

Imperialism In A Passage To India

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Abstract:

A Passage to India is a great masterpiece of E. M. Forster, an eminent English novelist who served in India during the British rule in the Indo-Pak-Bangladesh subcontinent. He was quite in touch with the social, political, cultural and religious conditions of the Indians who were under the subjugation of the British as their colony. His conception about the manner and etiquette of the Indians as well as his experience made it easy for him to make a contrast between the two classes of human race the Indians and the British by writing the book mentioned above where he made his endeavour to state whether friendly relationship is possible between the two nationalities representing the colonisers and the colonised. For this purpose, relevant data were collected through an open-ended questionnaire to some Masters students who read this novel. Moreover, a semi-structured interview of our junior colleagues having research work in the field has been conducted to reflect their attitudes in this regard. With this end in view he has depicted a good number of Indians and English characters in his novel in conjunction with his principal thought or philosophy about the Indian subjects and the superiority of the British showing signs of psychological clash with a diversity and distinction in their way living and thinking that has overshadowed the possibility of friendship. In spite of this, both teachers and students engaged in teaching and learning activities will benefit from this research work. Our main focus is to disseminate new ideas to others in pursuing this research work.

Keywords: Relationship, Psychological, Anglo-Indian, A Passage, Conflict, Racial, Colonialism.

Introduction

The main theme or the pivotal issue of the novel is to focus on the reality of life concerning the behavioural aspect of the two nations that differ from each other from the cultural point of view and this is the vital cause behind the failure to establish a relationship just as the East and the West are in contrast

in attitude and thinking. The three sections on which the book is based such as the 'The Mosque', 'The Malabar Caves', and 'The Temple form the core of the novel. The extraordinarily finest and exciting novel, A Passage to India encompasses the focal point of the title of our article as there is an adequate concentration of thought about the unreality of friendly tie between the ruler and the ruled particularly through the major characters Dr. Aziz an Indian and Mr. Fielding an English man. Due to complex racial and class distinction that created unfavourable circumstances gave rise to misunderstanding and separation in the long run with bitter suspicion and hatred towards each other. The first part of the novel determines the backdrop and unfolds the plot. The relation of the Indians and the English, between the ruler and the ruled, master and servant have continued to be normal until they were disturbed by the arrival of the two English ladies- one old Mrs. Moore and the other young Adela Quested who are anxious in their own different ways to find a passage to India. It is their desire not only to tour India and see its sights but what is somewhat singular to make contacts with the Indians and by so doing to find a passage into their hearts. This desire is so different from the mentality of other Europeans who have been entrenched in India for quite some time that leads different kinds of complications in the story. Additionally, the physical separation of the city of Chandrapur into sections along with the separation of the earth and sky are indicative of the separation of the deeper significance that exists between the Indian and the English sectors. The novel deals with the human relationship and the central idea that underlies its plot are: "Is it possible for the Indian and the Englishman to be friends?" To show both sides of the questions Mr. Aziz and his friend stand in sharp contrast to the English characters who also discuss the Anglo-Indian relationship.

Objective:

The main objective of the study is to judge the British attitude towards the Indians and that of the Indians towards the British in perspective of the main purpose of writing the novel.

Significance

We know that every author great or small has his or her specific objective at the time of producing any form of a masterpiece which we may regard as the message that he or she aspires to lay before the readers who can finally grasp after clear and mindful study. We all know by heart and soul that A Passage to India is a world-class novel translated and retranslated into many languages of the world with universal appeal to understand the mysteries of human life that embodies or unfolds remarkably the psychological clash between the Indian and the British in the past when the formers were subjects and the latter were ruler. E. M. Forster as a first-rate novelist in India with his vivid knowledge of

how the British looked upon the Indians and the Indians' attitude towards them which we can term as the worst form of hatred and enmity. In support and testimony of this adverse relation, the author has given examples of certain English characters like Rony Heaslop and Turton who not only hate the Indians they were in contact but also insulted them openly which has been critically pictured in many passages of the novel. The final attempt that had been made to reconcile these two races was an eyewash as the inherent cultural conflicts forced them to stand apart forever beyond the expectation of further enmity and friendliness in the cruel world that divides them. Forster's basic aim truly speaking was to identify the distinctive feature that widens the gap and create obstacles on this way to forge them towards friendship and love. It is something like the gospel truth that those who hurt each other should remain separate and the rest can live together. So where there is the difference of colour and race there can be no lasting relationship as history provides us within numerous examples. That is why Forster to vindicate the realities of life without taking resort to any unreal and unfounded truth that breaks up like a pack of cards with a touch of truth.

Literature Review:

A Passage to India is replete with the liberal humanism that has been presented through the half of the novel and Mr. Fielding and Dr. Aziz bear the testimony. Rao (2014) stated, "the college principal represents Forster in the novel. Sane views that English character Fielding is totally relieved free from ethnic superstition (P.159). Forster believes that worthy people are free and frank and amiable. The relationship between the British and the Indians could be successful, had it been like the one between Fielding and Aziz. In this context Shaheen (2004) shows that any discussion of Forster's politics must involve this long-life tradition since he is familiar as a liberal humanist. In chapter 5 (p. 22) he reveals that a fresh look at this point without avoiding textual into ethical form.

It is clear that all types of conflicts have been touched by Forster that caused the failure of most of the personal relationships such as that between the Indians and the Anglo-Indian bureaucrats, that among the several communal groups, the natives themselves and also the English people, who were not less divided than their Indian counterparts. 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." The aforementioned words suggest the discrimination exercised by the colonisers, and their attempt to always consider the Orient as inferior or second-hand citizens.

According to Nafi (2016) stated the gulf of difference between the Indians and the British arises mainly due to cultural barriers. 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 efforts 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 big gulf between the two had been beset with hundreds of hurdles.

Besides our background knowledge of the original edition of *A Passage to India* written by E. M. Forster, we had the opportunity to read a few research works on the subject that we selected for our academic writing with titles different from that of ours. Their discussion points were confined to cultural and racial aspects of the novel that stands on the way to a lasting relationship based on the friendship between great geographical and remote distance identifying as the Indian and the British. But in our assiduous fact-finding work, we have emphasised on the superiority complex and abominably high-class mentality of the British towards their subjects in India and their uncompromising attitude to bridge the gap as a necessary condition for a good gesture.

Analysis:

The relationship between Aziz and Fielding is the most significant personal relationship established in *A Passage to India*. In spite of so many barriers of race and character, the two men succeed in creating a unique rapport that stands out as evidence of the power of good-will and kindness. The course of the Aziz-Fielding relationship points to the difficulties men of different races in trying to understand one another. In their very first meeting, the difference between the two men dissolved by their mutual trust in each other and by the power of friendship. Knowing nothing of each other the two men behave with spontaneous affection and generosity towards each other. In their next meeting, Aziz shows Fielding the photograph of his dead wife. It shows the intimacy between the two.

Fielding's relations with Aziz became quite informal, even intimate. When Aziz is arrested, Fielding refuses to believe the charge that has been brought against him and repeatedly says that the man is innocent. He withstands the collective madness of his own countrymen and the pressure of circumstantial evidence. Fielding himself at odds with fellow Englishmen, he resigns his membership of the club and goes to discuss Aziz's defence with Aziz's Moslem friends. At this crisis in his life, his faith in Aziz remains unshaken and his conviction of Aziz's innocent unassailable.

But after Aziz's arrest and release, the fundamental differences of character and outlook rise to the surface and threaten the mutual trust on which they have based their understanding. Aziz is now determined to take revenge upon Adela for ruining his career but Fielding, moved by pity for the helpless Adela asks Aziz to withdraw his revengeful demand for heavy damage from Adela. Aziz now suspects that Fielding is pleading for Adela because he wants to marry her for the money. This suspicion spreads in his mind like poison which leads him to break with Fielding on this issue.

The Janmashtami festival was being celebrated at the place of Mau. Fielding has come to this state in the capacity of a Government Education Officer to inspect the functioning of the school of Mau. With his two children of Mrs. Moore-Stella and Ralph have also come. They were staying at the guest house. A chance meeting with Ralph who is stung by bees brings Aziz to the guest house. When the festival is at its height, Aziz, forgetting his hatred of the English, takes out the son of Mrs. Moore, Ralph, to show him the immersion ceremony of Lord Krishna. Fielding and his wife Stella were in another boat and amidst the noise and confusion of the ceremony and the thunder of rains, the two boats collide, the four people are thrown against one another. In the forcible meeting between Aziz and Fielding, there is a combination of the mysterious influences of Mrs. Moore, Shri Krishna, and the healing waters. The misunderstanding of Aziz, the restricted responses of the British, the suspicion, hatred, and pettiness between them all these seem to dissolve in water. Thus the frosty relation that existed between Fielding and Aziz is ended up and they are friends once more.

The culture and racial differences, and personal misunderstandings separate between Aziz and Fielding. In his conversation with Fielding, Aziz tells the cause that the Indians tolerate the British are only for the political reason. Aziz says: "Clear out, clear out, I say. Why are we put to so much suffering?"

But they realise that their character and outlook have changed radically. Fielding is now siding with Anglo-Indian and Aziz with Indian nationalism. They cannot continue their friendship under these circumstances. Thus the relationship between Aziz and Fielding shows us the complex tensions between East and West and the difficulties of human communication which ultimately intervene and make it impossible.

Fielding and Aziz are the two leading characters of *A Passage to India*. They have been sharply contrasted and presented possessed of qualities, which serve as a foil to the other. Fielding is an Englishman, Aziz is a Muslim. Fielding is a bachelor (for a considerable part of the novel), Aziz is a widower with three children. Aziz's temperament is highly strung and intensely emotional, it is like a veritable volcano, Fielding's is unemotional, undisturbed in any

circumstances and his portrait is of a perfect gentleman all the time. Aziz is a poet who sings of the same music of eternity, Fielding is a skeptic, who doubts any values of existences beyond this mundane world. Despite their temperamental differences, the two are friends, dear friends, and their friendship receives a temporary setback due to misunderstanding, but they soon become friends again. Then friendship, which begins surprisingly and suddenly gets cemented through a party and Aziz's illness, and meets with an estrangement due to perplexity and misunderstanding, is finally led on a state of rehabilitation and mutual reconciliation.

A greater portion of the novel, it is true, deals with the relationship between Aziz and Fielding and it includes within its ambit the larger question, whether Europeans and Indians could become real friends. The plot of the novel is devoted to systematically working out the heavy stresses and strains which come to be imposed on their friendship. Aziz is confronted with stresses and tensions with Fielding and Fielding is shown in resolving them and solving the minor and at least one major difficulty in which Aziz finds himself thrown into. Aziz meets with difficulties and reacts in a manner which brings out his chief traits, Fielding finds himself in the same maelstrom which is the result of his attempt to extricate Aziz from these difficulties and espousal of his cause, bringing out, as in the case of Aziz, strong point of his character. If the friendship between Aziz and Fielding is to succeed, and illustration of this is the main theme of the novel, it becomes incumbent on the novelist to express those qualities in Fielding's character, which are conspicuous by their absence in the character of Aziz, which will be designed to set off Aziz's nervous and emotional temperament.

Satire is one of the dominant weapons used by Forster in this novel to serve his purpose. The mischievous policy of the British rulers has been brought under the impact of Forster's sharp satire in this novel. When after resigning from British Indian service, Dr. Aziz joined service in a Hindu state, the political Agent, who was an Englishman, tried to poison the mind of the Hindu ruler by saying that it would be impious on his part to allow himself to be attended upon by a Moslem doctor. This is how they tried to divide the Moslem and the Hindus but this policy ultimately recoiled against them. The Hindus and Moslems clashed and fought with one another but in their heart of hearts, they realised that the Britishers were the villains of the piece in the drama of discord and disharmony in their life and so they came to hate the Britishers worse than the plague on earth. Fielding in the concluding part of the novel.

Conclusion:

To sum up the ultimate message of the novel with which the author made his experiment has loomed large when Mr. Fielding and Dr. Aziz as a former friend tried to reshape their old relationship but failed because of the diametrically opposite cultural difference of the English and the Indian Characters respectively represent the coloniser and the colonised. In consequence, they had to give up their attempt to heal the wounds to foster the bonding and were bound to say goodbye to each other. Here lies the success of the writer's feasibility study of human relation that could not continue to sustain in spite of the best efforts to mend mutual faults of disrespect and distrust culminating in catastrophic end beyond the expectation of the readers as opposed to the spirit of the book remarkable for its bold and efficient use of symbolic effects. It is this extraordinary quality that has brought a unique position for Forster.

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