, who try to change their real self and assimilate themselves with the colonizers. Inferiority and dependency complexes are the consequences of imperialism and colonialism. Fanon believes even the dignified native is involved in the inferiority complex, that is he considers himself as the inferior race. The colonized tries to revive his identity through cloth changing, change of behavior, or communicating with the White race who is the symbol of civilization for him. Fictional identities pave the way for the European to control the natives more easily under their complete domination.

Further, as Robert J. C. Young (1950-) argues by introducing English culture as the master one, the colonial and imperial powers have the opportunity to label the colonized as uncivilized, an unreal categorization, which help them to rule over and control the natives. In addition, 'Englishness', as Young believes, has been less fixed and stable than uncertain, fissured with difference and a desire for otherness. Culture is another means, which imperialism and colonialism focus on to change the native people. It helps the English Empire to narrate the Oriental culture in accordance with their objectives. This paper shows how Englishness throughout leaves its impact on both the colonizer and the colonized.

British Culture versus the Indian Culture

The Indian landscape is described as poor, trees are said to have a poor quality. The English people are presented as calm at the time of crisis, while the Indians are shown raving about impotently. British India is portrayed as an example of reason and orderliness, while the native India is irrational and superstitious. The conduct of an Indian Nawab at the time of a minor accident to his car is meant to reveal the childish nature of Nawab. He loses his head, abuses his chauffeur, and behaves badly towards Miss Derek, while the white men are presented as men of grace and poise. Forester shows the Indians as indifferent to morals and individual responsibility.

The bedroom of Aziz is squalid, the people there are busy in intrigues and gossip and their discontentment as shallow. The minds of the Indians are said to be inferior and rough. Dr. Aziz, an educated Indian, instead of cleaning his house, like Gandhi does in R. K. Narayan's novel *Waiting for Mahatama*, is shown only grumbling. His house is a place of squalor and ugly talk. The floors are strewn with fragments of cane and nuts, spotted with ink, the pictures crooked upon the dirty walls without a punkah. His friends are described as third-rate people.

Forster shows that educated Indians, like Dr. Aziz, would avoid politics at all costs. This is what the empire wanted. Forster also wanted to cultivate the politics of the empire. Fielding represents his point of view in this way: "England holds India for her good, an echo of the construction of Kipling, "White man's burden" " (*A Passage to India* 102). Haq, Aziz and others admit their inadequacy and inferiority at all levels. This is meant to justify the presence of the British in India forever! Everything associated with India is described as bad and ugly; April is a month of horrors.

Indian sun, instead of having any beauty and glory, is sinister. Aziz, under the influence of colonial ideology, has assimilated himself with the western notions of beauty as well and does not regard his late wife as beautiful. Compared to him, Sri Ram finds an Indian girl from the South more beautiful than the British Queen. The Indian children are shown like monkeys. The Indians are represented as dirty, ugly people, who are associated with smell, tobacco and the sound of spitting. Their lack of etiquette is frightful. They put their melons in their fez, guavas in their towels.

The description is ironically summed up as, "the celebrated Oriental confusion" (*A Passage to India* 121). The Raj officials invariably describe Indians as incapable of responsibility. The picnic arrangements are described as "odd," the purdha carriage is made fun of as "comic," the Indians are shown not familiar with the idea of traveling light, a pet word with Fielding. On top of this confusion, the Indian cook is shown making tea in the lavatory. Mrs. Moore makes her comment, "a strange place to make tea" (*A Passage to India* 125). The Indian hot weather is never

forgotten. By May, a barrier of fire falls across India and sea. Whereas the British novelists and poets celebrate the beauty of their countryside, here, the narrator laments that the India is the country of fields.

The towns of "blasted" India are the malaise of men, who cannot find their way home. India in the eyes of Forster is not a promise but only an appeal, indirectly justifying the Raj. There is only a half sentence reference to the world celebrated Taj. The down of India brings in wake no miracle but failure and disappointment. It is more than that. It is described as failure of the virtue in the celestial fount. The sun rises devoid of any splendor. The sun of India is treacherous; the month of April spreads lust like canker. The beauty of the sunrise is only associated with and reserved for the English Grassmere. "Ah, dearest Grassmere! Its little lakes and mountains were beloved by them all. Romantic yet manageable, it sprang from a kindlier plant" (*A Passage to India* 135-136). While Gandhi declares the flowing rivers of India as beautiful as the sunrise full of colors and the air so fresh. In Forster's India, the plane is untidy.

Pakistani writer Zulfikar Ghose, in preface to *The Murder of Aziz Khan*, declares that the Indian landscape is the most beautiful landscape in the world. At the sight of picnic, the presence of elephant attracts the villagers and "naked babies" (127). The ability of Indians to fabricate and invent stories, which do not exist, is another construction of the Orientalists. It is maintained that the Indians do not bother to verify the fact and can invite a snake out of a stick to create sensation. The Oriental fool Aziz, cannot see the difference between hospitality and intimacy.

On their return from picnic, Aziz behaves like a child in the face of the Raj officials, who intend to arrest him on charge of an attempted crime. Only Fielding is portrayed as a superior human being. The Indian including Aziz, wail and weep at this misfortune. McBryed, the British police officer, has an Orientalist doctrine about Indian "all natives who live south of latitude 30 are criminal at heart" (*A Passage to India* 156). The psychology of the people, McBryde tells Fielding, is different in India. The collector declares India is to be a "poisonous country" (*A Passage to India* 160) and its people as jackals. The Indian are bad starters, occasionally jib and possibly cowards. The Indian always do something disappointing. Even Fielding concludes that Indians can be unbearable on occasions.

Almost all British characters believe in the eccentricity, backwardness and supine malleability of the Indians. India is portrayed as a place isolated from the mainstream of European progress in science, art and commerce. Only the English are really unequalled, especially at the time of crisis. Godbole, though, steeped in Indian and Hindu mythology and philosophy, is not free from the influence of imperial culture and resultant mimicry. He plans to name his school after King Emperor Gorge the Fifth. The Indians are called as niggers and nothing is too bad for them. For alleged crime against a white woman, the ruling white community wants the whole of India to crawl up to the caves. The Indians ought to be spat at; they need to be grounded into the dust.

McBryde comes up with another thesis on Oriental pathology, "the darker races are physically attracted by the fairer, but not the vice versa" (*A Passage to India* 206). Muhammad Ali, the pleader, at the trial scene, is portrayed as a typical Indian, in spite of his education. He is portrayed as an immature and childish person who behaves in an extremely irrational way during the trial. McBryde described it as the natural gesture of "an inferior race" (*A Passage to India* 209). The Indians are portrayed as a community of people, who invariably seek a grievance, if not available, they invent one, as they do in the case of Mrs. Moore.

English Superiority versus Indian Inferiority

In the novel, Forster frequently shows that "Englishness" is absolutely incompatible with and accordingly superior to "Indianness." As a member of the English middle class who deeply cherished Victorian middle class values throughout his life, Forster's concept of Englishness is best understood as "English middle-classness," which represents the quintessence of England. Using Englishness as a yardstick thus almost exclusively attending to the uniqueness, singularity, and peculiarity of each culture Forster tends to organize different cultural behaviors, habits, and values in terms of opposition. More importantly, Forster tends to hold on to the belief that the differences between Englishness and Indianness are not just temporary, not just time and space specific; rather, they are transcendental in so far as they are culturally and racially determined; they go deep into "character," and thus are absolutely irrevocable.

The final implication is that a given culture can constitute its own system of signification, its own cultural autonomy, one that is independent of intercultural relations. It can be argued then that in demonstrating England and India evidently will remain forever two separate and incomparable nations and cultural traditions. Edward Said's important work *Culture and Imperialism,* for instance, persuades 'us' to deal with the 'Other' not just as a dictionary definition, an ivory tower abstraction, but as a concrete and living human being. Central to this teaching is a strong appeal for sympathy for the other, which means, as Said puts it, "to think concretely and sympathetically, contrapuntally, about others [rather] than only about us" and to avoid "trying to rule others […] trying to put them into hierarchies" (1993: 336).

Implicit in Said's remarks is a reservation about nationalism, an issue that centrally occupies Kwame Appiah, for whom insistence on a distinctive national identity such as Forster's on Englishness in *A Passage to India* is grounded in an appeal to a limited indigenous ethic rather than to what Appiah calls "an ethic universal" (ibid 353). Forster is eager to expose the British pretentious claim of superiority over the Indians.

In the novel, such an exposure is clearly dramatized in confrontation between Mrs. Moore and her son, Ronny, the city Magistrate. For Ronny, to keep India under British control is necessary; India needs to be ruled, because, as he puts it: "India likes [British] Gods to be there "to do justice and keep peace" (*A Passage to India* 45). In elevating the British to the image of "gods," an image evocative of positive qualities such as justice, wisdom, perfection, and power, Ronny is creating a hierarchy for the two cultures; that is, this elevation simultaneously debases India for its incapacity for self-government, an incapacity often associated with infertility and immaturity. Seen as a "baby" country, India thus needs a mature adult to take care of her, to make decisions for her, and above all, to claim sovereignty over her. In turn, Ronny's remarks suggest the Indians' flattering attitude toward the British.

The novel shows how self-deluding Ronny's assumption is. Many of the Indians hate the "gods" and struggle to drive them out or at least bring them down. For instance, Aziz speaks his doubt about the possibility of making friends with the British very early in the novel: "Why talk about the English? […] Why be either friend with the fellows or not friends? Let us shut them out and be jolly. Queen Victoria and Mrs. Bannister were the only exceptions, and they're dead" (*A Passage to India* 10). Even though there is no proof whether Ronny's attempt to ignore signs of Indian powerful hatred results from ignorance or from deliberate distortion, it goes without saying that such an attempt attributes to the Indians such pejorative qualities as obsequiousness and servility. In other words, the British role of "gods" is putatively not so much a result of colonization as of Indian obedience. The Indians have collaborated in promoting the British to the superior role of "gods." Here, Ronny's imperial arrogance not only displays his personal attitude toward India, but it also echoes a general British belief in India's incapacity for self-government.

A brief chronology of British rule in India exhibits a remarkable consistency in the British perception of India: whether it is the Evangelists' and the Utilitarian's ambition to "reform" India using certain European models, or the Victorian gentlemen's attempt to "transform India" by means of "good [Victorian] examples" (Hutchins 28). On the other hand, the duty of Ronny's generation "to hold this wretched country by force" (*A Passage to India* 45), the British perception of India as an inferior Other remains largely unaltered. Yet, while Forster's humanistic sentiment appears to put him in opposition to Ronny's officialism and aligns him temporarily with the colonized Indians, his belief in the superiority of Englishness over non-Englishness ultimately has him gravitating back to Ronny. Forster's pride in and affection for the English middle class are clearly registered in his collection of essays, *Abinger Harvest* (1940): "The character of the English is essentially middle-class […] only in England have the middle classes been in power for one hundred and fifty years of course there are other classes: there is an aristocracy, there are the poor. But it is on the middle classes that the eye of the critic rests" (3).

If the disengagement scene dramatizes temperance as part of English character, then the subsequent car accident focuses on rendering the allied British "calm" and courage (ibid 97), another aspect of the formidable English character. On the way back to Mrs. Moore's bungalow, the car that contains Ronny, Adela and two Indians breaks down. Facing the unexpected accident, Nawab Bahadar starts shedding "useless […] tears" (*A Passage to India* 81), while the Eurasian driver, without bothering to examine the cause of the accident, boasts that he can take them" any dam anywhere" in "five minutes' time" (*A Passage to India* 81). It is, however, Ronny and Adela who, "not upset by the accident" (*A Passage to India* 82), calmly examine the accident and establish what caused it.

Compared with British composure, the Indians' alleged "fluster" (*A Passage to India* 81) and childishness stand out all the more strikingly. Forster's reluctance here to give up ethnocentrism a condition that, as Said points out, "licenses a culture to cloak itself in the particular authority of certain values over others" (Brian 53) and has no doubt limited his thinking about English-Indian relations. Both Ronny and Adela in these accidents are presented as rational heroes capable of handling both physical and emotional dilemmas with adroitness and sobriety.

The juxtaposition of British rationality and Indian irrationality is clearly meant to be a critique of the latter by the former. In doing so, Ronny in his former role as the repellent imperial servant who levels in humbling the native Indians is now transformed; indeed here he along with Adela becomes the agent of the critique. For Forster, both Ronny's rationality and bravery reflect the best part of the English national character. Forster writes in *Abinger Harvest:*

When a disaster comes, the English instinct is to do what can be done first, and to postpone the feeling as long as possible. Hence, they are splendid at emergencies. No doubt they are brave no one will deny that but bravery is partly an affair of the nerves, and the English nerve system is well equipped for meeting a physical emergency. (7)

Yet, it is partly due to this kind of uncritical lauding of English character that Forster's critique of imperialism loses its steadiness and coherence, because Forster fails to interrogate the rationalism that, as the English character, has

served to germinate and nourish imperialism in the course of history. Having designated rationalism as characteristic of Western culture, he then is able to demonstrate that capitalism as an economic system is made possible in the West only by means of "rational organization" (ibid 21).

Upon receiving Major Callendar's summoning note, Aziz visits the Major's bungalow, the approach to which occasions his fear of "a gross snub" (*A Passage to India* 14). To avoid being scorned, he compromises the Indian habit by having the driver stop the Tonga outside "the flood of light that fell across the veranda" (*A Passage to India* 14). But as if to prove his fearful premonition, Aziz is received by the English ladies with the exact "gross snub" he has dreaded. This feeling of inferiority hurts him so deeply that he must visit the mosque to regain his lost dignity by immersing himself in his own Islamic attitude toward life and in the soothing rhythms of the Persian poem.

What Aziz longs for after all is, as the Persian poet desires, "the secret understanding of the heart," a longing that even arouses him to "tears" (*A Passage to India* 17). Ironically, however, the same sense of inferiority keeps plaguing Aziz even when he consorts with the amiable and friendly Fielding with whom he is no less conscious of his Indian secondariness, be it caused by his own "detestable" bungalow, the alleged Indian "unpunctuality" (*A Passage to India* 71, 140), or Indian untidiness.

Although Aziz does find in Fielding friendship and affection, he still cannot free himself from the same grip of the slave mentality that takes hold of him when dealing with the insidious and insulting officials. The only difference is that, with Fielding, Aziz's enmity is tempered by their mutual friendship; but, as it has been seen, friendship here is far from enough to lessen his sense of inferiority the deepest sense of self-negation which is also far more psychologically damaging and self-destructive than the sense of enmity.

This sense of inferiority is preconditioned by none other than the subject/object division Mrs. Moore longs to last, a category that has utterly murdered his sense of dignity, pride, and self- confidence. It is then safe to suggest that what Mrs. Moore, and Forster too, finally seek to investigate is not whether or not India should be colonized but how it should be colonized by the British. Amply dramatized as it is, Aziz's lack of the power to resist is scarcely meant to suggest the causal relation between the presence of the sovereign masters and the slave mentality of the colonized subject.

More often than not, such mentality is explained away by the evocation of local Indian sensitivity or rather oversensitivity to foreign habits and manners, a quality that often leads Aziz to the habitual playing down of Indianness on the one hand and slavish mimicry of English conventions on the other. The reader is reminded that Aziz's fear of being snubbed when approaching Major Callendar's bungalow precisely grows out of "the sensitive edges of him," which also prompt him to act "courteously." Sensitivity also makes him "terribly worried" when preparing for the "expedition" to the Marabar Caves, and the fear "to acquit himself dishonorably" (*A Passage to India* 119) scares him to death. Held up as a target for ridicule and slight, the silliness, buffoonery, and undue deference of Aziz's actions can just as well be made to match the politics he asserts at the end of the novel:

> Down with the British anyway. That's certain. Clear out, you fellows, double quick, I say. We may hate one another, but we hate you most. If I don't make you go, Ahmed will, Karim will, if it's fifty-five hundred years we shall get rid of you, yes, we shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea. (*A Passage to India* 306)

Enraged by Fielding's mockery of Indian nationalism, Aziz is shown to have no better way of responding than to "dance this way and that, not knowing what to do" (*A Passage to India* 306) but to "cry out" a series of anti- British slogans. The actual wording of this statement lays bare Aziz's deferential habit of playing down Indianness in order to sound English by miming bona- fide English idioms such as "you fello" Forster's interpretation of Indianness as the embodiment of inferior categories becomes more evident when compared the Indian characters with those frequently found in such later Indian novels. The revelation of this other side of Indianness apparently resists Forster's often neat, rigid, and simplified binary division of cultural differences. Like Mrs. Moore, Fielding, though resentful of officialism, shows his inability to envision a non-colonized cultural location for India.

The humanist in Fielding can be best seen in the sincerity with which he tries to be friend Aziz, an attempt which is both unconventional and challenging during this historical period. Their friendship is further developed when Fielding flouts conventions to visit Aziz during the latter ailment and culminates in their allied defense of Aziz's innocence in the trial scene. But while letting Fielding go out of his way to be genial to Aziz, Forster also has him perpetuate the divide between the public and the private, a divide that ultimately scorns the former in favor of the latter. For example, faced with Hamidullah's poignant question, "How is England justified in holding India?", Fielding first mocks the political texture of the question, only to admit: "It's a question I can't get my mind on to […] I'm out here personally because I needed a job. I cannot tell you why England is here or whether she ought to be here" (*A Passage to India* 102).

However, as the narrator narrates, Fielding does have an answer: "England holds India for her own good" (*A Passage to India* 102), but that is an answer he cannot express. And when further confronts Hamidullah's question of how an English worker is justified when Indians also need work, Fielding is forced to come up with his own logic

of fairness, which goes something like this: there is no such thing as fairness. For example, it might not have been fair that Fielding should have been born. Thus, he concludes that if one is happy in consequence, that is enough justification.

Following Fielding's logic, then, the British occupation of India is finally justified. England is there just as a new-born baby is there to take some of India's air, and no one should blame the new-born for breathing other people's air. Like Mrs. Moore, then, Fielding simply desires to replace the hostile official rule with the friendlier personal rule, a replacement. However ambivalent and troubling Forster's handling of English-Indian relations may seem to be, one thing that he never doubts is that the English are superior than the Indians; therefore, they should be allowed to rule the Indians.

English Christianity in A Passage to India

Forster's *A Passage to India* portrays the colonized India under British rule, before its liberation. Western civilization has created an 'Other' as a counterpart to itself, and a set of characteristics to go with it. An "us versus them" (Said 1978: 43) attitude is exemplified in Forster's representation of the 'Other'. Separation of the British and the Indian exists along cultural lines, specifically religious/spiritual differences. Savage or ungodly cultures were to be assimilated with or at the least governed by Christians, and be converted.

The separation between the English and the Indian occurs when the Christian assumes the Indians are an ungodly people, in need of spiritual salvation, a race below their own, and entirely unlike them. This was demonstrated historically by the dominance of supposedly inferior races by the Christians (English). Forster's Indians have a seemingly rugged outward appearance. The British are British because of their religion. How Ronny Heaslop, a white Christian British male, is outwardly polished is a construct of his Christian upbringing.

Ronny "approved of religion as long as it endorsed the National Anthem [of England]" (*A Passage to India* 47). His purpose, as was the purpose of English colonizers, was constructed by his Christian beliefs. If Ronny were not English he would not exist as a character. He is almost a caricature of what is English, and is represented wholly by the standards and beliefs of that culture. In contrast, Aziz would not exists if he were not Indian, representing wholly the standards and beliefs of that culture. Forster implies that the division, the 'Other', is what makes an individual who he is. Spirituality is integral to that existence.

English Christianity versus Indian Religion

This division of India's religions, as opposed to England's presumably unifying religion, separates England from India even more so. Because the Indians do not believe in the Christian God, they are unrecognized as spiritual. Religion shapes, if not embody characterization. India itself is linked directly to Indian spirituality. This is seen in Aziz's attitude towards his country and his faith: "Here was Islam his own country, more than a faith, more than a battle-cry, more, much more […] Islam, an attitude towards live both exquisite and durable, where his body and his thoughts found their home" (*A Passage to India* 16). India ("Islam") is not just a tangible country of earth and city, but an intangible entity connected directly to his spirituality. This description suggests a definite spirituality of the Indian people, however divided, but a spirituality within, unrecognized by British colonizers. The Marabar Caves are a distinct representation of this inward spirituality. While India is rugged, and rotting on the outside, the caves are beautiful:

The walls of the circular chamber have been most marvelously polished[…] here at last is their skin, finer than any covering acquired by the animals, smoother, smoother than windless water, more voluptuous than love […] Only the wall of the circular chamber has been polished thus. The sides of the tunnel are left rough, they impinge as an afterthought upon the internal perfection. (*A Passage to India* 116)

The Indians then are perfect on the inside, which the English do not recognize. In comparison to Christianity, which is imposed, the Indians' religion is a personal, inward quest. The description of the caves imply that faith cannot be found unless it is sought. Faith will exist, but will not be recognized unless there is an eye to see it: "They are dark caves. […] There is little to see, and no eye to see it, until the visitor arrives […] and strikes a match. Immediately another flame rises in the depths of the rock and moves towards the surface like an imprisoned spirit" (*A Passage to India* 116).

The discovery of faith, as understood by this description, leads to new truths and frees the human spirit. This difference of imposed faith versus discovered faith is the dividing line between the English and the Indian. Mrs. Moore appears to exist between the lines that separate the English from the 'Other'. However, her initially strong Christian beliefs at first side her with the English team. Mrs. Moore is a symbol of Christianity in its purest form, without the dogma acquired throughout the centuries and embraced whole heartedly by her contemporaries. She believes she understands and appreciates Indians. This cannot be so, however, as she cannot hope to comprehend their level of spirituality because she herself cannot possess it. Mrs. Moore first encounters Aziz at the Mosque. She surprises

Aziz by having the foreknowledge and respect to remove her shoes. Aziz, the embodiment of all that is Indian, has been raised in a world of "us" and "them", and meeting an English person with the sagacity to see through these illusions is a remarkable event for him.

He recognizes that she is not "them", and bound by the idea of categories, automatically makes her "us". This distinction, though, does not diminish the traits that Mrs. Moore does share with the Indians. Mrs. Moore exists in a state of limbo between two worlds, between England and India. In many ways Mrs. Moore is neither East nor West as traditionally defined. Her pursuit, simple as it may sound, is to be one with the universe. Her initial approach to this seems to suggest a more oriental view, finding worth in people, places and experiences without trying to quantify their value, and believing in universal love as the highest governing power.

The Marabar experience, however, puts her in another sphere entirely. When she goes to the caves, her experience is a spiritual one. She loses her faith in Christianity entirely, thus losing her identity. She does not exist. Her son exiles her to England, where she cannot possibly exist because of her affinity to Indian spirituality. She dies in transit between these two worlds, as she cannot hope to exist in either of them. Her counterpart, Fielding, who shares Mrs. Moore's respect for the Indians is threatened with an identity destruction as he is forced to choose between English and Indian cultures. Because he chooses India over England, he ceases to exist to the English, but can continue to exist with identity as an Indian. Fielding says "I am Indian at last" (*A Passage to India* 279).

Adela, likewise, is affected by the Marabar Caves, but not as profoundly as Mrs. Moore. Her creed or interpretation of Christianity is that "God […] is […] love" (*A Passage to India* 46). She is distinctly on the English team of the "us and them" attitude and though she says she wants to understand Indian culture as Mrs. Moore does, she seems to want this only to be trendy. Adela seems to share the colonizer, racist attitude of her fiancé Ronny. When he says, "'India isn't a drawing room' and 'Your sentiments are those of a god,' she said quietly, but it was his manner rather than his sentiments that annoyed her […] he said: 'India likes gods and Englishmen like posing as gods'" (*A Passage to India* 45).

CONCLUSION

The clash between the colonizers and the Indians, at the beginning of the novel, appears to be a racial one. The novel also addresses the issues of colonialism, rape and nationalism. There is a distinction between the political passions of the British in India, and their social issues. The political passions are only brought up every now and again in the novel. However, this incident only emphasizes the theme of the novel, the friendship between the Englishman, Fielding and the Indian, Dr. Aziz. The setting on their ride symbolizes the differences significant between the two men. The main difference is the difference of race. Friendship between the colonizer and the colonized cannot work.

Through the novel, Forster frequently shows that "Englishness" is undoubtly superior to "Indianness". As a member of the English middle class who deeply cherished Victorian middle class values throughout his life, Forster's concept of Englishness is best understood as "English middle-classness" (*A Passage to India* 198), which, according to Forster, represents the perfect type of England. Using Englishness as a standard thus almost exclusively attending to the uniqueness, singularity, and peculiarity of each culture Forster tends to organize different cultural behaviors, habits, and values in terms of contrast and opposition.

Even more important, Forster tends to hold on to the belief that the differences between Englishness and Indianness are not just temporary, not just time and space-specific; rather, they are transcendental in so far as they are culturally and racially determined; they go deep into "character," and thus are absolutely irrevocable. However ambivalent and troubling Forster's handling of English-Indian relations may seem to be, one thing that he never doubts is that the English are superior to the Indians; therefore, they should be allowed to rule the Indians.

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