



A Passage to India

E. M. Forster

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Introduction

A Passage to India, published in 1924, was E. M. Forster's first novel in fourteen years, and the last novel he wrote. Subtle and rich in symbolism, the novel works on several levels. On the surface, it is about India—which at the time was a colonial possession of Britain—and about 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. On a more symbolic level, the novel also addresses questions of faith (both religious faith and faith in social conventions). Forster's narrative centers on Dr. Aziz, a young Indian physician whose attempt to establish friendships with several British characters has disastrous consequences. In the course of the novel, Dr. Aziz is accused of attempting to rape a young Englishwoman.

Aziz's friend Mr. Fielding, a British teacher, helps to defend Aziz. Although the charges against Aziz are dropped during his trial, the gulf between the British and native Indians grows wider than ever, and the novel ends on an ambiguous note. 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 British unfairly, the book was popular with 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 scholars, critics, and other writers consider it a classic of early twentieth-century fiction, but in a survey of readers conducted by Waterstone's Bookstore and Channel 4 television in Britain at the end of 1996, it was voted as one of the "100 Greatest Books of the Century."

Author Biography

When Edward Morgan Forster completed *A Passage to India*, he was in his mid-forties and was already a respected and relatively successful novelist. Between 1905 and 1910 he had published four well-crafted Edwardian novels of upper-middle class life and manners: *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905), *The Longest Journey* (1907), *A Room With a View* (1908), and *Howards End* (1910). However, although he had continued to write short stories as well as another novel, *Maurice* (published in 1971, after Forster's death), he published little in the decade after *Howards End*.

Born in London on January 1, 1879, E. M. Forster was an only child. His father, an architect, died when Forster was only a year old. The boy was raised by his mother, grandmother, and his father's aunt, who left Forster the sum of 8,000 pounds in her will. This large amount of money eventually paid for Forster's education and his early travels. Early in the new twentieth century it also enabled him to live independently while he established his career as a writer.

Forster grew up in the English countryside north of London, where he had a happy early childhood. He attended an Eastbourne preparatory school and then the family moved to Kent so that he could attend Tonbridge School (a traditional English public school), where he was miserable. However, he found happiness and intellectual stimulation when he went to Cambridge University. There, at King's College, he studied the classics and joined a student intellectual society known as the Apostles. Among his teachers was the philosopher G. E. Moore, who had an important influence on Forster's views. He made many friends and acquaintances, some of whom went on to become important writers and eventually became active in the Bloomsbury Group.

After graduating from Cambridge, Forster traveled in Italy and Greece. These experiences further broadened his outlook, and he decided to become a writer. He became an instructor at London's Working Men's College in 1902 and remained with them for two decades.

In 1906, while living with his mother in the town of Weybridge, near London, Forster tutored an Indian student named Syed Ross Masood. The two developed a close friendship, and Forster became curious about India. In 1912 Forster visited India for the first time, with some friends from Cambridge University, and spent some time with Masood there. He stayed in India for six months and saw the town of Bankipore, located on the Ganges River in northeast India. Bankipore became the model for Chandrapore. Forster also saw the nearby Barabar Caves, which gave him the idea for the Marabar Caves. While in India he wrote first drafts of seven chapters of a new novel that would become *A Passage to India*. However, after returning to England he put the work aside and instead wrote *Maurice*, a novel about a homosexual love affair. Because its theme was considered very controversial at the time, Forster decided not to publish this book during his lifetime.

During World War I, Forster worked as a Red Cross volunteer in Alexandria, Egypt. In 1921 he made a second visit to India, where he spent six months as private secretary to the Maharajah of Dewas Senior, an independent Moslem state. He gathered more material about India, and after returning to England he finished writing *A Passage to India*, which he dedicated to Masood. Forster found the writing process difficult and feared that the book would be a failure. He was relieved by the book's favorable reception, and in the remaining forty–five years of his life he received many awards and honors. Although he continued to write short stories, essays, and radio programs, he turned away from the novel form.

Forster died of a stroke on June 7, 1970, in Coventry, England. Today, his literary reputation remains high, and all of his novels, except *The Longest Journey*, have been adapted into films.

Plot Summary

Part I–Mosque

Set in India several decades before the end of British Rule, *A Passage to India* by E. M. Forster explores the relationships that ensue when Dr. AZIZ, an Indian doctor, is befriended by Mrs. Moore and Miss Adela Quested, two recently arrived Englishwomen. In the opening scene, Dr. Aziz is involved in a discussion about whether or not it is possible for an Indian to be friends with an Englishman. The conversation is interrupted by a message from the Civil Surgeon, Major Callendar, who requests Dr. Aziz's immediate assistance. Aziz makes his way to Callendar's compound but arrives only to be told that the Civil Surgeon is out. On his way back home, AZIZ stops in a mosque to rest and meets Mrs. Moore. He is delighted by her kind behavior and accompanies her back to the Chandrapore Club. Mrs. Moore's son, City Magistrate Ronny Heaslop, quickly learns of his mother's meeting with the Indian doctor. He instructs her not to mention the incident to his fiancée, Miss Quested, because he does not want her wondering whether the "natives" are treated properly "and all that sort of nonsense."

Meanwhile, Adela, who travelled all the way from England to decide whether or not she will marry Ronny, expresses her desire "to see the real India." The Collector, Mr. Turton, makes plans to throw a Bridge Party—a party to bridge the gulf between East and West. But the event is not a great success and Adela thinks her countrymen mad for inviting guests and then not receiving them amiably. One of the few officials who does make a genuine effort to make the party work is Mr. Fielding, the Principal of the Government College. He hosts a gathering of his own a couple of days later, and it is then that Dr. Aziz first meets Adela and invites her and Mrs. Moore to visit the nearby Marabar Caves. It is also on this afternoon that a friendship begins to develop between Aziz and Fielding.

Part II–Caves

The day of the visit to the Marabar Caves arrives and, except for the absence of Fielding and his assistant, Professor Godbole, who miss the early morning train, the expedition begins successfully. An elephant transports the party into the hills and a picnic breakfast awaits AZIZ'S guests when they reach their goal near the caves. However, things begin to change when they visit the first cave. Mrs Moore nearly faints when she feels herself crammed in the dark and loses sight of Adela and Dr. Aziz. She feels something strike her face and hears a terrifying echo:

The echo in a Marabar cave is . . . entirely devoid of distinction. Whatever is said, the same monotonous noise replies, and quivers up and down the walls until it is absorbed into the roof 'Bourn' is the sound as far as the human alphabet can express it, or 'bououm', or 'ou–boum,'—utterly dull Hope, politeness, the blowing of a nose, the squeak of a boot, all produce 'bourn' Coming at a moment when [Mrs Moore] chanced to be fatigued, it had managed to murmur. 'Pathos, piety, courage—they exist, but are Identical, and so is filth. Everything exists, nothing has value.' If one had spoken vileness in that place, or quoted lofty poetry, the comment would have been the same—'ou–boum'.

The echo lingers in Mrs. Moore's mind and begins "in some indescribable way to undermine her hold on life." She suddenly realizes that she no longer wants to communicate with her children, Aziz, God, or anyone else and Sinks into a state of apathy and cynicism.

Meanwhile, Aziz and Adela are en route to visit more of the caves. Preoccupied by thoughts of her marriage and by the disturbing realization that she and Ronny do not love each other, Adela inadvertently offends her host by asking an ill–thought question. Aziz is momentarily annoyed and slips into one of the caves "to recover his balance." Adela loses sight of him and also enters one of the caves. When AZIZ

reappears, he catches a glimpse of Adela running down the hill towards an approaching car. Thinking that she has merely gone off to meet Ronny, Aziz returns to the camp and learns that Adela has unexpectedly driven away. The remaining members of the expedition take the train back to Chandrapore. Upon their return, Dr. Aziz is arrested and charged with making insulting advances to Miss Quested in the Marabar Caves.

That evening, there is a meeting at the Club and Fielding stands alone against his countrymen by stating his belief that Aziz is innocent. Adela remains ill for several days, hovering "between common sense and hysteria" and, like Mrs. Moore, is plagued by the sound of the echo. She begins to have doubts about what happened in the cave and eventually tells Ronny that she may have made a mistake. Mrs. Moore supports Adela's belief that Aziz is innocent but Ronny insists that the trial must proceed and sends his mother back to England. When Adela takes the stand, she feels herself returned to the Marabar Hills and finds the exact reply to all the questions put to her. However, she is unable to say for sure whether Aziz followed her into the cave; she could see herself in one of the caves, but could not locate Aziz. Finally she tells the court that she has made a mistake and that Dr. Aziz never followed her into the cave. The Superintendent withdraws the charges and Aziz is released "without one stain on his character."

After the trial, Adela receives the news of Mrs. Moore's death at sea and can no longer bear Ronny's company. He eventually breaks off their engagement because marrying her would now ruin his career. Before her voyage back to England, Adela is subjected to one final adventure when her servant, Antony, attempts to blackmail her by claiming she was Fielding's mistress. By this time, Fielding, who believes that Adela should not suffer for her mistake, has managed to convince Aziz to renounce his right to monetary compensation. Aziz begins to regret that decision when he hears the "naughty rumour" concerning his two friends. The misunderstanding is complicated when Aziz learns that Fielding is also returning to England. Aziz suspects that his friend intends to marry Adela for her money and leaves Chandrapore before Fielding can explain or say good-bye.

Part III–Temple

Two years later, Dr. Aziz and Professor Godbole are both living in Mau, a town several hundred miles west of the Marabar Hills and which is currently in the midst of Hindu religious celebrations. Dr. Aziz has learned that Fielding, along with his wife and brother-in-law, will soon be stopping in Mau on business. Fielding had sent his old friend a letter explaining all the details about his wedding to Stella Moore, Mrs. Moore's daughter, but Aziz never read it. As a result, he still thinks that Fielding has married Adela. All misunderstandings are finally cleared up when they meet, but Aziz does not care who Fielding has married; his heart is now with his own people and he wishes no Englishman or Englishwoman to be his friend.

Later that day, Fielding and his wife borrow a boat in order to watch the religious procession. Aziz runs into Ralph Moore and brings him out on the water too, thereby repeating the gesture of hospitality he had intended to make through the visit to the Marabar Caves two years earlier. At the height of the ceremony, the two boats collide and all are thrown into the water. The accident erases all bitterness between Fielding and Aziz and the two go back "laughingly to their old relationship." A few days later, they go for a ride in the Mau jungles and Aziz gives Fielding a letter for Miss Quested in which he thanks her for her fine behavior two years back. They talk about politics and Aziz foresees the day when India shall finally get rid of the English. Then, Aziz tells Fielding, "you and I shall be friends."

Part 1: Chapter 1

Part 1: Chapter 1 Summary

This story is set in Chandrapore, India, on the banks of the Ganges River. The city itself is run-down and poverty-stricken. Even though it is in decay with houses sometimes even falling down, it persists. However, as one moves inland, it improves. On the first rise, there is a hospital and an oval parade-ground. A more prosperous housing area is near the railway station. On the second rise, it improves dramatically. Here is where the civil service employees of the occupying British government live. There are offices, a club, and beautiful gardens.

Part 1: Chapter 1 Analysis

Chandrapore is the setting for this story. The poverty of the lower tier of the city is emblematic of the lives of most of the native Indians. The second tier indicates that there are areas of the city that are not so impoverished; but only the upper tier, the one occupied by the British occupiers, exhibits any level of affluence. This is what this story is about—the separation of the races, the classes, and even the religions of the inhabitants of India in this period of time. The date is ambiguous. Some critics say that it reflects the India of 1912, Forster's first visit. However, others feel that it is between 1912 and his second visit in 1921, when the unrest and resentment against the British that eventually led to Indian independence had reached a fever pitch. In 1919, British troops had fired on unarmed protesters at Amritsar in Punjab Province, killing a large number. This incident became known as the Amritsar Massacre. By the time Forster visited in 1921, the feelings of the Indians were much more volatile than are pictured in *A Passage to India*. It's reasonable to assume that the setting is sometime between 1912 and 1919.

Part 1: Chapter 2

Part 1: Chapter 2 Summary

Dr. Aziz, has two close friends, Mahmoud Ali, a lawyer, and Hamidullah, the leading trial lawyer in Chandrapore. All three are Muslims. Dr. Aziz's wife is dead, and he has three small children who live with their maternal grandmother. He lives meagerly so he can send his salary to the grandmother. The three friends are having dinner at the home of Hamidullah and the conversation is about the arrogance of the occupying British and their insufferable treatment even of Indian intellectuals and professionals. As they finish their meal, a messenger brings a note asking Dr. Aziz to come to the bungalow of Major Callendar, the Civil Surgeon, and the head of the hospital.

He goes on his bicycle to the major's home as requested only to find that he is not there and that he has left no message. On the way, he has a flat tire and must hire a tonga, a two-wheeled horse-drawn cart. As he leaves the major's domicile, two British women come out and commandeer his tonga. Aziz tells the driver, "Go, I will pay you tomorrow," and calls after the women, "You are most welcome, ladies." They pay him no attention.

He leaves his business card and asks a servant to secure him a tonga, but the servant tells him they are all at the club, so Dr. Aziz decides to walk. On the way, he stops off at a mosque to rest and seek comfort in a house of worship of his own religion. As he sits there, he spies a woman who has been in the mosque, which makes him angry. He tells her that she has no right there, she should have taken off her shoes, that this is a holy place for Muslims. She replies that she has, in fact, removed her shoes and left them at the entrance. He apologizes for speaking so unkindly and tells her that women rarely come except to be seen by others. She replies, "That makes no difference. God is here."

He is touched by this and asks her name. "Mrs. Moore," she tells him, and he says he

will tell his community about her. He guesses that she is newly arrived, and she acquiesces. He offers to help her any way that he can and offers to find a carriage, but she tells him that she is only going to the club. He warns her about walking about alone at night—that there are unsavory characters about as well as snakes.

Then he finds that she has come to visit her son, the City Magistrate, Mr. Heaslop, and that she has two other children by another marriage with a different last name. He tells her that he has the same number of children. She says that she has visited the hospital—where Major Callendar has taken her. She tells him she doesn't care much for Mrs. Callendar, which unleashes a torrent of complaint from him. Not only did the major summon him from his evening with his friends and then not bother to stay until he arrived, but also Mrs. Callendar was one of the women who had so rudely taken his tonga. He tells Mrs. Moore that she is different because she has cared enough to listen.

He escorts her back to the club, and she says that if she were a member, she would invite him in, but he tells her that Indians are not allowed, even as guests.

Part 1: Chapter 2 Analysis

This is an important chapter because it sets many things in motion that are significant later. First of all, the plot hinges on Aziz and his disastrous interaction with the Englishwoman who is here to pursue an engagement with Mrs. Moore's son and who is accompanying Mrs. Moore. Secondly, the interaction between religions—Christian, Muslim, and Hindu—is an important theme. Thirdly, the plot comes full circle in the last section of the story when Aziz meets Mrs. Moore's other two children in Mau, several hundred miles from Chandrapore.

Part 1: Chapter 3

Part 1: Chapter 3 Summary

Mrs. Moore has come to Chandrapore to accompany Adela Quested, who is sort of betrothed to her son. Adela desires to see the "real India," so Ronny (Mrs. Moore's son, the City Magistrate) asks the schoolmaster of the Government College, Cyril Fielding, how they might best do that. He recommends, rather flippantly, that they should try seeing Indians. The women laugh at such an idea. "Natives don't respect one any more after meeting one," they say. Mr. Turton, the collector, steps in and tells her she can see any type she likes.

However, she doesn't want that kind of superficial contact, so the collector recommends that they have a Bridge Party, described as an occasion where local citizens are invited to the club to a sort of reception. Mrs. Turton talks about Adela on their way home, saying that she isn't "pukka"—first-class. She says that Fielding, the schoolmaster, also isn't "pukka," so the two of them should hit it off.

Mrs. Moore tells them she has gone to the mosque, and her son chides her, telling her about the snakes. She says that the young man she met there had said the same thing, and she tells them about her conversation with Dr. Aziz and how much she enjoyed visiting with him. Ronny is indignant that the doctor had attempted to correct her about her shoes. He questions her about his attitude toward the Anglo-Indians (the English government employees) and she tells him that it seemed favorable except that he didn't care for Major Callendar. Ronny jumps on this and says he will report this to the Major. She objects, saying it was a private conversation. He says there's always something behind every remark the natives make. She makes him promise not to pass it on, and he reluctantly agrees.

He asks her not to talk to Adela about Aziz because she would begin to wonder if the Anglo-Indians were treating the natives properly, and he wants to make a good

impression on her. After they say goodnight, she ponders her encounter with Dr. Aziz and feels that he has been slandered and misunderstood.

Part 1: Chapter 3 Analysis

This discussion between Mrs. Moore and Ronny about her meeting with Aziz is important because Forster uses it to set the stage for later action. The attitude of the British expatriates toward the native Indians is introduced here. It also has a somewhat sinister tone to it in that Ronny seems to indicate that Aziz will be punished for daring to say anything unkind about an Anglo-Indian.

We are also introduced here to the viciousness of the women, which will play a significant role in the action. In addition, we learn of Ronny's own awareness and concern about how newly-arrived British citizens respond to the treatment of the natives, which he passes off as a failure to understand only because of their inexperience; but it obscures the fact that this treatment is deliberate and is the result of prejudice as much as it is of convenience.

Part 1: Chapter 4

Part 1: Chapter 4 Summary

Nawab Bahadur, a generous and wealthy leader in the Muslim community, discusses the invitation to the Bridge Party with Mahmoud Ali and others. They are cynical and resentful of the empty attempt to pretend an interest and concern in the Indian community, but Nawab disputes their attitude, saying he welcomes and appreciates the gesture. He will have business elsewhere that day but will drive the twenty–five miles to shake the collector's hand, and this will have considerable weight with others in the community.

Part 1: Chapter 4 Analysis

At this point, Nawab seems to be the only neutral party in this Indian/British conflict in Chandrapore. However, we see in the closing chapters that he abandons any effort to play a medial, mediating role when their behaviors go too far.

Part 1: Chapter 5

Part 1: Chapter 5 Summary

The Bridge Party honoring Mrs. Moore and Miss Quested, takes place on Tuesday evening, with the Indians in a group on one side of the lawn and the Anglo-Indians on the other.

As they stand discussing Cousin Kate, a play put on at the club by some of the members, Mrs. Moore notices how conventional her son has become. He had scorned this play when they had seen it in London, but now he is praising it and pretending it is a good play to avoid hurting anyone's feelings. It has been reviewed rather unkindly locally, "the sort of thing no white man could have written," says one of the women. Although the play was praised, the following sentence appeared in it: "Miss Derek, though she charmingly looked her part, lacked the necessary experience, and occasionally forgot her words." Nancy Derek, a rather unconventional unmarried young Englishwoman, is a personal assistant to the Maharani of Mudkul, an independent Indian state. She is here visiting with the McBrydes of the police and had stepped in to fill a gap at the last moment.

Some of the Indian wives have come to the party, and the discussion among the Anglo-Indians involves a critique of all who have come and why. Mostly, they conclude that they only come to curry favor. The Anglo women resent having to make the effort to meet any of them and don't understand why the women bother to come. When Mrs. Moore asks who the women are, the answer is, "You're superior to them, anyway. Don't forget that. You're superior to everyone in India except one or two of the Ranis, and they're on an equality."

Mrs. Moore and Adela are interested in visiting with the women but feel they don't know the language; but one of the women, speaking very good English because she has lived in London, speaks up. However, Adela's and Mrs. Moore's attempts to make

conversation are not successful. Mrs. Moore asks one of the women whether they might call upon her, and she agrees, but they have trouble arriving at a date for the visit. Her husband intervenes and tells them to come on Thursday. He will send his carriage to get them.

Cyril Fielding, the principal at the college, visits with Mrs. Moore and Adela and invites them to tea. He is ashamed and angry that the Indians have been invited to the party and have been treated so badly, especially by the women. Since they want to meet some members of the Indian community, he will invite Dr. Aziz, whom Mrs. Moore met at the mosque, and an old professor, who sings Indian music.

Mrs. Moore and Ronny discuss Adela. She feels that he should be spending more time with her alone. Adela feels that the Anglos do not behave pleasantly to the Indians. He says they are not here to behave pleasantly; they are simply here to keep the peace. Mrs. Moore is annoyed at his attitude. She thinks the Englishmen pose as gods, which Mrs. Moore disapproves; she says that India is a part of the earth and God puts people on earth to be pleasant to each other. "God is love," she says. Ronny does not disapprove of religion; he just doesn't want it to attempt to influence his life.

Part 1: Chapter 5 Analysis

Forster carries even further his depiction of the attitudes of the British interlopers toward the native Indians. We feel his indignation in this chapter. Cyril Fielding is introduced in this chapter, and we can see already that he is a mediating force, and a character the author is using to show that the gap between the cultures can be bridged by decency and an interest in the Indians as human beings. This has already been introduced in the encounter between Mrs. Moore and Aziz. Later, we will find that Fielding, who is a sympathetic character, is not religious, so it serves the author's purpose to show Ronny, who does not come off very well in the story, as also indifferent to religion. The contrast indicates that it is not whether or not one is religious that determines character, but the choices one makes with regard to relationships to others.

Part 1: Chapter 6

Part 1: Chapter 6 Summary

Due to a busy surgical schedule, Dr. Aziz did not go to the Bridge Party. Major Callendar is angry because he did not come when summoned and didn't understand that his bicycle had broken down in front of the Cow Hospital, which was not on the way from Dr. Aziz's residence. What the Major didn't understand was that educated Indians visit one another constantly and that Dr. Aziz had been at Hamidullah's house when he received the summons. Aziz is amused by the behavior of the Anglos most of the time; he knows that he is competent and indispensable, so he doesn't take them too seriously.

However, Dr. Panna Lal, an older doctor who works with Aziz, had felt that they should go to the party. He has a new tumtum (a two-wheeled one-horse cart) and wants Aziz to drive it. But when the time came, Aziz felt that he could not bear the mocking of the English women. It was the anniversary of his wife's death, and he is still dealing with his grief. He is very unhappy. Instead he goes to Hamidullah's house and borrows his horse and plays polo.

When he returns home, he finds the invitation from Mr. Fielding to tea and is pleased. He looks forward to meeting the educator and getting to know him.

Part 1: Chapter 6 Analysis

We have one more instance here where the divide between the two cultures is mentioned—Aziz's visiting with friends instead of being at home, and the major's failure to understand that aspect of Indian culture.

Part 1: Chapter 7

Part 1: Chapter 7 Summary

Mr. Fielding is over the age of forty, has experienced a lot of life, and is devoted to education. He has always gotten along with Englishmen, but he does not like these expatriate Anglo-Indians in Chandrapore, and they consider him to be a disruptive force. He feels that the segregationist attitudes of the British leaders here are evidence of stupidity. He calls the whites "pinko-grey," and they are offended. Actually, the men are more tolerant of him because of his good heart and strong body. It's the women who feel threatened by him. He has found that he can be in with the Indians and still be friends with the Englishmen, but not the Englishwomen, who never come to the college except for official functions.

Aziz comes early and the two hit it off right away. Now he finds that the two women will also be coming to tea as well as Naryan Godbole, who is a Brahman—a Hindu of the highest caste. The Muslims don't care much for the Brahmans, but Dr. Godbole is accepted because of his sincerity.

Aziz would have had trouble visiting with the women if either had been young and pretty; as it is, Mrs. Moore is old and Adela is plain, so he enjoys the conversation. In an effort to understand, they ask him to explain why the Indian lady and gentleman who had invited them to come and visit and were going to send a carriage did not follow through. Everyone is encouraging them to make nothing of it, but Aziz says it's because they are Hindus and have no idea of society. Besides, he tells them, they were probably ashamed of their house.

Without giving it much thought, Aziz invites them to his house. Then he remembers that it is not fit to invite anyone to visit. He gets carried away with the opportunity to talk to them and rattles on until Professor Godbole arrives. The old professor takes his tea at a distance from the others; he considers them outcastes. He is elderly and

wizened and has skin as fair as a European's.

Aziz, the garrulous, is at it again, talking about everything and anything. The interest of the women in India turns him loose. He asks Adela why she doesn't just settle in India, to which she answers without thinking, "I'm afraid I can't do that," without realizing until later what the remark must have meant to Mrs. Moore, who is expecting her to marry Ronny and settle down here.

When Adela mentions that Aziz has invited them to his house, he changes the invitation to a trip to the Marabar Caves. Ronny appears and demands that the two women come with him at once to a polo match at the club.

Aziz is offended at the effrontery of the young magistrate and baits him. Ronny takes Fielding aside and complains about Adela being left alone with an Indian. Ronny has broken up a pleasant gathering, and everyone is cross and uncomfortable as the women leave with him. Before they leave, Adela requests that the professor sing, which he does—a religious song in which he entreats the "Lord of the Universe" to come, but he does not come.

Part 1: Chapter 7 Analysis

The author of this story, Edward Morgan Forster, had visited India in 1912. There for about half a year, he visited the town of Bankipore, on the Ganges River, on which Chandrapore is presumed to be based. The Barabar caves are near Bankipore, and probably suggested the Marabar caves of the novel. This story was published for the first time in 1924.

The desire of Adela to see the real India is that of a tourist at this stage, and we can feel her frustration as her attempts seem to come to nothing. She is expecting that the same approaches that work in England will work here—she lets her interest in visiting a family be known, she is invited, but they don't follow through, and she is hurt and doesn't understand. Now Aziz has impulsively invited them to his home, but it can't

happen; and when she pursues the invitation, he switches it. She just doesn't understand. Seeing her role as that of tourist, she naturally expects that she will "see" natives and sights. Her insensitivity is revealed here. What the Indians feel are what other native people feel when they are invaded by strangers and are viewed as curiosities. They don't necessarily return the curiosity, and they are resentful of the depersonalizing. The Indians in Chandrapore have been conditioned, of course, by the arrogant and insensitive treatment of the invading British. They certainly have no desire or curiosity to meet more of them.

The likely fact is that the family that invited them to visit was possibly ashamed of their home as is Aziz reveals the cultural divide as represented in their living accommodations. The British at the station live well in their comfortable bungalows. The exploited natives are too embarrassed to invite them to their humble homes.

Part 1: Chapter 8

Part 1: Chapter 8 Summary

Adela had known Ronny well in England and had come to India to visit him before deciding to be his wife. She does not care much for the person he has become here in this outpost. He is arrogant, rude, insensitive, and chauvinistic. His behavior at Mr. Fielding's house has made her very angry. He forbids them to go on this visit to the caves without British auspices. Mrs. Moore asks to be dropped at the bungalow because she is tired out by the wrangling, and Adela also wants to be left at the house. He forbids them to continue their efforts to try to meet Indians. When they are alone, she tells him that she will not marry him. He takes it in good humor, but she wants to discuss it. They agree to remain friends.

Nawab Bahadur sees them sitting and talking and offers them a little spin in his new car. She goes somewhat reluctantly, her interest in seeing India no longer so strong. While driving in their car, they are struck by an animal and have an accident, but are soon picked up by Nancy Derek in an official car belonging to the Indian state that she works for.

Ronny and Adela have found themselves holding hands in the back seat of the two cars they were riding in and rethink their decision. When they part, they are engaged to be married, and they go in to tell Mrs. Moore. Ronny apologizes for his behavior and for forbidding them to see India.

Part 1: Chapter 8 Analysis

Adela seems to be a modern-thinking young British woman and it is surprising to find her potential fiancé treating her so chauvinistically. There is little to indicate that this marriage has much of a chance.

We see Nawab here again playing a mediating, intercultural role. He is the modern Indian, we are led to believe. He doesn't ride around in two-wheel carts, as do the others. He has a new little car, and he is trying to help introduce Adela to India, as she has said she wants. She has finally found an Indian who is willing to help her be a tourist.

We see a decline here in Adela's enthusiasm for seeing the country, brought on at least in part by her frustrating efforts to work out a relationship with Ronny. Later in the novel, this lessening of her original urge to see the country will figure in the plot.

Part 1: Chapter 9

Part 1: Chapter 9 Summary

Aziz has a slight fever and is taking it as an opportunity to stay at home in what is described as a hovel. He feels the need for female companionship and decides to try to visit Calcutta to satisfy this need in a brothel. He ruminates that if Major Callendar had been an Indian, he would have understood this need and would have granted two or three days' leave to Calcutta without asking questions.

Aziz is visited in his bed by all his friends, including Dr. Lal, on behalf of the Major. He checks his temperature and declares that he has a slight fever. Then Fielding comes and Aziz is embarrassed by the poor conditions he lives in. There is a discussion about Providence, and Fielding shocks them by telling them that he doesn't believe in God.

They ask whether in England most people are atheists, and Fielding replies that educated, thoughtful people are, for the most part. They ask him whether or not morality also declines, and he admits that it probably does. If this is the case, they ask, how is England justified in holding India?

Fielding says he is here because he needed a job. He can't tell them why England is here or whether she ought to be here. They point out that there are well-qualified Indians for the job he holds. They assure him that they are glad he is here because he respects them, and they like to talk to him frankly like this.

He tells them that he doesn't know why he got the job over an Indian—that perhaps he got in first—but he, too, is delighted to be here.

Part 1: Chapter 9 Analysis

The plot in this story has several levels. The conflict between the two cultures is the

major one; and by this stage, it is set in play very clearly. We know by now that the British consider themselves superior to the Indians and have little respect or concern for the people they are supposed to be governing. Adela's and Mrs. Moore's distaste for their attitudes and behavior emphasizes how wrong they are.

Another conflict that Forster has set up is between religions. Aziz is Muslim and does not understand or feel comfortable with either Hindu or Christian. However, he does admire Professor Godbole, who, although he is of a superior caste and would be expected to look down on everyone else, is kind and friendly. Mrs. Moore sets herself apart by her kindness and her genuine interest in Aziz. She rises above the religious conflict and sets an example for how all of them might come together and live in peace. She is eventually venerated by the Hindus; and Aziz, a Muslim, never fails to admire her and hold her example up for himself and others.

But now we have Fielding bringing a whole new force into this story. His announcement that he is an atheist is incomprehensible to the company gathered in Aziz's miserable little home. It's important to remember that he is not well accepted in the Christian community, not because of his lack of faith but because of his disapproval of their attitudes and behaviors, which clearly violate Christian teachings. And again, Mrs. Moore is the one who rises above all of this and sets an example that should be followed by the others.

Part 1: Chapter 10

Part 1: Chapter 10 Summary

This short chapter does little to move the plot forward except to introduce the aspect of the climate that does play a role—the heat. It is April, and the oppressively hot weather sets in.

Part 1: Chapter 10 Analysis

The heat is introduced deliberately by Forster as a character in this story albeit a minor one.

Part 1: Chapter 11

Part 1: Chapter 11 Summary

Before Fielding leaves, Aziz calls him back and asks him to open a drawer and take out a picture of his wife. Fielding tells him that he appreciates his showing him the picture but questions why. He asks why he has been afforded the privilege because Muslim women are purdah—do not show their faces. Aziz answers that because Fielding has shown him kindness, he considers him his brother, and his brothers were permitted to see her when she was alive. He tells Fielding that he feels that kindness is the only hope for the building up of India.

Aziz says he shows him the picture because he has nothing else. His children are with their grandmother, and he lives in a hovel. They talk about their lives and Englishwomen. Fielding says they are much nicer in England, that there's something that doesn't suit them out here. Aziz asks him why he isn't married, and he replies that the lady he liked wouldn't marry him. They talk about Adela, and Aziz suggests that Fielding might marry her, but he replies that she is a prig and besides she is engaged to the city magistrate.

Aziz feels that she is nice and sincere.

He feels protective of Fielding. He says that he can't be too careful here because there are always spies and reprimands him for talking about God as he did. He says the others will certainly report it and this is an awful place for scandal. He tells him that he might even lose his job. Fielding answers, "If I do, I do. I shall survive it. I travel light." He says his job is education, that he believes in teaching people to be individuals and to understand other individuals. It's the only thing he does believe in, he tells Aziz.

Aziz now considers Fielding a friend, a brother. He thinks he is truly warmhearted and

unconventional, but not what can be called wise.

Part 1: Chapter 11 Analysis

This exchange between Aziz and Fielding fills in more of the picture in the cultural/religious conflict. As is always true when two cultures come together, attitudes toward women are areas of disagreement. In Aziz's Muslim culture, women are hidden away, not allowed to be seen. In sharp contrast, Adela is not only seen, but she expects to participate freely in interactions between the cultures. She does not realize that she is asking them to do something that is foreign to them, that makes them uncomfortable, and that only increases the already rather fragile relationships. As the story progresses, we will see that these efforts on her part are a catalyst for disaster.

There are so many themes and threads in this story that it's impossible to pursue all of them in one analysis. However, it is important to note here that friendship is one of those threads. Aziz wants to be friends with Fielding across the cultural/religious divide. His showing his wife's picture to Fielding is of major significance here. His desire for friendship cancels out his religious and cultural inhibitions.

Part 2: Chapter 12

Part 2: Chapter 12 Summary

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the Marabar Caves. "A tunnel eight feet long, five feet high, three feet wide, leads to a circular chamber about twenty feet in diameter." They are all alike—there is no carving or nest or anything else to distinguish one from the other. In the circular chamber, if a match is lit, it becomes apparent that the interior walls are a polished mirror.

Part 2: Chapter 12 Analysis

The Marabar caves are an essential component in the setting for this story. Whereas in Chandrapore we can see graphically the cultural levels with the British living on a tier above the other residents, the caves represent a complex spiritual force that will blast the action to its climax. Just as the heat is written by Forster as a palpable character in this story, it would also be reasonable to call the caves a character. They seem to live and move and have their own being as the story progresses.

Part 2: Chapter 13

Part 2: Chapter 13 Summary

In a conversation with Nancy Derek, Adela happens to mention that she is disappointed that Dr. Aziz hasn't followed through on his invitation to the caves. This is heard by a servant and intensified until, when it finally comes to Aziz's ears, he is led to believe that the ladies are deeply offended. He is horrified, so he enlists Fielding to invite them to tea at the caves. Professor Godbole will also be invited. Ronny is not enthusiastic about it; in fact, now no one is enthusiastic about it, not even Adela. Nevertheless, the die is cast, and so the party is planned. Preparations are complicated, what with arranging transportation and managing all the food restrictions of a Brahman, a Muslim, and the ladies. He has arranged for many servants to accompany them. They are to leave very early in the morning, long before daylight.

The women arrive unaccompanied by Fielding, which distresses Aziz; however, the women treat him with kindness, and he is touched. Ronny has sent his own servant with the women, but they don't like him and send him away. The train is ready to leave and Fielding and Godbole are held up at the level-crossing, so they have to leave without them. Aziz is distraught, but Mrs. Moore soothes him. Adela joins in, so they are off. Aziz asks Mohammed Latif, a relative and servant of his, "by the way, what is in these caves? Why are we all going to see them?" Mohammed is unable to answer, but assures Aziz that the local villagers will act as guides.

Part 2: Chapter 13 Analysis

Life in the Indian community seems to be largely driven by gossip. The servants to the British are expert spies, and once they have a tidbit, it is blown out of proportion until it frequently creates crises. The invitation to the tea party is an example of this. Mrs. Moore and Adela have reached the place where their enthusiasm for seeing the "real" India has pretty much run its course. Nevertheless, the mindless invitation at the tea

party has taken on a life of its own. This characteristic of the Indians seems never to be comprehended or taken into account by the British occupiers.

The "snowballing" of this rumor that becomes an invitation foreshadows the coming tornado that is set off by this party, and when Aziz asks what is in the caves, Forster is foreshadowing the disaster to come. Aziz's lack of experience with and knowledge of the caves contributes to the unfortunate outcome.

Part 2: Chapter 14

Part 2: Chapter 14 Summary

Mrs. Moore and Adela have long since lost their excitement and curiosity about seeing India, but they are amused that Mahmoud Ali's butler manages to serve them tea and poached eggs on the train.

The wedding between Adela and Ronny will take place in Simla at the home of her cousins but not until May, so Mrs. Moore's stay has been extended. Adela discusses the plans for the wedding as they travel, but Mrs. Moore is not feeling well and falls asleep. When daylight dawns, they can see the Marabar. Aziz comes and wishes them good morning and advises them to put on their *topis* (insulated helmet-like hats worn especially for protection from the sun). He has arranged for an elephant to take them to the picnic spot near the caves. He has everything planned—an hour to get there, two hours for the caves, and an hour to get back. He tells them that they will be back in time for their tiffin, their midday meal.

They have tea near the caves before their expedition, and Aziz and Mrs. Moore reminisce about their meeting at the mosque. Adela is surprised to find that he knows about Mrs. Moore's other children, and she does not. He tells them how honored he is to have them as his guests, that they have honored him and he feels "like the Emperor Babur." He is a great admirer of the Moguls, and talks about them frequently. He says that some will say Akbar is the greatest of all, but he was not a true Muslim. He was half Hindu. Adela asks, "But wasn't Akbar's new religion very fine? It was to embrace the whole of India."

Aziz replies, "nothing embraces the whole of India, nothing, nothing, and that was Akbar's mistake." She answers that there must be something universal in this country—how else will barriers be broken down. She discusses her concerns about becoming like the other women once she has married Ronny. He replies that she is

certain to be happy with any relative of Mrs. Moore's. He tells her that she will never be rude to the Indian people because it is not in her nature.

Mrs. Moore does not enjoy the cave visit; she feels suffocated, and there is an echo that disturbs her. She feels that someone has touched her; she is detached from Adela and Aziz and feels frantic. She makes her way out with some difficulty. Once outside, she realizes that what had touched her had been a baby held on its mother's hip. She knows that there is nothing evil in the cave, but she decides to go and sit in the shade instead of going into another cave.

So Adela and Aziz go on alone. At Mrs. Moore's suggestion, they leave the crowd of villagers behind and take only one servant with them.

Part 2: Chapter 14 Analysis

The tensions among the various religions in India is very much a part of this story and has played a significant role in the history of India. When Aziz states that nothing embraces the whole of India, he is highlighting the conflicts and the themes of the story. Hoping for peace in a country that is made up of so many different religions and cultures is bound to be somewhat futile at best, and it has been the cause of much violence in the twentieth century.

Forster deliberately writes a lot of ambiguity into this story, and what happens to Mrs. Moore in the cave is an instance of that. From this time forward, she is no longer herself. Because she is a very spiritual person, we must conclude that what happened was a spiritual crisis of some sort. The caves as supernatural force—even an evil one—seems to be suggested here. Mrs. Moore acknowledges that the force that she had felt in the cave has a simple explanation, but it doesn't change its effects. She does not recover from this experience.

Part 2: Chapter 15

Part 2: Chapter 15 Summary

The day has heated up, and as the trio climb, there is little conversation. Adela is thinking about the upcoming wedding and her life in Chandrapore. She suddenly comes to the realization that she does not love Ronny.

She asks Aziz whether he is married, and he replies in the affirmative and invites her to come and see his wife. He also tells her he has children and that they are a great pleasure to him. Then she asks him whether he has more than one wife, and he is shocked that she would ask such a question. He is so upset that he turns loose of her hand and goes into a cave by himself. She is not aware of what she has done and, not seeing him, also enters a cave.

Part 2: Chapter 15 Analysis

Adela has committed a serious faux pas. This is something a British woman would not ask a Muslim man, and he is deeply offended, so deeply that he must isolate himself in order to recover. Symbolic of the British failure to understand the Indians, she doesn't even know that she has blundered.

It's interesting that this character regularly lies or misrepresents the facts. When he invited Fielding's guests to his house, he knew he could not entertain them there. His wife is dead; Adela cannot come and see her, yet Aziz blithely invites her to come. Forster is using this character to exhibit the enigmatic Indian mind.

Part 2: Chapter 16

Part 2: Chapter 16 Summary

Aziz comes out of the cave and finds the servant alone. They hear the sound of an automobile and go to look for it. They see it coming down the Chandrapore Road, but can't see it very well until it comes to a stop immediately below where they are standing; the road ends there.

They hurry back to tell Adela, but they can't find her. They don't know which cave she went into. He chides the servant because he has not kept track of her. Both shout, but to no avail. There are so many caves they have no idea where she might be. Aziz is so distressed that he strikes the servant, who flees.

Then he sees her making her way down the hillside and going to the automobile, speaking to another woman. He comes upon Adela's field glasses and picks them up. He tries to put them over his shoulder, but the strap is broken, so he puts them in his pocket. He goes back and looks in case something else might have been left behind then hears the car engine start up, so he goes back to Mrs. Moore, and Fielding is there. He has come in the car they saw on the road, which is Nancy Derek's car. Mrs. Moore wants to know where Adela is, and Aziz says she has gone down to see Nancy. Her chauffeur informs them that the two women have returned to Chandrapore. Fielding feels that something is amiss as they remount the elephant and begin the journey to the train. Aziz, unaware that anything is wrong, is happy; Fielding is worried.

When they arrive in Chandrapore, the Inspector of Police is waiting for them and arrests Aziz, who tries to resist, but Fielding persuades him to go along and goes with him. He says it's obviously a misunderstanding, and they will clear it up. Mr. Turton refuses to allow Fielding to go along, and Ronny escorts his mother off the train.

Part 2: Chapter 16 Analysis

To this point, everything has been background for the event that is the center of the story. We don't know yet why Adela has fled. We don't know what has happened in the cave. We also don't know why Aziz is being arrested. Suspense is a device that writers use to keep readers reading, and Forster is employing it here. If this were a cliffhanger, the hero would be hanging from the cliff at the end of this chapter.

Part 2: Chapter 17

Part 2: Chapter 17 Summary

Adela has accused Aziz of assaulting her in one of the caves. Fielding insists that it could not be and asks to talk to her. Turton has already decided that an English girl fresh from England has been assaulted on his watch, and he expects Fielding to rally to the banner of race. Fielding wants to know the facts.

Part 2: Chapter 17 Analysis

This story is probably based at least in part on an actual occurrence in India in 1919 during the uproar that followed the Amritsar Massacre (See Chapter 1 Analysis). Marcella Sherwood, an English School Superintendent in Amritsar, was allegedly sexually assaulted in this period of extreme unrest.

In earlier versions of this incident, Forster was much more explicit in the sexual aspects of the assault, and the strap of the field glasses was being used to strangle her. In that version, she used the glasses as a weapon to free herself from her attacker. By the time Forster had revised it for publication, the attack is much more ambiguous, tentative, and tenuous, which makes the climax of this story possible.

Part 2: Chapter 18

Part 2: Chapter 18 Summary

Fielding goes to visit McBryde, the district superintendent of police, who tells him everything he knows. The story: Aziz followed her into the cave and made advances, she hit at him with her field glasses, he pulled at them and the strap broke, and that is how she got away. The glasses were in Aziz's pocket when they searched him. She also said there was an echo that frightened her.

Fielding says that it doesn't make sense that he would have kept the glasses if he had assaulted her, and McBryde begins to understand that Fielding hasn't bought into the herd mentality that has taken over the Anglo community. McBryde also points out that they found a letter in Aziz's pocket from a friend who owns a brothel in Calcutta. Fielding objects strongly. "I don't want to hear his private letters," he tells McBryde. Besides, he says, I did that at his age. So had the superintendent of police, but he didn't like the turn the conversation had taken.

Fielding wants to talk to Adela. Now McBryde wants to know why. Fielding replies that he wants to see her on the off chance that she'll recant before the report goes in. Otherwise, McBryde is committed for trial, and the whole thing goes to blazes. Major Callendar denies him the chance to visit with Adela, so he wants to visit with Aziz.

McBryde tells him not to get mixed up with it, and that he needs to toe the line—that there's no place for personal views at a time like this. The only way he can see Aziz is if the city magistrate permits it. That, of course, is Ronny, so his request is not granted.

Part 2: Chapter 18 Analysis

The Anglos have circled the wagons, and Fielding's attempts to get at the truth are

seen as treasonous. Reason no longer plays a role in the proceedings. We will see later that the same can be said about the Indian community. The Fielding character stands out as the voice of objective reason in this standoff between cultures, and religions and plays a pivotal role in the plot.

Part 2: Chapter 19

Part 2: Chapter 19 Summary

He goes to Hamidullah, the leading barrister of Chandrapore with a Cambridge degree. Fielding wants to stand surety on Aziz's bail, and Hamidullah wants to hire Amritrao, a Calcutta barrister, who has a good reputation but is notoriously anti-British. Fielding is not so sure that's a good idea, but Hamidullah is determined. Fielding asks Hamidullah to give Aziz his love, and he goes back to the college.

Hamidullah is surprised that Fielding is taking Aziz's side against his own people. Fielding knows that it will create problems for him, but he is not afraid.

Professor Godbole comes to see him and after an exasperatingly roundabout discussion about other things, they discuss the situation with Aziz. Fielding says he intends to find out what did happen. He does not believe Aziz did what Adela says he did, that it might have been the servant, but he doesn't think it's malice on Adela's part.

He finally gets to see Aziz, but he will not talk to him except to say, "You deserted me." Since he can't see Adela, he writes her a letter.

Part 2: Chapter 19 Analysis

Fielding's role as mediator, voice of reason, continues in this chapter. Professor Godbole is dependably inscrutable and noncommittal. While he has the respect of the Indian community, he doesn't effectively play any role in what is going on. While the Anglos consider themselves superior to the Indians, Godbole, a Brahmin, knows he is. While he doesn't use his superiority in such socially unacceptable actions as the Anglos, particularly the women, do, he also does not play an active role in helping anyone, not even the other Hindus.

Part 2: Chapter 20

Part 2: Chapter 20 Summary

The women rally around Adela and are sorry they had not been more inclusive before. A meeting is called at the club presided over by the collector, who assures all the women that they are in no danger. Fielding asks about Adela's health, which annoys the people.

The women are sent out, and the men continue their meeting. Then Ronny comes in and addresses them, blaming himself because he allowed the outing to occur. The word comes that Adela is much improved.

Now the Major is telling a story he has concocted that Aziz plotted to get Adela alone by getting rid of the servants. They are even saying that Professor Godbole had been bribed to make Fielding late so he couldn't accompany them. Also, there had been an attempt to suffocate Mrs. Moore in a cave to get rid of her. The Major wants to call in the troops.

Everyone had stood up when Ronny came in except Fielding, and he is being questioned. He asks whether he can make a statement and is allowed to. "I believe Dr. Aziz to be innocent," he announces. Then he tells them that he is awaiting the verdict of the courts and that if he is pronounced guilty, he will resign his post and leave India. He announces his resignation from the club. He tries to leave the room but is stopped by a soldier. Ronny tells him to let him go.

Part 2: Chapter 20 Analysis

The battle lines are clearly drawn, and mass hysteria has taken over the Anglo community. The atmosphere is white-hot and dangerous. The plot moves relentlessly toward its climax. The Anglos are lined up against the Indians and at this stage either

side could come out the victor. It's also apparent at this stage that no one is going to win this battle. Even if the Brits manage to convict and punish Aziz, they will lose the important battle of maintaining order and civility in the region. If Aziz is not convicted, the Indians will be in worse shape than they were before the incident occurred. There will be more distrust, more anger, and more persecution. It's a lose/lose situation.

Part 2: Chapter 21

Part 2: Chapter 21 Summary

The holiday of Mohurram is being celebrated as Fielding makes his way through the city to go to meet with Nawab Bahadur, Hamidullah, Mahmood Ali, and others regarding Aziz's situation. They will try for bail again since Adela is improved.

Part 2: Chapter 21 Analysis

Contrast is an effective device that an author uses to highlight some aspect of a story. In this case, the sounding of drums that signaled the celebration seems ominous in light of what is going on in the city. However, itinerant musicians provide a contrast that irritates some with their cheerful and upbeat melodies but serves as a reminder of the seriousness of the political situation. With the atmosphere in the city so tense, it doesn't seem a good time for a celebration.

Part 2: Chapter 22

Part 2: Chapter 22 Summary

Adela picked up cactus spines on her descent from the cave, which Nancy and Mrs. McBryde have been picking out of her skin. Her story is that she entered the cave, scratched the wall with her fingernail to start the echo, and a shadow entered down the entrance, shutting off her exit. She hit at him with the glasses, he grabbed them and pulled her around the cave by the strap until it broke, then she escaped. She feels that it's a lot of nonsense, that she's upset, but she'll get over it. All the women are sympathetic, but Mrs. Moore will have nothing to do with her. There had been a near riot at the offices at the civil station, but it had been stopped, Ronny and McBryde tell her. They also say that she will have to appear in court, identify the prisoner, and submit to cross-examination by an Indian lawyer.

She wants to know whether Mrs. Moore will be with her, and Ronny assures her that she will be, and that he will also be there. Since Ronny can't serve as magistrate in this case, it will come before his assistant, who is an Indian. This decision has been protested, but Adela is not bothered by it. Now they tell her that Fielding is defending Aziz and has sent her a letter, which they have opened, in case it was useful to them. It wasn't. He only suggests that she has made a mistake and that Dr. Aziz is innocent. She replies, "Would that I had!"

Adela has been at the McBrydes since the incident, but Ronny now takes her back to his own bungalow and to Mrs. Moore, who is not cordial. Ronny tells her she will have to testify, and she refuses. She wants nothing to do with it. "I shall attend your marriage, but not your trial," she tells them. "Then I shall go to England."

Now Adela tells Ronny that Aziz is innocent; that she has made an awful mistake. Mrs. Moore affirms, "Of course he is innocent." She says that she will not testify. She will not help them to torture the doctor for something he didn't do. Adela wants to

withdraw the case, but it's too late. Ronny decides to send his mother home before the trial so she can't testify.

Part 2: Chapter 22 Analysis

We have again the suggestion that the caves themselves have supernatural powers. Adela's account of the incident indicates that she was trying to set up the echo when she was interrupted by the shadow in the entry tunnel. Mrs. Moore is not herself and has not been since her encounter with the echo in the cave. We have begun to suspect in this chapter that Fielding is right—Aziz is innocent. We know we can trust Mrs. Moore, and she declares that he is innocent even though she was nowhere near the cave when Adela was attacked.

But the die has been cast. The case will go forward in full fury. Ironically, an Indian will be sitting as the judge because of Ronny's vested interest. Ronny now intervenes on behalf of the Anglo community and spirits his mother out of the country so she will not be able to jeopardize their case. It's clear that getting at the truth is not what this is all about.

Part 2: Chapter 23

Part 2: Chapter 23 Summary

The wife of the Lieutenant Governor was sailing for England, and when she heard of Mrs. Moore's plight, she invited her to sail in her own cabin. Mrs. Moore was gratified to be missing the trial, the marriage, and the hot weather. She looked forward to going to England and to seeing her other children.

Part 2: Chapter 23 Analysis

Mrs. Moore has had some sort of spiritual crisis as a result of her experience with the echo. She does not defend what she knows to be right as she would have done in the past but goes along willingly, glad not to be called upon to play a role in the unpleasantness.

Part 2: Chapter 24

Part 2: Chapter 24 Summary

The temperature reaches a hundred and twelve and Adela is now staying with the Turtons since Mrs. Moore is no longer in Ronny's bungalow.

The day of the court appearance has arrived, and Adela and her supporters are gathered in Ronny's office. Their chairs have been arranged in the courtroom so they will look dignified. Mr. McBryde opens with "Everyone knows the man's guilty," then goes on to give the details of the "assault." He ends by remarking that the darker races are physically attracted by the fairer, but not vice versa—a scientific fact, he claims.

Someone in the room comments, "Even when the lady is so much uglier than the gentleman?" This upsets Adela, and Nancy tries to comfort her. The Major demands better accommodations so his patient can have air. He wants her seated on the platform. All their chairs are brought to the platform and the entire party moves. This leaves Mr. Fielding the only European remaining in the body of the hall.

Amritrao objects to this move to the platform. He has no problem with Adela's being there, but declares that having all the Anglos on the platform will intimidate witnesses. Das, the magistrate in charge, agrees, and requires that they all come back down to the floor. However, Adela feels better now that she has seen everyone in the room, and a change comes over her.

McBryde tries to present the case as a conspiracy and cites the treatment of Mrs. Moore as one bit of evidence. Mahmoud Ali leaps to his feet and accuses them of smuggling her out of the country so she can't testify. Ronny says she is on her way and is to Aden by now – this incenses Mahmoud, and he calls the trial a farce and hands his papers to Amritrao and leaves. Meanwhile, a chant of "Mrs. Moore" begins in the street, except it sounds out "Esmiss Esmoor." Finally, peace is restored, and now

Adela will testify.

She is led through the day from the time they arrived until she and Aziz were on the ledge outside the caves where the incident occurred. She agrees that she went alone into one of the caves. When asked whether the prisoner followed her, she takes a moment to answer, then says "No." The magistrate bends forward. "I'm afraid I have made a mistake," she says. "Dr. Aziz never followed me into the cave." McBryde starts to go over the deposition she had given, but the magistrate intervenes and asks her to speak on oath, and she tells him, "I withdraw everything."

Das says, "The prisoner is released without one stain on his character; the question of costs will be decided elsewhere."

Part 2: Chapter 24 Analysis

This chapter brings the story to its climax. Almost like the echoes in the caves, the conflicts have been building to a roar. There have been demonstrations in the streets, and now those demonstrations venerate Mrs. Moore. She becomes, ironically, a sort of Hindu saint. We see this character again as a symbol of what it will take to unite the Anglos and the Indians. While she is a Christian, her exemplary behavior and attitude have obliterated religious lines. She is venerated by the representatives of all the religions—the Hindus in the streets; Aziz, the Muslim; and Adela, the Christian. She exists outside the religions and the cultures. Her message is that practicing one's religious principles will bring people together no matter what the religion. Her credo, "God is Love," is the glue that will hold the nation together.

The conflict between the natives and the Anglos we know now that the natives have won resoundingly and ironically by the honesty of a white woman. The remainder of the story is denouement—the unraveling of the various strands of the plot, and this plot is characterized by its many strands.

Adela's plainness has been used by Forster to present another kind of bigotry—sexual discrimination. Aziz is as much offended that anyone would think he would make sexual advances to a woman as ugly as Adela as he is by the lie. Now in court, the onlookers are vicious when the prosecutor makes the equally bigoted statement that darker races are always attracted to the fairer ones but not vice-versa. As long as this kind of bigotry and intolerance exists, there will never be peace, and this is Mrs. Moore's message to both sides of this conflict.

Part 2: Chapter 25

Part 2: Chapter 25 Summary

Adela is abandoned by the Anglos, so Fielding steps in and puts her in his carriage; he is concerned for her safety. There are no horses; the trial ended so soon that they are still in the stables. Students come forward and pull it themselves, taking Fielding and Adela to the college. His phone lines have been cut, and the students have taken the carriage, so the only thing he and Adela can do is wait.

Meanwhile, Aziz is with the Indian supporters and Mahmoud wants to attack the collector and the chief of police. Nawab Bahadur as the voice of reason tries to restrain them; he knows that violence against the British will not serve anyone's best interests. Dr. Lal had agreed to testify for the prosecution in hopes of pleasing the English; also, he hates Aziz. He left the trial early, taking his horse to the hospital in hopes the Major would protect him. However, Aziz and his entourage find him first. He pleads and begs for forgiveness. There had been a rumor that Nawab's grandson was being abused at the hospital, so Lal goes and gets the grandson to appease the crowd's anger.

Nawab brings order by making a speech about justice, courage, liberty, and prudence, and announces that he is giving up his British–conferred title and will live as a private gentleman, plain Mr. Zulfiqar. The crisis is over. He says they will rejoice tonight and tells Hamidullah to bring Fielding and Amritrao. It is so hot and everyone is so exhausted that they take naps.

Part 2: Chapter 25 Analysis

Every action and emotion on this eventful day has been influenced by the extreme heat. There is no air–conditioning, of course, and people who are already overwrought and in extreme emotional states are even more agitated because their bodies are trying

to compensate for the impact of the searing temperature. It's as if yet another character were introduced into the super-charged atmosphere.

In the winding down of the action, Adela is left out of any loop. It's to be expected that Fielding, the peacemaker, will step in and see that she has refuge. The Indians are not going to treat her as a heroine, and she is not acceptable in her ranks. They don't encourage Fielding to intervene on her behalf. However, this action on his part only underscores the role he has played in the plot. He participates in both cultures and tries to apply reason and intelligence to what happens in their lives.

Nawab is yet another peacemaker who is trying to save the situation. His sacrifice signals the significance of what has happened. He has been an important influence in making the situation between the Anglos and the Indians work as well as it has. Now he will no longer play that role, and as far as we can tell at this stage, no one will step in and fill his shoes. So the beat will go on.

There is, of course, one character who is a self-serving despicable game-player—Dr. Lal, Aziz's colleague. This character provides a contrast to Fielding, who has done what is right regardless of cost to himself.

Part 2: Chapter 26

Part 2: Chapter 26 Summary

Fielding had hoped that Adela would have a place to go right away, but nothing materializes. He isn't interested in developing a friendship with her, but she asks him to help her figure out what happened to her. She wants to know whether she might have been ill and hallucinating at the time of the incident. After she tells him how she was feeling beforehand, he agrees with her surmise that she was, in fact, hallucinating. He asks her when she began to feel ill, and she tells him it was after the tea at the college. He recalls that both Aziz and Professor Godbole had become ill after the party also.

She says that she was brought up to be honest, but it doesn't seem to get her anywhere. He says it will get us to heaven – if heaven existed. He says he believes that she had recovered and that the hallucination had disappeared suddenly in court that morning. All she can say is that events presented themselves to her in their logical sequence.

She wants to know what Dr. Aziz thinks of her, and Fielding tells her that Aziz is very bitter. What he doesn't tell her is that Aziz was offended that people would think he had approached a woman who is not pretty. Fielding does not like that in Aziz; he calls it sexual snobbery. They also consider the possibility that she was attacked, but by someone else—either the guide or someone who was in the caves at that time.

The matter of where she will stay is a problem. Fielding thinks she should stay at the college, but Hamidullah has come to pick him up and he feels that it is not their problem. Fielding sees it otherwise. While they are talking, Ronny comes and tells them that Mrs. Moore has died at sea. Adela cannot go to the Turtons, and she can't come to his bungalow. The decision is made that she will stay at the college for a couple of days and that Fielding will stay elsewhere.

Fielding and Hamidullah pick up Amritrao on their way, and he asks how much Adela ought to pay as compensation. Fielding is horrified. It has been a long day.

Part 2: Chapter 26 Analysis

So what we know is that we don't know exactly what happened in the cave. This entire collision between the cultures was brought on by "who knows what." Perhaps the point that Forster is making is that the causes of such eruptions and misunderstandings are usually insignificant and could be settled peacefully if attempts are made to sort them out. Only in the fallout do they become so disastrous.

One of the strands that is now being sorted out is what Adela must do to compensate for the damage she has caused. This factor has not entered Fielding's consciousness up to now.

Part 2: Chapter 27

Part 2: Chapter 27 Summary

The victory dinner is over, and they are all sleeping on the roof of Mr. Zulfiqar's mansion. Aziz and Fielding discuss compensation from Adela. Fielding disapproves and tries to persuade him to ask her to pay the costs but no more because it will ruin her. He reminds Aziz what she gave up in order to be honest and save him. He tells him he mustn't listen to the others. If an apology is needed, she will do that—he will secure it himself. Aziz says he will ask Mrs. Moore, and if she says he should let her off the hook he will. He will write to her; she is well on her way to her other children.

Fielding didn't know about the other children. He reminds Aziz that Adela behaved decently whereas Mrs. Moore did nothing for him. He tells Aziz that Mrs. Moore is dead, but he does not believe it. Fielding doesn't press it; it will be known by everyone tomorrow.

Part 2: Chapter 27 Analysis

The victors have celebrated, and again we find Fielding trying to make certain that the right thing is done. Mrs. Moore's role has been a significant one, and she is still influencing Aziz. However, she is dead, and she exists now as a venerated Hindu saint.

There is foreshadowing here when Aziz is the one who reveals to Fielding that Mrs. Moore had two other children. Fielding will later marry the daughter and assume the care of the son.

Part 2: Chapter 28

Part 2: Chapter 28 Summary

Mrs. Moore became ill soon after the ship departed, and the wife of the lieutenant governor did everything that needed to be done. In Chandrapore, there is a rumor that an Englishman killed his mother for trying to save an Indian's life, and a cult rises up around her. Adela stays on at the college because there is no other place she can go and she cannot leave until Aziz's suit for damages is settled.

Part 2: Chapter 28 Analysis

Once more, we are reminded of the incendiary nature of rumor in the Indian community. Now they are saying that Ronny killed his mother, and because of this, they started a cult in her name.

Part 2: Chapter 29

Part 2: Chapter 29 Summary

The lieutenant governor visits and praises Fielding for his handling of the episode. He requests, even demands, that he rejoin the club. Adela stays on at the college for some time and writes Aziz an apology with the help of Fielding. Ronny is being moved to another province, and Adela is being sent back to England. He breaks off the engagement. She promises to write to Fielding; they part good friends and agree to meet sometime in England. She intends to look up Mrs. Moore's other children.

Part 2: Chapter 29 Analysis

The plot has now come full-circle. Fielding's exemplary behavior does not go unnoticed or unrewarded. He did what was honorable in spite of the risk to his career, and things came right for him. There's no doubt that Forster is making a point here about human courage and motivation.

Part 2: Chapter 30

Part 2: Chapter 30 Summary

Aziz wants to get away from British India. He does not bring suit for damages from Adela. One of the servants tries to blackmail her when she is leaving, saying he knows that she had seen Fielding late at night at the college. She throws him out. Now the rumor is rampant in Chandrapore.

Part 2: Chapter 30 Analysis

Again, the vicious role of rumor in the Indian community comes to the fore. This rumor will be powerful in the remainder of the playing out of the climax to the story.

Part 2: Chapter 31

Part 2: Chapter 31 Summary

Aziz believes the rumor. However, there is also an actual scandal. Nancy Derek and McBryde have been having an affair and it has been discovered by Mrs. McBryde, and she is divorcing him. He and Fielding quarrel. Fielding is appalled that he would believe the rumor about him and Adela. He must go to the club to be reinstated, and he is not popular there.

Fielding is being sent to England to get him away from Chandrapore for a while. Aziz becomes convinced that he is going to marry Adela and they will enjoy the money that he might have had if he had pressed for damages.

Part 2: Chapter 31 Analysis

It's just like Forster to set up a contrasting real situation to compare to the rumor started by the Indian servant. The purpose, of course, is to make the innocence of Fielding and Adela's relationship more apparent. Fielding pays a price for doing the right thing, but we know this character now, and we know that the disapproval of the Anglos at the club will not affect him. He knows that they know that he did the right thing.

Part 2: Chapter 32

Part 2: Chapter 32 Summary

This chapter does little to move the plot forward. It simply chronicles Fielding's feelings as he journeys through Egypt, Venice, and other exotic places as an inspector of educational facilities for the government, his new position. He writes postcards to all of his Indian friends.

Part 2: Chapter 32 Analysis

What's important about this chapter is that it shows how much Fielding treasured the friendship of his Indian friends and his intention to hold onto those friendships. We will see later that these feelings were not necessarily reciprocated by the Indians, indicative of the depths of their anger and resentment over the Adela incident.

Part 3: Chapter 33

Part 3: Chapter 33 Summary

It is two years later now, and the setting is Mau, several hundreds miles west of Chandrapore. Professor Godbole is participating in a religious celebration whose theme is God is Love, and he remembers Mrs. Moore. He feels that while he is a Brahman and she was a Christian, it made no difference. It was his duty to place himself in the position of God and to love her.

Part 3: Chapter 33 Analysis

It has already been apparent that Mrs. Moore is a major player in this story even though the account of her visit takes up a very small percentage of the text. In this last part of the book, we truly see the story being played out, and this is signaled by the fact that Professor Godbole, who seemed to play an insignificant role in the action, is now commemorating her as he celebrates her message in the confines of his own religion. The importance of the "God is Love" theme is reinforced in this final section, which focuses on this major Hindu celebration.

Part 3: Chapter 34

Part 3: Chapter 34 Summary

Dr. Aziz is also in Mau, thanks to the generosity of Professor Godbole. Here the tensions are between Brahman and non-Brahman; Muslims and English are essentially irrelevant. However, because of the cloud on his reputation, he was watched by local authorities at first. He works under a Hindu doctor but is actually the principal doctor to the court. His children are with him all the time now and he has married again. Life is good.

He feels only bitterness for Fielding. He believes that he has gone to England and married Adela, thereby profiting from his own decision not to press for damages. He received letters for a while, but he did not open them. Now Fielding is here in Mau to inspect educational facilities and is staying at the European guest house; he will be stuck here for awhile because of flooding downstream. His wife and brother-in-law are with him. He wants to see Aziz and is asking for his help in seeing the sights. Aziz is resentful and unenthusiastic about seeing his old benefactor, who he feels has betrayed him.

Part 3: Chapter 34 Analysis

Time has elapsed; the players have moved on. Now in this final denouement (unraveling), we meet the major ones two years later. We find a resentful Aziz. While his life is good now, he has repudiated any of the feelings he had for Fielding. He is convinced that he has gone to England and married his arch-enemy, Adela, thereby profiting from his decision not to sue her for damages. He not only feels rejected, he feels betrayed and used. Again, we find that Indian rumor takes over and reason goes out the door. We are also reminded once again of the contrast between Fielding and all the others. Fielding is rational; everyone else seems to be irrational. They don't come to conclusions or shape their emotions according to what is factual. Aziz not only

resents; he is vengeful. He makes certain the visitors do not have oars for the boat they must use to view the celebration.

Part 3: Chapter 35

Part 3: Chapter 35 Summary

Aziz and his children are out for a walk and encounter Fielding and his brother-in-law, who has been stung by a bee. The doctor takes the stinger out and assures him that he will be okay. Fielding reproaches him for not responding to his letters. He tells Aziz that his reception here has been very cold as compared to his visits to other provinces, and that, although he has made arrangements for the visit, no one knows about it. He wants to take the boats out, but there are no oars. His attempts to be friendly to Aziz are met with coldness, and he gives up.

Then the mystery is unveiled. Fielding's wife is not Adela but Mrs. Moore's daughter, Stella. The young man with Fielding is Ralph, Mrs. Moore's son. Fielding is incensed. He tells Aziz that he had told him about the marriage in the letters he wrote to him. Aziz blames Mahmoud Ali for the misunderstanding.

However, Aziz is angry and wants nothing to do with any Englishman. He has had enough to do him for a lifetime. When he goes home, he remembers Mrs. Moore and the promise he made to be kind to her children, Stella and Ralph.

Part 3: Chapter 35 Analysis

The extraordinary visit that Aziz and Mrs. Moore had in the mosque in Chandrapore again comes into action in the story. It played a major role in the clash between the cultures and religions in Chandrapore, and it still lives in Aziz's heart. Forster is using irony very cleverly here. Aziz believed that Fielding had married Adela, his enemy; Fielding had, in fact, married Mrs. Moore's daughter, Stella, the daughter of his very good friend. There is no treachery. The union should be a cause of joy. The reunion with Mrs. Moore's family should delight him instead of enraging him.

Part 3: Chapter 36

Part 3: Chapter 36 Summary

Aziz relents and decides to take a salve to the guest house for Ralph's bee sting. On the way, he sees that they have managed to take the boats out and are looking at the festival. Instead of hailing them there, he proceeds on to the guest house, thinking that there would be servants and he could just leave the medication. He goes all over the guest house, exploring without embarrassment, and he finds two letters, which he opens and reads. One is from Ronny, and it makes him angry. It suggests that Fielding has come over to the side of the Anglos. It also indicates that Ralph is somewhat retarded. He also mentions Adela, and says he would like to make peace with her. He tells him he's lucky to be out of British India, that because of the propaganda, maintaining the peace is difficult, and he blames it on the Jews.

The second letter is from Adela, and she writes about Ralph's health and her experience with India. As he reads it, Ralph comes out and Aziz is cruel with him. He won't allow the doctor to put the ointment on the stings and asks him to leave it, but Aziz refuses. Ralph says he should not treat them like this because they have done him no harm. As he prepares to leave, he extends his hand and Ralph takes it. Aziz asks him whether he thinks he is unkind anymore and Ralph answers that he doesn't. Aziz remembers Mrs. Moore, and tells him he can keep the salve.

He asks Ralph whether his mother spoke of him, and he says she did in her letters and that she loved him. He wants to show Ralph the country but he can't because of whom he is with, but he does decide to take him out on the water. He knows where the oars are; he has had them hidden so Fielding cannot find them. He takes the second pair of oars just in case the Fieldings, who had pushed the boat out with long poles, might need them. Ralph is directing where the boat is to go. He seems to have some supernatural understanding and they are in the exactly right place to see the god of the Hindus at the climactic moment.

The boats crash and capsize, and Fielding, Stella, Ralph, and Aziz are in the water.

Part 3: Chapter 36 Analysis

Although Ralph is limited mentally, he is Mrs. Moore's true son. He has a supernatural ability to see, feel, and intuit, which is not lost on Aziz. We have a collision of a different sort here, and the outcomes are more what Fielding had hoped for after the lawsuit. It brings them all together. This entire section, "Temple" is infused with religious fervor. The "God is Love" festival pervades everything—sounds, sights, and activities. It's appropriate that resolution be realized here. Mrs. Moore, whose spirituality was so saving in the early chapters of the book, is reflected in this celebration of the God of love.

Part 3: Chapter 37

Part 3: Chapter 37 Summary

After the shipwreck, Fielding and Aziz make up and are friends again. They go for a horseback ride into the woods and discuss the politics of India. Aziz wants the English to leave India. He says that if they don't leave in his lifetime, they will leave in his children's. He writes a letter to Adela thanking her for giving him his freedom. They part friends, knowing they will never meet again.

Part 3: Chapter 37 Analysis

Resolution is complete, but just as there is ambiguity in the rest of the book, there is ambiguity here. Aziz participates in the renewal of the friendship, but he wants no more of the mixing of cultures that brought on his personal disaster. He believes that India will be free eventually. This book was published in 1924. On August 15, 1947, India finally acquired its independence from Britain after many years of violence.

Forster uses point of view in an unusual way to lead the reader through this story and into the minds of the characters. It is written in an impersonal third-person narrative voice, but the narrator is omniscient—he knows India and fills in the facts for the reader. Also, in the descriptions of the actions of the characters, we get more insight than an impersonal narrator would be able to give.

The narrator is often ambiguous, leaving much to the reader to fill in and put together. Sometimes, the narrator is even in the mind of one or the other of the characters, breaking away from the third person impersonal narrative voice he has established. For example, we are in Mrs. Moore's mind when she has the "other-worldly" experience in the caves. We know Aziz better as a character, which is important to our involvement, because from time to time we know what he is thinking and feeling. We become exasperated with him when he is behaving badly; however, we are also

sympathetic when he is falsely accused and is suffering. We can only have these feelings toward a character in whose thoughts and feelings we are able to participate.

Characters

Mahmoud Ali

A close friend of Dr. Aziz. A Moslem and a lawyer, he is often in the company of Aziz and Hamidullah. In Chapter II, Mahmoud Ali declares that it is not possible for Indians to be friends with the English; Hamidullah argues that such friendship is possible. Mahmoud Ali is generally cynical, and he often makes sharp comments about other characters. He helps to defend Aziz at Aziz's trial.

Mr. Amritrao

A famous Hindu barrister (trial-lawyer) from Calcutta who is hired to defend Dr. Aziz at his trial. Mr. Amritrao, reputed to be one of the finest Indian lawyers in the country, has made his name as a radical who is "notoriously anti-British." His hiring causes some controversy, and the move is regarded as a political challenge to the British. During the trial, Amritrao objects to the fact that Adela's British supporters have been allowed to sit on a platform at the front of the courtroom, and they are forced to move.

Dr. Aziz

A young doctor who is the central Indian character in the novel. Dr. Aziz is a Moslem and a widower. His three children live with his wife's mother. He is described as "an athletic little man, daintily put together but really very strong." He works at the government hospital in Chandrapore, under the supervision of Major Callendar. In addition to his practical skill as a doctor, he also has a romantic side and writes poetry. His favorite poetic themes are "the decay of Islam and the brevity of Love." Although he is thoroughly Indian, he idealizes the cultures of Persia and Arabia, where the Islamic faith originated. He regards the historical Mogul emperors of India as his models. In the early part of the novel he is disdainful of Hindus; although they are

Indians, he considers them foreign. Because of his good education and respected professional situation, AZIZ believes that he can be accepted by the British as almost their equal. Despite a melancholy streak, Aziz possesses a sense of humor, and hospitality is important to him. He is eager to please and Impress people whom he considers kind and thoughtful, and early in the novel he especially wants to make friends with Mrs. Moore and Mr. Fielding. However, his very goodwill and his somewhat impulsive nature get him into situations that cause him trouble. ("Aziz overrated hospitality, mistaking it for intimacy, and not seeing that it is tainted with the sense of possession.") He at first wants to invite Mrs. Moore and Fielding to his house, but then realizes that this is not a suitable place for entertaining Western guests. On the spur of the moment, he asks Mrs Moore, Fielding, and Adela Qusted to Join him for a picnic at the Marabar Caves, a famous natural landmark outside the town. The picnic results in disaster, however, when Adela believes that Aziz has attacked her in one of the caves He is brought to trial in Chandrapore. Although Adela drops the charges during the trial and Aziz is freed, his reputation is mined.

He becomes completely disillusioned with his position in life and develops a hatred of the British. In Part III of the novel, he has moved to the Hindu state of Mau and given up his medical ambitions; instead, he is content to be a simple "medicine man" to the state's ailing ruler. At the end of the book he is reconciled with his British friend Fielding but tells him that they can only be true friends after the British have left India.

Nawab Bahadur

A distinguished Moslem who is a leading figure in the Indian community in the Chandrapore district. ("Nawab" is an honorary title.) The Nawab Bahadur is an older man, "a big proprietor and a philanthropist, a man of benevolence and decision." A supporter of British rule in India, he is also known for his hospitality and loyalty to his friends. Ronny Heaslop and Adela Qusted are riding in the Nawab's car when it runs off the road. Following the incident at the Marabar Caves, the Nawab proclaims Dr.

Aziz's innocence and attends his trial. After the trial he renounces his title and is known simply by his original name, Mr. Zulfiqar. A victory banquet is held at his mansion, where Aziz, Fielding, and Hamidullah lie on the roof and discuss the trial and its consequences.

Major Callendar

The head of the government hospital in Chandrapore and a figure of some authority in the Anglo–Indian (British) community. Major Callendar holds the post of civil surgeon and is Dr. Aziz's immediate superior at the hospital. The most arrogant of the British officials in Chandrapore, he is "dour," gruff, and plain–spoken to the point of offensiveness. In Chapter II he summons Dr. Aziz to his bungalow, interrupting Aziz's pleasant evening with his friends. When Aziz arrives after a short delay, a servant informs him that Callendar is not at home and has not left a message. After Aziz's aborted trial, Callendar makes some intemperate remarks about Indians at the club, where the members of the Anglo–Indian community have gathered

We later learn that Callendar has been replaced as civil surgeon by a Major Roberts. ,

Collector

See Mr. Turton

Mr.Das

The assistant magistrate (judge) in Chandrapore and thus the assistant to Ronny Heaslop, the magistrate. Das, a Hindu, presides over the trial of Dr. Aziz. (Ronny has excused himself from sitting on the case because of his relationship with Adela Quested, who has brought the charges against Aziz.) Ronny expresses confidence in Das's ability to conduct an orderly trial, but Major Callendar declares that Das is not

trustworthy because he is an Indian. Das follows correct procedures in the trial and does not show favoritism toward either the prosecution or the defense. After the trial Das visits Dr. Aziz for medical treatment and also requests a poem from Aziz for his brother-in-law's magazine. Das' s friendly visit represents a new spirit of cooperation between the Moslem and Hindu communities.

Miss Nancy Derek

An unconventional Englishwoman. Young and single, Miss Derek is regarded with some distrust by the British community at Chandrapore because of her unorthodox behavior. She is not part of the civil station at Chandrapore, but serves as a personal assistant to the Maharani of Mudkul, an independent Indian state. When Adela Quested and Ronny Heaslop are in a minor car accident, Miss Derek comes along and drives them back to Chandrapore. She again shows up in her car near the Marabar Caves as Adela is running from the caves and drives Adela back to Chandrapore. After Dr. Aziz's trial, Aziz and Fielding discuss a rumor that Miss Derek is having an affair with Mr. McBryde, the Superintendent of Police.

Mr. Cyril Fielding

The principal of the Government College (that is, a British-run school) in Chandrapore. Fielding develops a close friendship with Dr. Aziz during the course of the novel and is the only Englishman to publicly express his belief in Aziz's innocence. In contrast to such Anglo-Indian (British) career administrators as Mr. Turton and Major Callendar, Fielding arrived in India relatively late in his life after the age of forty. By the time he arrives in India, he has already had a "varied career." He is described as "a hard-bitten, good-tempered, intelligent fellow on the verge of middle age, with a belief in education." Because of his more easygoing and broadminded attitudes, he is regarded with some suspicion by his fellow expatriates, especially the women. Indeed, he has no particular enthusiasm for the conventional social life of Chandrapore's Anglo-Indian community, and thus "the gulf between

himself and his countrymen...

widened distressingly" Moreover, he has "no racial feeling"—he regards Indians simply as people from another country, not as inferiors. He believes that people from different parts of the world can understand one another "by the help of good will plus culture and intelligence." He is "happiest in the give-and-take of private conversation." Tills emphasis on the importance of friendship and the personal over the professional life makes Fielding a representative of Forster's own views. In Chapter VII, Fielding gives a tea party attended by Aziz, Mrs Moore, Adela Quested, and Professor Godbole (who teaches at the college). The party is a success, bringing together Christian, Moslem, and Hindu as equals. However, the party sets in motion the disastrous events of the excursion to the Marabar Caves. Fielding is supposed to travel to the caves with Aziz and the English women, but he misses the train. When Adela returns to Chandrapore with Miss Derek and claims that Aziz has attempted to rape her, Fielding goes to see Inspector McBryde. Fielding tells McBryde that there has been some misunderstanding and that Aziz is innocent, but McBryde becomes angry at Fielding's interference. Because he supports Aziz and insults Ronny Heaslop, Fielding is forced to resign from the English club in Chandrapore. Adela stays with Fielding after the trial. Fielding has a long conversation with Aziz at the post-trial victory party at the Nawab Bahadur's house, but their friendship cools. Fielding soon returns to England, and Aziz believes that he has married Adela. The friendship is revived somewhat when Fielding eventually returns to India with his new wife, Stella, the daughter of Mrs. Moore. However, Aziz tells Fielding that they cannot be true friends until the British have left India, and the novel concludes on this ambiguous note.

Narayan Godbole

See Professor Godbole

Professor Godbole

An Indian who teaches at the college in Chandrapore, where Mr. Fielding is the principal. He is a friend of Dr. Aziz. Godbole is a Hindu (of the Brahmin caste, the highest caste in the Hindu religion) and remains somewhat aloof. Godbole is supposed to take part in the trip to the Marabar Caves organized by Aziz. However, he and Fielding miss the train on which Aziz, Mrs. Moore, and Adela Quested are traveling because Godbole takes too much time saying his prayers before leaving for the station. In the third part of the novel, "Temple,"

Professor Godbole has moved to the Hindu state of Mau, where he is Minister of Education in the local government. Godbole is the central symbolic figure in this part of the book, representing the Hindu philosophy of acceptance. Ironically, he may also be more representative of the "real" India than is Aziz. He takes part in the ceremony held to celebrate the rebirth of the Hindu god Krishna.

Hamidullah

A Moslem Indian who is a good friend of Dr. Aziz. He was educated at Cambridge University in England and is "the leading barrister [trial lawyer] of Chandrapore." In chapter two, Hamidullah, AZIZ, and Mahmoud Ali discuss whether it is possible for an Indian to be friends with the British. Hamidullah recounts his own experience in England some years earlier. He had been welcomed into the home of an English couple, whom he recalls with great affection. Hamidullah helps to organize Dr. Aziz's defense after Aziz is charged with having assaulted Adela Quested in the Marabar Caves.

Ronny Heaslop

A young Anglo-Indian (British) civil servant who is the city magistrate of

Chandrapore. He is the son of Mrs. Moore by her first husband. At the outset of the novel, Ronny is expected to marry Adela Quested, whom he had originally met in England. Educated in an English public (the equivalent of an American private) school, Ronny embodies a narrow, rigid concept of duty and represses the personal side of his life. He expresses the view that the Indians are not capable of governing themselves, and that Britain rules India for India's own good. When his mother and Adela arrive in India, they are disappointed to find that Ronny has changed. Adela perceives that "India had developed sides of his character that she had never admired," such as "self-complacency," "ensoriousness," and "lack of subtlety" She also finds that "when proved wrong, he was particularly exasperating." Ronny disapproves of his mother's and Adela's attempts to see "the real India" and to mix with Indians socially. He becomes Impatient with what he considers their naive attitude toward India. According to Ronny, "No one can even begin to know [India] until he has been in it twenty years." The alleged attempted rape of Adela at the Marabar Caves and her subsequent withdrawal of the charges against Aziz during the trial cause Ronny much embarrassment, and he breaks off their engagement.

Dr. Panna Lal

A colleague of Dr. Aziz at the government hospital in Chandrapore. A Hindu, he is described as "timid and elderly" and "of low extraction." Dr. Aziz regards Dr. Lal as "Major Callendar's spy," and he and his friends make Lal the butt of some humor. Dr. Lal urges Aziz to go with him to the Turton's Bridge Party, but at the last minute Aziz decides not to go. In Chapter VI, Dr. Lal meets Aziz and asks why he was not at the party; Aziz makes up the excuse that he had to go to the post office. In Chapter IX, Dr. Lal goes to Aziz's bungalow to treat him for a mild illness.

Mohammed Latif

A poor distant relation of Hamidullah. He is described as "a gentle, happy, and dishonest old man" who "had never done a stroke of work." Mohammed Latif serves

Dr. Aziz as a general servant and dogsbody. He is often present in the book but never speaks unless he is spoken to. He accompanies Aziz, Mrs. Moore, and Adela Quested on their picnic to the Marabar Caves. In the last section, "Temple," he has left Chandrapore with Aziz and settled in Mau.

Mr. McBryde

The district superintendent of police in Chandrapore. McBryde formally arrests Dr. Aziz after Adela Quested reports the incident in the Marabar Caves. Forster describes McBryde as "the most reflective and best educated of the Chandrapore officials." He was born in India (in the town of Karachi, in present-day Pakistan), not in Britain, and he has "read and thought a good deal." His experiences, including an unhappy marriage, have made him cynical; but unlike Major Callendar, he is not a bully. He is personally sympathetic toward Aziz and acts against him out of his professional duty, not out of malice. McBryde gets angry at Fielding when Fielding tries to tell him that Aziz is innocent. He acts as the prosecutor at Aziz's trial. Aziz and Fielding later hear that McBryde has been having an affair with Miss Derek and is divorcing his wife.

Mrs. Moore

An Englishwoman who is a central figure in the book. She is the most sensitive and reflective of the English characters. An elderly widow, she is the mother of Ronny Heaslop, the Chandrapore city magistrate, by her first marriage. She also has another son, Ralph, and a daughter, Stella, by her second marriage. Mrs. Moore has recently arrived in India with Adela Quested, who is expected to marry Ronny. Mrs. Moore is introduced in Chapter IT when she encounters Dr. Aziz in the mosque in Chandrapore. Dr. Aziz has gone into the mosque after his unsuccessful attempt to find Major Callendar and is startled when he discovers that a stranger—an Englishwoman—is also there. The two talk, and a friendship develops: Aziz is happy to have met an English person who is sympathetic toward him and India, while Mrs. Moore finds Aziz charming, intelligent, and interesting. (Adela Quested later tells Aziz that Mrs. Moore

"learnt more about India in those few minutes' talk with you than in the three weeks since we landed.") Uncomfortable in what she considers the superficial company of the English expatriate community, Mrs. Moore decides that she wants to see "the real India." Her plans to visit two Indian women are unsuccessful, but she enjoys Mr. Fielding's tea party. At the tea party, Aziz invites Mrs. Moore, Adela, Fielding, and Professor Godbole to join him on an excursion to the Marabar Caves. (At the tea party Mrs. Moore also discusses "mysteries and muddies"; these words take on a special significance in the book.) In the meantime, Mrs. Moore quarrels with Ronny, who she finds has become narrow-minded during his time in India. When it becomes clear that Ronny and Adela will not marry, Mrs. Moore realizes that "My duties here are evidently finished. I don't want to see India now; now for my passage back." By the time of their visit to the caves, Mrs. Moore has lost interest in the trip. Tired by the heat, she finds the caves "a horrid, stuffy place," hits her head, and nearly faints. Moreover, she is alarmed by "a terrifying echo." When she emerges from the cave "the echo began in some indescribable way to undermine her hold on life." For her, the echo's message is "Everything exists, nothing has value." Shortly thereafter—just before Aziz's trial—she leaves India; we later learn that she has died on the voyage back to England. However, her presence continues to be felt after her death. Although Dr. Aziz's career is ruined by Adela's false charge of rape and he develops a hatred of the English, Aziz continues to think fondly of Mrs. Moore. Indeed, on his acquittal, the Indian crowd acclaims her as "Esmis Esmoor," transforming her into a Hindu goddess. (The Indians apparently believe that she had somehow intervened to testify on Aziz's behalf, and regard her as a deity of justice.) At the end of the novel, the spirit of Mrs. Moore returns to India symbolically in the form of her daughter Stella, who has married Cyril Fielding.

Ralph Moore

The son of Mrs. Moore by her second husband. He is thus the brother of Stella and half-brother of Ronny Heaslop. Ralph is mentioned several times in the book but does not appear until near the end of the novel, when he arrives in Mau with his sister Stella

and her new husband, Cyril Fielding. Dr. Aziz meets Ralph and treats his bee stings.

Stella Moore

Mrs. Moore's daughter. Stella's father was Mrs. Moore's second husband; she is thus the full sister of Ralph and the half-sister of Ronny Heaslop. Stella is mentioned by Mrs. Moore and referred to at several points in the novel. She lives in England and does not actually appear until the end of the novel, when she arrives in the Hindu native state of Mau with Ralph and with her new husband, Cyril Fielding. Dr. Aziz had mistakenly assumed that Fielding had married Adela Quested. Aziz is surprised and pleased when he learns that Stella, not Adela, is Fielding's wife. However, Aziz's attitude toward Stella is ambiguous because she is related both to Mrs. Moore, whom Aziz had admired, and to Ronny, whom he dislikes. Fielding confides that Stella "has ideas I don't share.... My wife's after something." This suggests that she has a deeper understanding of life than either Aziz or Fielding.

Miss Adela Quested

A young Englishwoman who comes to India With Mrs. Moore. She is expected to marry Mrs. Moore's son Ronny Heaslop, the Chandrapore city magistrate. Adela is a catalyst for the central dramatic events of the novel, and her behavior in these events radically affects the lives of the characters around her. Her accusation against Dr. Aziz, followed by her recantation during the trial, exposes the deep divisions between the British and Indians. On a more symbolic level, Adela may also be seen to represent most people's inability to communicate or to understand the deeper patterns and meaning of life.

Adela is described as "plain." (Because of her very plainness, Aziz is not at all attracted to her, and he is later insulted by the idea that anyone could think he would have wanted to rape her.) Although initially she is well-intentioned toward India, she does not possess Mrs. Moore's sensitivity and imagination. As a newcomer, she is

somewhat naive about the nature of relations between the Anglo–Indians (British) and the Indians. Ronny expresses his disapproval of Adela's desire to see "the real India." While she is at Fielding's tea party, she offhandedly remarks that she is not planning to stay long in India. Immediately she—and the reader realizes that unconsciously she has decided not to marry Ronny. However, she changes her mind temporarily when she and Ronny are in a minor accident in the Nawab Bahadur's car.

Adela accompanies Dr. Aziz and Mrs. Moore to the Marabar Caves. Here, while she is in one of the caves, something unexplained happens and she hurriedly runs out of the caves. Miss Derek, who happens along in her car, drives Adela back to Chandrapore, where Adela tells the authorities that Dr. Aziz had attempted to rape her. Ill and confused after her experience, Adela stays with the McBrydes before the trial. Although earlier Adela had not endeared herself to the British officials and their wives, they rally around her and denounce Aziz because she is "an English girl, fresh from England." However, when she withdraws her charge against Aziz during the trial, she in effect renounces her own people. She breaks off her engagement with Ronny and stays with Fielding for a while before leaving India and returning to England. She does not reappear after this. However, in Part III, Dr. Aziz continues to harbor bad feelings toward her. He mistakenly believes that Fielding, who has also gone back to England, has married her—a misunderstanding that is not cleared up until just before the conclusion of the novel.

Mr. Turton

An Anglo–Indian (British) government administrator in Chandrapore. He holds the post of Collector, and is a generic representative of British authority in the district. Aziz uses the phrase "your Turtons and Burtons" to refer offhandedly to all British civil servants. Turton has been in India for twenty–five years, but his comments and actions show that he really does not understand the Indians. For example, he remarks that "India does wonders for the judgment, especially in hot weather." He organizes a "Bridge Party" so that Adela Quested and Mrs. Moore can meet some Indians.

Although Turton is not particularly sensitive or imaginative, he is basically a decent man.

Mrs. Turton

The wife of the Collector at Chandrapore, Mr. Turton. She is a generic *memsahib*— the wife of an Anglo–Indian (British) official. She is something of a snob. Mrs. Turton prefers to socialize with other British wives and their husbands in the tight–knit Anglo–Indian community and does not socialize with Indians except at formal events. She disapproves of Adela Quested.

Mr. Zulfiqar

See Nawab Bahadur

Themes

Culture Clash

At the heart of *A Passage to India* –and in the background–Is a clash between two fundamentally different cultures, those of East and West. The British poet Rudyard Kipling, who was born in India and lived there for several years as an adult, wrote: "East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet." _ Without quoting or acknowledging Kipling, Forster adopts this premise as a central theme of *A Passage to India*.

The West is represented by the Anglo–Indians (the British administrators and their families in India) in Chandrapore. They form a relatively small but close–knit community. They live at the civil station, apart from the Indians. Their social life centers around the Chandrapore Club, where they attempt to recreate the entertainments that would be found in England. Although these Westerners wish to maintain good relations with the Easterners whom they govern, they have no desire to "understand" India or the Indians. Early in the book Ronny Heaslop remarks that "No one can even begin to think of knowing this country until he has been in it twenty years." When Adela Quested rebukes him for his attitudes, he replies that "India isn't home"–that is, it is not England.

Mrs. Moore, Adela, and Mr. Fielding are three English characters who challenge this received wisdom. Significantly, Mrs. Moore and Adela are newcomers who have no experience of India and thus are not fully aware of the gulf that separates the two cultures: "They had no race–consciousness–Mrs. Moore was too old, Miss Quested too new–and they behaved to Aziz as to any young man who had been kind to them in the country." However, Adela shows her ignorance of Indian customs when she asks Dr. Aziz how many wives he has. The Turtons throw a "Bridge Party" to "bridge the gulf between East and West," but this event only emphasizes the awkwardness that exists between the two cultures. Mrs. Moore senses that India is full of "mystery and

muddle" that Westerners cannot comprehend. Following Aziz's arrest, Turton tells Fielding that in his twenty–five years in India "I have never known anything but disaster result when English people and Indians attempt to be intimate socially."

The culture clash, however, is not only between Indians and Anglo–Indians, but also between two distinct groups of Indians–Moslems and Hindus. The narrative makes it clear that these two groups have very different traditions. Dr. Aziz is proud of his Moslem heritage and considers the Hindus to be almost alien. Hindus "have no idea of society," he tells Mrs. Moore, Adela, and Fielding. At the same time, although he is quite conscious of being an Indian, Aziz has a sentimental affection for Persia, the land from which Moslem culture originally spread to India. The Moslem–Hindu divide closes somewhat when a Hindu attorney, Mr. Amritrao, is called in to defend Aziz. After the trial, Hindus and Moslems alike celebrate Aziz's acquittal. In the book's final section, Aziz is living in a Hindu state, where he regards himself as an outsider.

Friendship

E. M. Forster considered friendship to be one of the most important things in life. He once remarked, controversially, that if he were faced with the choice of betraying his country or betraying his friends, he would betray his country. *A Passage to India* explores the nature of friendship in its various forms, and the word "friend" occurs frequently throughout the book. When we first meet Dr. Aziz and his friends Hamidullah and Mahmoud Ali, they are discussing whether it is possible for Indians to be friends with the British. Hamidullah, who is pleasant and easygoing, fondly recalls his friendship with a British family long ago. When Dr. Aziz meets Mrs. Moore at the mosque, he feels she is someone with whom he can develop a friendship. He also wants to make friends with Cyril Fielding, whom he regards as a sympathetic and enlightened Englishman. However, despite his general impulsiveness, Aziz realizes that "a single meeting is too short to make a friend".

Aziz has a curious friendship with Professor Godbole. He likes Godbole but is unable to understand him. Godbole himself has a friendly attitude, but he is vague and distracted. When Fielding tells him that Aziz has been arrested, Godbole seems unconcerned. Instead, he asks Fielding for advice about what name to give to a school that he is thinking of starting. Still, Fielding acknowledges that "all [Godbole's] friends trusted him, without knowing why."

Of all the British characters in the book, Fielding has the greatest gift for friendship. Mrs. Moore feels friendliness for Aziz when she first meets him, but she loses interest in friendship—and in life itself—when she loses her faith at the Marabar Caves. Among the other British characters, a sense of duty generally takes precedence over friendship. Although he had known her in England, Ronny is unable to sustain a relationship with Adela in India. In their words and actions, Anglo-Indian officials such as Ronny, Mr. Turton, and Mr. McBryde demonstrate that while they may get along with Indians on one level, it is impossible and indeed undesirable to be friends with them.

The book concludes with a conversation between Aziz and Fielding about the possibility of friendship—the theme that had been the subject of the first conversation. Aziz tells Fielding that they cannot be friends until the English have been driven out of India. Fielding replies that he wants to be friends, and that it is also what Aziz wants. The last paragraph, however, suggests that the impersonal forces at work in India will not yet allow such a friendship.

Public vs. Private Life

The various attempts at friendship throughout *A Passage to India* are frustrated not only by cultural differences but also by the demands of public life, or duty. These demands are strongest among the Anglo-Indian officials of Chandrapore. In general, characters such as Turton, Callendar, McBryde, and Ronny put their jobs above whatever personal desires they may have. The Turtons' "Bridge Party" is more a

diplomatic exercise than a truly personal gesture McBryde, the Superintendent of police, prosecutes Aziz because it is his duty to do so; personal feelings do not enter into his decision. Ronny breaks off his engagement with Adela partly because her actions in the court are seen by the Anglo-Indians as a public disgrace. His marriage to her would offend the members of his community, who disapprove of Adela because of her behavior at the trial.

Cyril Fielding, the principal of the government college, seems to be the only British character willing to act out of personal conviction rather than public duty. The Anglo-Indian authorities believe it is important to keep up a public image of unity on the question of Aziz's guilt. In speaking up for Aziz, Fielding goes against the public behavior that is expected of him and is seen as "letting down the side." Because of this transgression, he is expelled from the English club at Chandrapore.

McBryde's affair with Miss Derek, revealed later in the book, is perhaps a minor instance in which another British official chooses to fulfill a personal desire at the risk of his public image. However, we do not see the consequences of this choice.

Dr. Aziz himself is torn between his public life as a doctor at a government hospital and his private dreams. When he attempts to transcend the distinction between private wishes and the public constraints, "Trouble after trouble encountered him, because he had challenged the spirit of the Indian earth, which tries to keep men in compartments." Only in Professor Godbole does the division between public and private life seem to disappear. For Godbole, the two are simply different forms of one existence. Godbole's prayers, for example, have both a private and public function, and it is difficult to tell where one ends and the other begins.

Ambiguity

A Passage to India is full of ambiguity, and its most important characters—Dr. Aziz, Mrs. Moore, Cyril Fielding, Adela Quested—are beset by doubt at key points in the

narrative. The terms "mystery" and "muddle" are introduced during Fielding's tea party and are repeated several times throughout the book. When Adela remarks that she "hates mysteries," Mrs. Moore replies that "I like mysteries but I rather dislike muddles." Mr. Fielding then observes that "a mystery is a muddle."

Doubt and ambiguity surround two key incidents in the book that occur at the Marabar Caves. On a literal level, Adela does not know if she has really been attacked in the cave or if she has only imagined this incident. If she has been attacked, was Dr. Aziz the attacker? While the reader might not doubt Aziz's innocence, there is a larger ambiguity about what really did take place. For Anglo-Indian authority figures such as Ronny Heaslop, Major Callendar, and Mr. McBryde, there is no doubt whatever; it is only characters such as Cyril Fielding who are capable of entertaining doubt and, thus, of thinking critically about events.

An even larger, more metaphorical ambiguity surrounds Mrs. Moore's experience at the caves. While she is inside one of the caves, she hears an echo and suddenly feels that everything—including her religious faith—is meaningless. So powerful is the doubt that fills Mrs. Moore, that she loses her grip on life.

God and Religion

E. M. Forster was not a religious man nor a religious writer. However, religion is a major preoccupation in the book. India is seen as a meeting point of three of the world's historic religions—Islam, Christianity, and Hinduism. Indeed, the three parts of the book—"Mosque," "Cave," and "Temple"—generally correspond to these religions. Aziz loves the cultural and social aspects of his Moslem (Islamic) heritage, but he seems less concerned with its theology and religious practice. He is aware that Moslems are in the minority in India, and he thus feels a special kinship with other Moslems such as Hamidullah. The Anglo-Indians are nominal representatives of Christianity, although there is little overt sign of such Christian virtues as charity, love, and forgiveness. Ronny Heaslop admits that for him Christianity is fine in its

place, but he does not let It interfere with his civil duty. Mrs. Moore is basically Christian in her outlook. However, she experiences a crisis of faith during her visit to the Marabar Caves, and her belief in God or in any meaning to life is destroyed. Hinduism is the main religion of India, and Professor Godbole is the central Hindu figure in the book. He is also, by far, the most religious character. For Godbole, Hinduism is "completeness, not reconstruction." The central principle of this religion is the total acceptance of things as they are. Forster suggests that this is the most positive spiritual approach to life. It is also most representative of the true spirit of India.

Style

Point of View

A Passage to India is written in the third person, with an impersonal narrative voice. This technique makes the narrative seem traditional and straightforward, especially when compared to the more obviously experimental narrative techniques that were being used at the time by such novelists as James Joyce and Virginia Woolf. The narrator here is apparently omniscient, telling the reader much about India at the same time as describing the situations in which the various characters find themselves. At the same time, however, the narrative withholds a full explanation of certain events, most notably the misadventures that befall Mrs. Moore and Adela Quested at the Marabar Caves. Indeed, in recounting these details, the narrator is ambiguous rather than omniscient. A degree of ambiguity also surrounds the depiction of certain characters. Often, relatively minor characters (such as Mr. Turton, Mrs. Callendar, Mahmoud Ali, and the Nawab Bahadur) will appear in a scene without much introduction. Forster seems to take their presence for granted. This technique mimics the way that people might come and go in real life. Forster also assumes that the reader will have some knowledge of the social nuances of British India.

At times, the narrative focus shifts from a depiction of external events and enters the consciousness of one character or another, almost without the reader noticing that such a shift has occurred. This stream-of-consciousness effect is evident when Forster writes about Mrs. Moore's experiences at the caves and when he reports Adela's perceptions during the trial. It is also used several times when the narrative records Aziz's thoughts about his Islamic heritage and about his place in India.

Setting

The action of the first two sections of the book takes place in the town of Chandrapore

and at the Marabar Caves, located outside the town. Within the town itself, which is fairly nondescript, Forster identifies several localized settings. When we see the Anglo-Indian officials such as Major Callendar and Mr. Turton and their wives, it is almost invariably at the Civil Station, the area where the Anglo-Indians live and work. Often they are at the Chandrapore Club, which is exclusively for the Anglo-Indians and their British guests such as Mrs. Moore, and which Indians cannot enter. Although this setting emphasizes the Anglo-Indian's superior social status, it also shows their isolation from the mass of Indians who live around them. By contrast, the Indians are often shown at their own homes or in public places. The third section is set in Mau, a Hindu state several hundred miles from Chandrapore. (The book's three section headings "Mosque," "Caves," and "Temple"—indicate the symbolic settings; see "Structure" and "Symbolism," below.)

Apart from these specific settings, India itself is the larger setting of the book. Indeed, some critics have remarked that India is not only the setting: it is also the subject and might even be considered a "character."

Critics have argued about the extent to which *A Passage to India* reflects actual historical and political conditions of the time in which it is set. Indeed, there is some critical dispute over exactly when the novel takes place; Forster gives no dates in the narrative. One Indian who admired the book believed that it was more representative of India at the time of Forster's first visit, 1912. Several Western Critics have agreed with this analysis, and one has claimed that the action of the novel occurs "out of time." It may be safe to assume that the time setting is an amalgamation of the early 1910s and the early 1920s.

Structure

A Passage to India is divided into three parts or sections. Each part has its own particular symbols, correspondences, and associations. Each is set in a different season and opens with a chapter that describes a particular aspect of India. Part I, titled

"Mosque," takes place during the cool, dry season. The Mosque where Dr. Aziz meets Mrs Moore corresponds to Islam and the Islamic or Moslem aspect of India, as represented by Dr. Aziz and his family and friends. Despite some hints of possible trouble, the prevailing mood is one of harmony. The main events of this part of the book are Aziz's meeting with Mrs. Moore and Mr. Fielding's tea party.

Part II, "Caves," takes place during the hot season. The focus shifts to the British domination of India and to a contemporary British Christian perspective. Adela Quested becomes the center of attention. This part of the novel is marked by misunderstanding and conflict (or mystery and muddle, to use Mrs Moore's earlier terms). Mrs. Moore gives in to despair after she hears the echo while she is in the cave, and Adela becomes completely confused. The incident at the Marabar Caves and the trial of Dr. Aziz make up the main dramatic action.

Part III, "Temple," takes place during the rainy season several years after the action of Parts I and II Dr. Aziz has settled in a Hindu state, Mau. Professor Godbole becomes a more prominent character. This part of the novel concentrates on the themes of rebirth and reconciliation. The primary events are the Hindu festival celebrating the rebirth of Krishna and Fielding's return to India. Part III is the shortest of the three sections of the novel and might be considered as an epilogue.

Motif

Just as the three-part structure gives the novel dramatic shape, the use of certain motifs helps to give the book dramatic unity. A *motif* is a recurring image or incident that has a suggestive and even a symbolic quality. One prominent motif in *A Passage to India* is the interrupted or delayed Journey. Tills first occurs in chapter two, when Dr. Aziz is riding his bicycle to Major Callendar's bungalow at the English civil station and gets a flat tire. He has to find a tonga, or carriage, to take him the rest of the way. By the time he finally arrives, the major has left. Aziz's failure to arrive on time suggests the wide gulf that separates the Indians and the British. (To make

matters worse, two English ladies appear and take Aziz's carriage, leaving him without transportation.)

Another interrupted journey is the ride that Adela and Ronny take in the Nawab Bahadur's car. There is a minor accident—in the darkness the car runs off the road, stranding the passengers until Miss Derek comes along and offers to take them back to Chandrapore in her car. (But she leaves the Nawab's chauffeur behind) During this episode, Adela and Ronny decide that they will marry after all; but their engagement will prove to be temporary. This interrupted journey suggests their failure to marry.

In Part II of the novel, Cyril Fielding and Professor Godbole miss the train that they are intending to take on the trip to the Marabar Caves. This failure separates them from Aziz, Mrs. Moore, and Adela, who go on without them. The reader is left to imagine that if Fielding and Godbole had been able to accompany Aziz and the women as they had planned, the terrible and confusing incidents that befall the members of the party at the Marabar Caves might never have occurred. Later, Mrs. Moore dies on her voyage back to England.

In the final section, as they travel to the native state of Mau where Aziz and Godbole are living, Fielding, Stella, and Ralph are delayed by floods caused by the monsoons. *Just* before the end of the book, Aziz takes Ralph out on the river in a boat ("a rudderless dingy"); the oars had been "hidden to deter the visitors from going out." Fielding and his wife have already gone out in another boat, using long poles to push themselves. Aziz fears that the couple "might get into difficulties, for the wind was rising." The two boats collide and the passengers spill into the river. Despite the accident, this time the journey ends safely. The four characters have witnessed the Hindu celebrations, and their immersion in the water suggests not drowning but rebirth and renewal.

Irony

E. M. Forster has been called an ironic writer, and *A Passage to India* is perhaps the most ironic of all his works. Several layers of irony are evident. For example, it is ironic that Aziz has organized the trip to the Marabar Caves in order to entertain his English guests. Rather than being the pleasant outing that Aziz intended, the excursion ends in disaster for everyone concerned. Something happens to Adela while she is in one of the caves: she believes that she has been attacked by Aziz. Aziz, who had prided himself on his hospitality, instead finds himself punished for a crime he did not commit. (There is also a minor irony in that Aziz finds Adela physically unattractive and is offended that anyone could think that he would want to rape her.) Mrs. Moore too suffers a fate more terrible than Adela's. While she is in the cave she hears an echo that is simply a meaningless noise—"ouboom." She takes this to mean that everything is meaningless, and thus she loses her faith. It is also ironic that, although the caves are reputed to be famous, there is really nothing remarkable about them except their effect on the visitors.

A further irony occurs later in the book when Dr. Aziz assumes that his friend Cyril Fielding has married Adela Quested. In fact, Fielding has married Stella Moore, the daughter of the late Mrs. Moore, whom Aziz greatly liked and admired. Also ironic is the suggestion that Stella, who has just arrived from England, may have a greater understanding of the mystery of India than does Aziz himself.

Symbolism

Although *A Passage to India* is a realistic novel, it also contains many symbolic elements. The most obvious symbols are those that give the titles of the book's three sections—mosque, cave, and temple. Both for Aziz and Mrs. Moore, the mosque is a symbol of refuge and peace, a place of sanctuary. The first meeting of Aziz and Mrs. Moore takes place in the mosque at night, under the moonlight. Mrs. Moore has gone to the mosque because she is bored with the play she has been attending at the

Chandrapore club. The English play, *Cousin Kate*, seems artificial and out of place in India. The mosque, by contrast, is one symbol of the "real" India.

The cave bears some resemblance to the mosque, in that both are enclosed spaces. Here, however, the resemblance ends. The cave is dark, featureless, and menacing. Although there are many caves at Marabar, it is impossible to tell one from another; they are all alike. Critics have argued about the symbolic meaning of the cave. It is at least certain that whatever else they might suggest, they stand for misunderstanding and meaninglessness, or what Mrs. Moore calls "muddle."

Prominent among other symbols is the wasp. When Mrs. Moore goes to hang up her cloak at the end of chapter three, she sees a wasp. The symbolic significance of the wasp is not spelled out. However, it suggests the natural life of India, and also carries a hint of uncertainty. Much later, in Part III, Professor Godbole recalls "an old woman he had met in Chandrapore days." He then remembers "a wasp seen he forgot where.. .. He loved the wasp equally"

Historical Context

Forster's England

Although the action of *A Passage to India* takes place entirely in India, it should be remembered that Forster was a British writer, and that most of his readers were British. Thus, the work reflects not only the contemporary India, which is its overt subject, but also England and the milieu in which Forster lived and wrote. Moreover, although Forster published the book in 1924 during the reign of King George V (r. 1910–36), he is commonly regarded as an Edwardian novelist. Forster's first four novels were written in the first decade of the twentieth century, during the reign of King Edward VII (r. 1901–10), and his values and outlook were developed during this period, before World War I. Thus, like Forster's earlier books, *A Passage to India* is commonly regarded as an Edwardian book (an Edwardian novel of manners, at that), even though it was not written during the Edwardian period.

Between the time Forster first visited India and began writing this novel (1912–13) and the time he finished it (1924), Britain had undergone the traumatic experience of World War I. Britain and her allies won the war, but more than 750,000 British soldiers were killed, along with another quarter of a million soldiers from other parts of the British Empire; another two million British and Empire soldiers were wounded, many of them severely. These losses affected people's attitudes toward tradition and authority. The self-confidence that earlier had marked Britain's attitude about its empire and its place in the world was replaced with doubt and uncertainty. Nonetheless, although there was some sympathy for the Indian cause, most British people at the time would have supported the British presence in India.

Between 1912 and 1924, the British political landscape had also changed. At the beginning of this period, the Liberal Party had been one of the two major parties in Britain. (The other major party was, and remains, the Conservative Party.) The Liberals had won the majority of votes in the election of 1908, and were in power

from that time until 1915. However, during this decade the Liberals lost much of their support to the newer and more radical Labour Party, which favored a socialist program. The Labour Party had its first election victory in 1924; by this time, the Liberal Party had dwindled to a third-party status, and it never won another general election. (Forster and most of his circle, including the members of the Bloomsbury Group, were Labour supporters.) Although Labour remained in power for only ten months in 1924, the party had become the main alternative to the Conservatives.

During this period the British Empire was beginning to change. This change was most evident in Ireland, the only region of the British Empire that was right on Britain's doorstep. On Easter Sunday, 1916, a group of Irish rebels declared Irish independence from Britain and attempted to seize control of Dublin. Although the British army quickly crushed the rebellion, a more widespread Irish independence movement soon arose, and in 1921 the British government signed a treaty recognizing self-rule for the twenty-six southern counties of Ireland.

The Indian Context

Although the Irish rebellion had no direct effect on British rule of India, the fact that Ireland had gained limited independence helped to strengthen the idea of possible Indian independence in the minds of many Indians. Forster's novel is set during a time of increased tension between the British and their Indian subjects. The British presence in India had begun in the 1600s, when a British trading company, the East India Company, gained a strong foothold in Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta. At this time, much of India was nominally governed by a royal Moslem dynasty, the Moguls. (It was the Mogul emperors and their court that Dr. Aziz in the novel idealized.) However, the Mogul government was weakened by infighting and was unable to control all of India. The Indian population consisted of a number of different ethnic and religious groups, with little sense of an overall Indian identity. The British were thus able to increase their power in India.

In 1773, the English Parliament created the post of Governor General for India. Under Governor-General Cornwallis (1786–93), the British established a sophisticated colonial administration in India. (Cornwallis was also the British general who had surrendered to George Washington at the end of the American Revolutionary War.) Cornwallis instituted a system of British rule that was still mostly intact at the time of *A Passage to India*. Indians were forbidden to hold high government office and were subject to other laws that kept them in a subservient position, both legally and economically. A number of areas of the country known as Native States or Independent States were not under direct British rule, but were governed by local Indian princes or maharajahs. However, the British authorities kept close watch on these states, which had friendly policies toward the British.

The British suppressed an Indian rebellion (known as the Indian Mutiny or Sepoy Rebellion) in 1857. By the time of *A Passage to India*, there was a significant organized movement for Indian equality and eventual independence, in the form of the Indian National Congress. In 1919, nearly 400 Indians were shot to death and another 1,200 wounded when soldiers under British command opened fire on a crowd that had gathered illegally in the northeast Indian town of Amritsar. The Amritsar Massacre, as it became known, caused a public outcry both in India and Britain. India stood poised on the edge of widespread violence. In this tense atmosphere, a British-educated Indian lawyer named Mohandas K. Gandhi began a long non-violent campaign of civil disobedience against British rule. Gandhi advocated Indian equality as well as peaceful cooperation between the country's Hindu and Moslem populations. Forster does not mention Gandhi or the Amritsar Massacre, but the division between India's Hindus and Moslems is a major concern in the novel.

There is some critical dispute over the time period during which Forster's novel is set. One Indian who admired the book believed that it was representative of India at the time of Forster's first visit, 1912. One American critic has claimed that the action occurs "out of time." Most critics and readers feel that the action takes place in the early 1920s, contemporary with the time that the book was finished and published.

In any case, Forster's novel is not only concerned with its own time but also looks forward to the future. The novel hints that the two groups may be able to put aside their traditional differences and live in harmony as Indians. However, this did not turn out to be the case. As independence grew nearer, Moslems demanded the creation of a separate Moslem nation, Pakistan Indian independence in 1947 was accompanied by violent clashes between Hindus and Moslems, with tens of thousands of deaths on both sides. The next year, Gandhi was assassinated by a Hindu fanatic who believed that Gandhi was making too many compromises with the Moslems. Ironically, today both India and Pakistan have relatively good relations with Britain and the British. So It is likely that Dr. Aziz and Mr. Fielding would today be able to have the sort of uninhibited friendship that is mentioned at the end of the book.

Critical Overview

When *A Passage to India* was published in 1924, E M Forster was already a well-known and highly respected novelist. However, he had not published a novel for fourteen years (*Howards End*, 1910, was his previous book). Upon its publication, *A Passage to India* was reviewed widely in British newspapers and literary journals, as well as in American magazines. Most of these early reviews were very favorable and helped to ensure the book's success.

Among the first reviewers of *A Passage to India* in Britain and America were the English novelists Rose Macaulay (*Daily News*, June 4, 1924) and L. P. Hartley (*The Spectator*, June 28, 1924); the British writer and publisher Leonard Woolf (*The Nation and Athenaeum*, June 14, 1924); and the Scottish poet Edwin Muir (*The Nation*, October 8, 1924). All of these reviews were positive; in fact, these writers believed that *A Passage to India* was the best novel that Forster had written. A review in the *London Times Literary Supplement* concluded that Forster "portrays the super-sensitiveness, the impulsiveness, the charm and the weakness, of Mohammedan and Hindu India, in order to emphasize the honesty, the arrogance... and the moral tremors of the governing caste." In the United States, Robert Morss Lovett wrote a favorable review in *The New Republic* (August 16, 1924). However, E. A. Home in *The New Statesman* in London criticized Forster for his unsympathetic portrayal of the book's Anglo-Indian (British) characters and pointed out some inaccuracies in Forster's depiction of India.

Two of Forster's distinguished contemporaries expressed differing views of *A Passage to India* in personal remarks. The celebrated military hero T. E. Lawrence—Lawrence of Arabia—told Forster that *A Passage to India* was "universal" the bitter hopeless picture a cloud might have painted, of man in India." However, the novelist D. H. Lawrence (no relation to T. E. Lawrence) commented that the book was filled with "people, people, and nothing but people."

In the decades since its publication, *A Passage to India* has continued to receive close and respectful attention from many distinguished scholars and critics, often as part of a consideration of Forster's writing in general. With her husband Leonard, Virginia Woolf was an early—though not entirely uncritical—supporter of Forster's work. She discussed the book in a 1927 essay, "The Novels of E. M. Forster," in the *Atlantic Monthly*. Rose Macaulay, who like Forster was a graduate of Cambridge University, wrote one of the first full-length books about Forster, *The Writings of E. M. Forster*, published in 1938. That same year the influential English critic F. R. Leavis wrote about Forster in his Cambridge journal, *Scrutiny*. The famous American critic Lionel Trilling discussed *A Passage to India* in 1943 in *E. M. Forster: A Study*, thereby helping to revive American interest in the work nearly twenty years after its publication.

More recent academic studies in both Britain and America have focused attention on particular aspects of Forster's book, such as its narrative technique, symbolism, and politics. Malcolm Bradbury and Jeffrey Meyers are among those who have made important contributions to scholarship on *A Passage to India*.

Criticism

- Critical Essay #1
- Critical Essay #2
- Critical Essay #3

Critical Essay #1

Lilburn, a teaching assistant at the University of Western Ohio, explores possible interpretations of Forster's novel, including its political, racial, and homo-erotic Implications.

A Passage to India is E. M. Forster's final and perhaps finest novel. Forster visited India twice and wrote another novel, the posthumously published *Maurice*, before finally completing *A Passage to India* in 1924—more than ten years after it was begun. Although Forster has stated that the novel is not really about politics and that it is less concerned with the incompatibility of East and West than it is with the difficulty of living in the universe, the novel does address issues such as colonialism, racism, nationalism, and rape. As a result, much of the critical analysis has focused on political and social themes. One of the major issues the novel attempts to address is introduced in the second chapter through a conversation in which Dr. Aziz, Mahmoud Ali, and Hamidullah discuss "whether or not it is possible to be friends with an Englishman." Shortly after this discussion, Dr. Aziz is befriended by two Englishwomen and the Anglo-Inman Principal at the College, Mr. Fielding. But most Critics tend to look beyond the relationships between individuals and discuss the novel in terms of its depiction of Anglo-Indian colonial society. Debate over whether or not *A Passage to India* is critical of colonialism is ongoing Many critics agree that the novel does attack the traditional justifications for British domination, but convincing arguments can also be made that Forster's attempt to represent India implicates him in the "muddle" of imperial power.

At the centre of the novel is the visit to the Marabar Caves. All the connections and friendships established in the first section of the novel lead to this expedition. Much has been written about what actually happens in the caves but the mystery remains unsolved. One might read Mrs. Moore's and Miss Quested's experiences in the caves as a breakdown of established values resulting from the exposure to "other" conceptions of culture and being. Adela's experience in particular is often read as a

hallucination or hysterical reaction brought about by sexual repression. But the mystery remains a mystery because the pivotal scene involving Adela and Aziz is never told. Mrs. Moore has a "horrifying" experience inside one of the caves and sinks into a state of apathy and cynicism. All that is known of Adela's misadventure is that she suffers a maybe–real, maybe–imagined sexual assault and that Aziz is charged with the crime. Whether or not there even was a crime committed, either by Aziz or by someone else, is never revealed.

After witnessing the unsuccessful Bridge Party, Adela vows that she will never succumb to Anglo–Indian ideology. Yet, as Jenny Sharpe has noted in her article *The Unspeakable Limits of Rape: Colonial Violence and Counter–Insurgency in Genders*, the accusations Adela makes against Dr. Aziz seemingly confirm the fears and racist assumptions used to justify imperialism—that the "native" world is chaotic, uncontrollable and evil and thus in need of English domination. Following Aziz's arrest, many of these hateful and unfounded fears are openly manifested. The District Superintendent of Police, Mr. McBryde, is not surprised by Aziz's downfall because he believes that "all unfortunate natives are criminals at heart, for the simple reason that they live south of latitude 30." At the Club, people begin to voice their concern for the safety of the "women and children" and one young woman even refuses to "return to her bungalow in case the 'niggers attacked.'" The prevailing attitude is best represented by McBryde's words at Aziz's trial. He delivers his opening statement almost indifferently because he believes that Aziz's guilt is already accepted as fact. The possibility that Aziz may in fact be innocent is never even considered because, as McBryde tells the court, It is a "general truth" that the "darker races are physically attracted by the fairer, but uot vice versa".

But passages such as these do not lend authority to Adela's allegations against Dr. Aziz. On the contrary, the rhetoric used to justify imperialism is severely parodied. The scenes paint all ugly picture of the English officers sent to India to "do Justice and keep the peace"; they become almost ridiculous when it is remembered that the colonizers' prejudices and fears are aroused by an event that may not have taken place. McBryde's "general truth" is based not on evidence or, as he claims, scientific fact, but

on the assumptions and premises which are necessary to support notions of Western superiority.

Similarly, the mystery surrounding the caves and the events that transpired inside them undermine any sense of certainty in the novel. Adela herself becomes unsure about what actually happened in the caves and is plagued by the echoing doubt that her accusations may have been fabricated. Sharpe has argued that this element of uncertainty, introduced into a crime which supposedly confirms the "native's" depravity, reveals the fictionality of what she terms "colonial truth-claims." In other words, Sharpe illustrates how the declaration of Aziz's innocence "undermines the racist assumptions underpinning an official discourse that represents anti-colonial insurgency as the savage attack of barbarians on innocent women and children" The novel's exposure of such politically constructed "truths" thus subverts the conventional justifications for British domination.

However, the novel's condemnation of imperial ideology is not unproblematic. Benita Parry has noted, in *The Politics of Representation in A Passage to India*, from *E. M. Forster: Contemporary Critical Essays*, that while the text does lampoon colonial rhetoric, its overt criticism of colonialism is phrased in the feeblest of terms. One scene which several Critics have singled out even suggests that colonialism might have been more acceptable had the British only been a little kinder: "One touch of regret... would have made [Ronny] a different man, and the British Empire a different institution." The novel's ending is also troublesome. Fielding, the one man who stood against his countrymen to defend Aziz, finally throws in "his lot with Anglo-India by marrying a countrywoman" and "acquiring some of its limitations." He even begins to doubt whether he would repeat his defiance of his own people "for the sake of a stray Indian."

Moreover, there are instances in the novel where the narrator appears to be guilty of making broad generalizations about Indians. Compared to the loud and offensive remarks spoken by McBryde, the narrator's occasional reinforcement of racial stereotypes is easily overlooked. But seemingly harmless comments—"like most

Orientalists' Aziz overrated hospitality"—do contribute to the West's textual construction of the East. And, as alluded to above, It is this kind of fabricated report which can eventually become accepted as a "general truth." While narrative comments such as these do not necessarily invalidate the novel's criticism of colonialism, they do suggest that the Western novelist's prose about India, like the "pose of seeing India" criticized in the novel, can be a "form of ruling India".

Of course, it is possible to discuss the novel without emphasizing the political and colonial themes. A completely different reading is offered by Parminder Bakshi in *A Passage to India: Theory and Practice Series*. Bakshi argues that *A Passage to India*, like all of Forster's fiction, contains homo-erotic themes and was inspired not by colonial issues but by the barriers to male friendship. She contends that Forster strives to dissociate friendship from politics and illustrates how the novel moves towards creating intimacy between Fielding and Aziz. Central to her argument is the theme of friendship which, Bakshi believes, decenters the hollow and artificial convention of marriage because it poses a threat to male friendship.

Perhaps most convincing is Bakshi's reading of the novel's final scene. Although politics appear to be the reason for Fielding and Aziz's separation, Bakshi argues that politics are actually superfluous. More traditional readings of the scene interpret Aziz's final words as an acknowledgment that the colonial situation makes friendship between the English and Indians impossible. But Bakshi points out that it is only at the suggestion of male intimacy made by Fielding ("Why can't we be friends now? It's what I want. It's what you want.") that the entire universe rises in protest by hurling countless barriers between them: "the horses didn't want it—they swerved apart; the earth didn't want it, sending up rocks through which riders must pass single-file; the temples, the tank ... they didn't want it, they said in their hundred voices, 'No, not yet,' and the sky said, 'No, not there.'" Through Bakshi's reading, the novel transcends contemporary politics and becomes an indictment against the oppression of male love.

Still, it is impossible to read the end of the novel without also considering the political and colonial themes. Forster's text is not optimistic about the future of East-West

relations, but it is prophetic. Early in the novel, when Aziz is making his way to Callendar's compound, he becomes depressed by the roads which, "named after victorious generals and intersecting at right angles, were symbolic of the net Great Britain had thrown over India." In his final meeting with Fielding, Aziz recognizes the immediate need to throw off this net and foresees that the time for Indian independence will come with the next European war. Will the act of driving "every blasted Englishman into the sea" make it possible for an Indian to be friends with an Englishman? The novel provides no simple answer. Forster was certainly aware that the repercussions of British authority would echo for years after the end of British domination, and while his novel's final words, spoken by a chorus of a hundred voices, do suggest the possibility of a better future, it is a future that, in 1924, remains uncertain.

Source: Jeffrey M. Lilburn, in an essay for *Novels for Students*, Gale, 1998.

Critical Essay #2

In the following excerpt, Hawkins considers Forster's primary anti-imperial argument as the impossibility of personal relationships. Besides the bigotry of the English in India, he dwells on the self-interest and fear of betrayal on the Indian side. He also questions not only politics but nature itself as a power against human connection.

The chief argument against imperialism in E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* is that it prevents personal relationships. The central question of the novel is posed at the very beginning when Mahmoud Ali and Hamidullah ask each other "whether or no it is possible to be friends with an Englishman." The answer, given by Forster himself on the last page, is "No, not yet— No, not there." Such friendship is made impossible, on a political level, by the existence of the British Raj. While having several important drawbacks, Forster's anti-imperial argument has the advantage of being concrete, clear, moving, and presumably persuasive. It is also particularly well-suited to pursuit in the novel form, which traditionally has focused on interactions among individuals.

Forster's most obvious target is the unfriendly bigotry of the English in India, or the Anglo-Indians as they were called. At times he scores them for their pure malice, as when Mrs. Callendar says, "The kindest thing one can do to a native is to let him die." More tellingly, Forster shows up their bigotry as prejudice in the literal sense of pre-judgment. The Anglo-Indians, as Forster presents them, act on emotional preconceptions rather than rational and open-minded examination of facts. They therefore fall into logical inconsistencies which the author exposes with his favorite weapon: Irony. For example, at the hysterical Club meeting following Dr. Aziz's arrest for allegedly molesting Adela Quested, the subaltern defends an anonymous native with whom he had played polo the previous month: "Any native who plays polo is all right. What you've got to stamp on is these educated classes." The reader knows, as the subaltern doesn't, that the native was Aziz himself. Against the bigotry of the Anglo-Indians, Forster urged tolerance and understanding in the widest sense....

Forster does much more in his book... than simply deride the intolerance of a few accidental individuals. He carefully shows how this intolerance results from the unequal power relationship between English and Indians, from the imperialistic relationship itself. The process is best shown in the book in the case of Ronny, who has only recently come out from England to be City Magistrate of Chandrapore.

Ronny was at first friendly towards the Indians, but he soon found that his position prevented such friendship. Shortly after his arrival he invited the lawyer MaJmoud All to have a smoke with him, only to learn later that clients began flocking to All in the belief that he had an in with the Magistrate. Ronny subsequently "dropped on him in Court as hard as I could. It's taught me a lesson, and I hope him." In this instance, it is clearly Ronny's official position rather than any prior defect of the heart which disrupts the potential friendship. And It is his position in the imperial structure which causes his later defect, his lack of true regret when he tells his mother that now "I prefer my smoke at the club amongst my own sort, I'm afraid."

Forster tells us that "every human act in the East is tainted with officialism" and that "where there is officialism every human relationship suffers." People cannot establish a friendship of equals when the Raj is based on an inequality of power.. ..

The one possible exception to this process of corruption among Englishmen is Fielding. He is partially Immune to the influence of the Imperialistic power relationship because he works in education rather than government, and because, as he puts it, he "travels light"—he has no hostages to fortune. Fielding establishes a friendship with Aziz and maintains it in defiance of all the other Anglo Indians. There is some doubt, however, whether he can maintain this course and still remain in imperial India. He is obliged to quit the Club and says he will leave India altogether should Aziz be convicted. After Fielding marries Stella, thereby ceasing to travel light, and after he becomes associated with the government as a school inspector, he undergoes a marked change of attitude toward the Raj.

It would surely be a mistake to continue, as several critics do, to identify Forster with Fielding past this point. The omniscient narrator pulls back and summarizes Fielding's situation: "He had thrown in his lot with Anglo-India by marrying a countrywoman, and he was acquiring some of its limitations." Like Ronny and the other English officials, Fielding begins to be corrupted by his position. Thinking of how Godbole's school has degenerated into a granary, the new school inspector asserts that "Indians go to seed at once" away from the British. Fielding almost exactly echoes Ronny's defense of the Raj to his mother when he excuses unpleasantness in the supposedly necessary imperial presence: he had "'no further use for politeness,' he said, meaning that the British Empire really can't be abolished because it's rude." Fielding certainly did not start with a defect of the heart, but, as a result of his new position in the imperial structure, he is acquiring one.

The English, of course, aren't the only ones corrupted by Imperialism. Although most of the Indians in the book have a nearly unbelievable desire to befriend Englishmen, they are ultimately turned from it by the political reality. Some succumb to self-interest. MaJmoud All, for example, seems to have been the first to subvert his budding friendship with Ronny by advertising their smoke to potential litigants. More often the Indians succumb to the fear, largely justified but occasionally erroneous, that they will be scorned and betrayed. The prime example is Aziz. He makes the horrible mistake of assuming that Fielding back in England has married his enemy Adela and further that Fielding had urged him not to press damages against his false accuser so Fielding himself could enjoy Adela's money. Aziz, of course, has been conditioned to expect betrayal from his experience with other Anglo-Indians, and this expectation provides an undercurrent to the friendship from the very beginning. After Fielding returns to India, and Aziz learns he really married Stella Moore, their relationship is partially retrieved, but the damage has been done. The new school inspector has shifted toward the Raj, and Aziz, now leery of all Englishmen, has become a nationalist, saying of India, "Not until she is a nation will her sons be treated with respect." . . .

In 1924, when *Passage* appeared, the Indian movement led by Mahatma Gandhi was still not yet agitating for independence. They said they wished to achieve dominion status and remain within the empire. Forster took what was at the time a more radical position by declaring that India inevitably had to become free. In an article in *The Nation and the Athenaeum* in 1922, Forster stated that "ten years ago" Indians had looked to Englishmen for social support, but now it was "too late," and he anticipated "the dissolution of an Empire." These phrases are repeated at the end of the novel when Aziz cries, "Clear out, all you Turtons and Burtons. We wanted to know you ten years back—now it's too late."

Forster's novel does not explicitly spell out what has happened in the previous ten years, apart from Aziz's own trial and his blow-up with Fielding. However, the book is full of muted references to recent events. The most important among these was the 1919 uprising in the Punjab which the British brutally suppressed. At the town of Amritsar, General Dwyer ordered his troops to fire on an unarmed crowd, killing nearly four hundred. Later he issued an order requiring Indians to crawl through a street where an English girl, Miss Marcella Sherwood, had been attacked. In *Passage* Mrs. Turton, after the supposed attack on Adela, says of the Indians, "They ought to crawl from here to the caves on their hands and knees whenever an Englishwoman's in sight." After Amritsar, General Campbell issued an order obliging Indians to approach the houses of Europeans on foot. Thus Aziz, when he goes to visit Major Callendar, has to get out of his tonga before he reaches the verandah....

There are two important drawbacks in Forster's argument for independence on the grounds that it is necessary for friendship. The first is that his argument takes little account of the less personal, more abstract issues of imperialism, particularly the economic issues. Apart from a passing reference to "the wealth of India" allowed "to escape overseas," there is no mention of England's economic exploitation of India. We see no plantations or mines in British India. Collector Turton presumably takes in tax, but we never see him doing so. And, with the exception of the punkah wallah, we never see an Indian performing physical labor. Thus we have little sense of why the English are in India in the first place... .

Forster may have omitted the economics of the Raj because he was ignorant of them or didn't see their significance. Or possibly he did so because he was following the Bloomsbury aesthetic of starting with characters and bringing in the material world only secondarily. In any case, he left out an important aspect of the Raj, and this omission has led the Marxist critic Derek S. Savage to attack him fiercely: "The ugly realities underlying the presence of the British in India are not even glanced at, and the issues raised are handled as though they could be solved on the surface level of personal intercourse and individual behavior." This criticism may be justified, but in defence of Forster It should be noted that his particular argument against the Raj, its disruption of friendship, was shared by the Indian leaders of his day. In a 1921 letter explaining the purpose of the Non-cooperation Movement, Gandhi wrote: "We desire to live on terms of friendship with Englishmen, but that friendship must be friendship of equals both in theory and practice, and we must continue to non-cooperate till ... the goal is achieved".

The second drawback to Forster's anti-imperial argument is perhaps more damaging. It is that even if the political barriers are overcome, Forster is still skeptical that friendship can be achieved. This skepticism has the effect of undermining the entire political argument and making us say, "Why bother?" *A Passage to India* suggests a number of non-political barriers to friendship: the selfishness inherent in human nature, cultural differences which Cannot be bridged, and the human potential for insanity. The most important banner, though, is the echo. There have been many interpretations of the echo in the Marabar caves, and it is difficult to explain in words since the echo intrinsically resists language, but It seems first of all to indicate the meaninglessness of the universe. For Mrs. Moore, the echo reduces all human expressions to the same dull "bourn," and it says, "Everything exists, nothing has value."... In the political aspect of the novel, Forster attacked the prejudice of the Anglo-Indians by appealing to a reason which would find the true facts; but in the metaphysical aspect, he tells us that reason is useless.

The effect of the echo on Mrs. Moore is to make her abandon all attempts at human connection After hearing it, she realizes she "didn't want to communicate with anyone

She lost all interest, even in Aziz." Mrs. Moore withdraws into herself, leaves India without any further significant interaction with anyone, and finally dies. For her, the echo makes friendship impossible. Later, of course, the figure of Mrs. Moore undergoes a sort of apotheosis in which she is imagined as a benefactress of India. She becomes the Hindu demi-deity Esmiss Esmoor; Professor Godbole makes her part of his ecstatic devotion, and Aziz tells Ralph, "Your mother was my best friend in all the world." There is no objective basis, however, for this exaltation of her by the Indians, and Reuben Brower seems right in saying, "We can hardly accept this about-face in Mrs. Moore's role and its symbolic value. We cannot at the end of the novel regard Mrs. Moore as in tune With the infinite and conveniently forget the mocking denial of her echo." Whatever her effect on others, she seems irretrievably isolated by the echo. Although she senses that Aziz is innocent, she is indifferent to his plight and does nothing at all to help him. When asked to testify, she says irritably, "When shall I be free from your fuss? Was he in the cave and were you in the cave and on and on ... and ending everything the echo." She decides of all people, including Aziz, "They do not exist, they were a dream." Mrs. Moore's friendship for Aziz thus comes to an end. The disruption in this case has nothing to do with the Raj or any other political barrier; rather it is caused by something much more powerful and over-riding: the echo.

A Passage to India does suggest a solution to the echo, of course. There is some doubt, however, whether Forster himself subscribed to this solution.

And the solution contributes nothing to the argument against the Raj since it transcends politics and all other worldly concerns. The solution is Hinduism, which is shown countering the echo by abandoning reason and embracing the muddle of the universe with irrational joy. The negative echo "bourn" is thus transposed into the affirmative chant "OM," representing the Hindu trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva.

While Hinduism may provide a metaphysical solution, it does not, at least according to Forster's novel, provide a political one. Hinduism is shown embracing everything, including the British empire, with equal mindless affirmation. Professor Godbole points out that good and evil "are both of them aspects of my Lord." There are no

villains: everyone attacked Adela. When Shri Krishna is born in the festival of Gokul Ashtami, he saves foreigners as well as Indians....

At the very end of the novel when Aziz tells Fielding, "We shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea, and then... and then... you and I shall be friends," the Englishman asks him, "Why can't we be friends now? It's what I want. It's what you want." The question is never answered by either man because their horses swerve apart. . One interpretation of this closing paragraph is that Fielding and Aziz cannot be friends until India becomes a nation, but another interpretation, a far more chilling one, is that they can never be friends. Not only politics keep them apart. The very earth and sky do all of existence and the echo prevent human connection.

Source: Hunt Hawkins, "Forster's Critique of Imperialism In *A Passage to India*," In *South Atlantic Review*, January, 1983, pp. 54–65.

Critical Essay #3

In the following excerpt, Clubb proposes that the meaning of the Marabar Caves is the mystery of the origin of life and a conscious spirit beyond human powers of comprehension.

That E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* should, almost forty years after its first publication, continue to have an enthusiastic reading public is not surprising, though as a political and sociological document it is often spoken of, even by Forster himself, as dated. The fact is, as many recent articles have made clear, that the theme of the novel—the resolution of chaos (or the possibility of such a resolution) through human or divine love—is one which has pervaded the literature of the West from the time of Aeschylus to the present. Furthermore, analyzed on almost any level—as social comedy, as penetrating study of character, as metaphysical discourse, or as patterning of detail and episode—the novel is a masterpiece. Even as political and sociological comment the novel is, I feel, not so dated as Forster was prepared to admit. Certainly the situation in India has altered since the book was begun in 1912; however if we take the conflict between England and India as a pattern of that between France and Algeria, Belgium and the Congo, Portugal and Angola, or African white and African Negro, we see that the political aspects of the novel are by no means dated, nor will be so long as political or economic domination leads to conflicts between peoples. This is not to say that all such conflicts are identical, but it is to say that wherever we find the exploitation of one people by another, we are likely to find political and social consequences which, if not worse, will be much like those portrayed in *A Passage to India*... .

The importance of the Marabar Caves is indicated by the emphasis given them in the opening chapter, which begins, "Except for the Marabar Caves—" and continues with a description of the novel's main setting, Chandrapore on the Ganges River with the English civil station above. Towards the end of the chapter is mentioned the "Immense vault" of the sky. The description of the sky naturally leads to the horizon and then to

the only interruption of the straight line of the horizon, the "fists and fingers" in the south. The final sentence of the chapter returns us to the caves: "These fists and fingers are the Marabar Hills, containing the extraordinary caves."...

Throughout Part One of the novel Forster keeps the reader's attention on the caves by casual references and more particularly by Aziz's invitation to Adela and Mrs. Moore to visit them. However, the caves remain mysterious. Indeed they remain mysterious throughout the novel, but in Part One few details are given about them and no inkling whatever of their impact on the viewer. In Chapter Seven during Fielding's tea party, at which Mrs. Moore and Adela are present, the caves are discussed by Aziz and Professor Godbole, but only to leave them in a greater mystery than before. Aziz has never seen the caves himself and knows them only by hearsay. Godbole has visited the caves but for some unknown reason is not willing to reveal anything about them except for the most trivial and obvious facts....

The first extended treatment of the caves occurs at the beginning of Part Two, where Forster not only describes their appearance but also gives a brief geological history of the Indian sub-continent....

The caves are associated with the vast and unknowable expanse of geological time. They derive from the most remote ages of the Pre-Cambrian era, a period covering the first two or three billion years of the earth's history and a period of which geologists have merely the slightest knowledge, since only the lowest and most easily obliterated forms of life existed. The caves antedate even the most primitive fossils. Forster divests them of any relation to life-human, animal, or plant. "To call them uncanny suggests ghosts, and they are older than all spirit." The Hindus have made some scratches on them; some saddhus once tried to settle in them but failed. This is all....

[The] caves represent not only a primitive level of intellectual and emotional activity but also, I believe, those mysteries of our universe which human beings-because they are, after all, finite, at least in the physical world-will never understand. Particularly,

they symbolize the riddle of life itself, the mystery which lies behind the creation or appearance of that nonmaterial essence that we call spirit or consciousness....

The description of the caves, then, offers one more example of this pushing back to the unknown. I have suggested above that the mystery here may be that which lies behind the existence of spirit itself. How can stone, in which spirit is apparently inherent (for the stones themselves seem alive during the journey of the Aziz party to the caves), give rise to those forms of matter which we call *life* and which exhibit so clearly the quality that we call *consciousness*? The question, of course, cannot be answered. The biologist can explain how the one-celled protozoan can evolve into man, but he cannot explain how the complex molecule becomes the protozoan. This is a crucial step. Professor Godbole, whose sympathies can comprehend the wasp, cannot make the imaginative leap to stone. One passage particularly in the chapter on the caves suggests the mystery inherent in the development of life from non-life. Forster writes of the visitor striking a match upon entering the cave....

Here we have the direct opposition of organic and inorganic matter. The response of the flame in the stone suggests that spirit is infused through *all* matter but that only the spirit or consciousness of living beings can know this; hence the flame in the stone is a *reflection* of the flame in the air. Ultimately the gap between stone and flame can never be completely closed because, in this life, the spirit of man can never be completely one. With the spirit of inorganic matter, however broad his sympathies may be....

[The] caves should be understood as symbolic of the womb. Such a meaning reinforces the concept that the caves represent the mystery of the origin of life. We may say, then, that the caves symbolize this mystery on two levels: the metaphysical and the sexual.

This interpretation of the meaning of the caves helps to explain the reactions of Mrs. Moore and Adela to their experiences at the Marabar. For Mrs. Moore the metaphysical problem is dominant. In England her faith had apparently been that of the

orthodox Christian, possibly of rather narrow persuasion. In India her sympathies instinctively broaden. She feels the presence of God in the Mosque, and she offers a kind of benediction over the wasp; thus she is becoming a mystic who sees the cosmos as an emanation of, or as infused with, the spirit of God, a universal God, not a specifically Christian God. In essence she is approaching the Hindu position, and it is significant that during the trial of Aziz she becomes deified among the Hindus as Esmis Esmoor and that she and Professor Godbole are linked through the thoughts of Godbole at the end of the novel. Intellectually, however, Mrs. Moore finds herself dissatisfied. ..

Mrs. Moore finds God less efficacious because in her heart she no longer accepts her former religious beliefs as the final and absolute truth. In the caves and afterwards comes her spiritual crisis, for the caves represent an unsolvable mystery, a mystery which Mrs. Moore's Christianity cannot cope with. Because of her religious uncertainty she cannot accept the caves with equanimity like Aziz and Professor Godbole. She reacts almost violently, and for her the echo of the cave robs everything of truth and value: "Pathos, piety, courage—they exist, but are identical, and so is filth. Everything exists, nothing has value."...

And so Mrs. Moore, unable to come to grips with the riddle posed by the caves, falls into pessimism and selfishness. She becomes peevish and petty, unwilling to comfort Adela or to testify at the trial in behalf of Aziz, though she believes him innocent.

Forster has been criticized for resurrecting Mrs. Moore as a spiritual force later in the novel, through her children, Ralph and Stella. It is certainly difficult to overlook the dwarfing of her spirit after the episode of the caves, but Forster does not leave her in this barren state of mind and prepares, though perhaps not sufficiently, for her spiritual influence over later events. Just before her death as she is leaving India, the mystery of the Marabar is put in its proper perspective, for one must come to terms with the unknowable. During the overnight journey from Chandrapore to the port of exit, Bombay, she sees the mosque at Asirgarh. The train makes a semicircle around the town, and the mosque appears to her once again....

The mosque, which in part represents the positive value of the love of man for man and which presided over the meeting and establishment of understanding between Mrs. Moore and Aziz, suggests the renewal of spiritual life. As she sails from Bombay the voices of India impress upon her that the Marabar Caves are a very small part of the whole of India and that the mystery of the Marabar is a relatively minor problem in the whole of life... Her journey across India, on one level, is a journey from life to death, for she dies soon after leaving Bombay; but on the spiritual level it is a journey from death to life, from the Caves to the Mosque.

The effect of the caves on Adela is different. In Mrs. Moore the full Impact of the experience builds up slowly, and her thoughts about it are more terrifying than the experience itself. Adela, however, is suddenly thrown into a state of mental shock from which she recovers only by reliving the experience at the trial through the Prosecutor's questioning, which has the effect on her of a kind of psychoanalysis. (Fielding refers to the process as an "exorcizing.") Adela, who on the whole is a rather literal-minded, no-nonsense young woman quite unaware of the power of suggestion or of the workings of the sub-conscious mind, enters her second cave having just come to the startling conclusion that she is planning to marry a man she does not love. But also she has been thinking in a rather disinterested way about Aziz—what a handsome man he is and what a beautiful wife and children he no doubt has. Then recalling that Mohammedans often have four wives, she asks a question that shocks Aziz deeply: "Have you one wife or more than one?" Aziz breaks away from her in anger and the two enter separate caves. Precisely what happens to Adela is not fully revealed. Did she have a hallucination? Did the guide attack her? Was she simply thrown into a panic by the echo? Certainly the echo, with its suggestion of mystery, continues to haunt her until the trial scene. But whatever may have happened to her literally, it is clear, I believe, what happened to her psychologically. Consciously she rejects Ronny, and subconsciously she desires Aziz I do not wish to be misunderstood here. Forster states that Adela has nothing of the vagrant in her, and indeed she does not. Surely, however, the subconscious desire for Aziz is there. Why otherwise does she dwell on his physical beauty and why the question about his wives? Conflict is set up between the conscious and subconscious minds, and Adela resolves the

subconscious desire into a supposed sexual attack on the part of Aziz. In rushing from the cave she is repudiating a part of herself, the cave symbolizing at this point the womb or sexual consummation....

In the cave, then, Adela faces a mystery of another kind, the mystery of the primitive workings of the subconscious mind. Like Mrs. Moore she comes to terms with the meaning latent for her in the caves, but unlike Mrs. Moore she is incapable of the breadth of love and sympathy necessary for universal brotherhood and she retires from India defeated, dissatisfied, and "at the end of her spiritual tether." Mrs. Moore had some concept of a realm of the spirit beyond the physical universe, but not Adela....

But even Mrs. Moore did not know all. The ultimate mystery of the Marabar Caves, the mystery behind the existence of conscious spirit in the Universe, is beyond the powers of the human intellect to solve.

Source: Roger L. Clubb, " *A Passage to India*, The Meaning of the Marabar Caves," in *CLA Journal*, March, 1963, pp. 184–93.

Media Adaptations

A Passage to India was adapted as a film by David Lean, starring Judy Davis, Victor Banerjee, Peggy Ashcroft, James Fox, and Alec Guinness, Columbia, 1984. It was nominated for eleven Academy Awards, including Best Picture; Ashcroft was named Best Supporting Actress for her portrayal of Mrs. Moore. Available from Columbia Tristar Home Video.

A Passage to India was adapted for the stage by Santha Rama Ran, produced in London, 1960, produced on Broadway, 1962; adapted for television by John Maynard, BBC-TV, 1968.

Topics for Further Study

Research a specific aspect of life in British India in the early twentieth century. Possible aspects for study include. the British colonial administration; the legal system; the Hindu caste system; the Native States and their relation to British India; Hindu–Moslem relations; the everyday lives of Anglo–Indian (British) families.

Identify some of the various ethnic groups within India In what regions do these people live? What languages do they speak, what religions do they practice, and what are some of their customs?

Research Mohandas K. Gandhi and his philosophy of nonviolence and passive resistance. What were Gandhi's main beliefs and how did he practice them? What effect did his teachings and actions have?

Compare & Contrast

1910s–1920s: The British Empire stretches around the world. British–ruled territory in Asia includes present–day India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burma, Malaysia, and Singapore. Such present–day African countries as Egypt, Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe, and South Africa are also part of the Empire, as are many Caribbean islands.

Today: Virtually all the former British colonies are independent nations. Many retain loose trade and cultural ties with Britain in an association called the Commonwealth of Nations. Hong Kong, one of the last remaining British crown colonies, returned to Chinese rule at midnight on June 30, 1997.

1910s–1920s: Britain is a major world power with a large industrial base and dominates international trade. Much of the raw material for Britain's manufacturers comes from India and other British colonies.

Today: Britain is a small nation with a largely service–based economy. It is a member of the European Union (formerly the European Economic Community), a close economic association of European nations. Britain trades widely with other European nations in the EU. After a period of economic change that saw the decline of traditional industries such as mining, manufacturing, and shipbuilding, Britain is now one of the most prosperous nations in Europe. Foreign–owned businesses operate successfully in Britain.

1910s–1920s: The population of Britain is comprised almost entirely of English, Scottish, and Welsh people. A small number of elite students from India and other parts of the Empire are educated at British universities.

Today: Immigrants from former colonies, and their descendants, make up approximately five percent of the British population. Some large British cities, including London, have substantial Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi communities.

1910s–1920s: Mohandas K. Gandhi, an Indian lawyer educated in Britain, develops his philosophy of passive resistance to British rule. By 1920 he has become a leading figure in the Indian National Congress, a political and cultural organization that works for fair treatment and increased civil rights for Indians. Support for independence grows.

Today: India (predominantly Hindu) and Pakistan (Moslem), formed out of former British India, have been independent since 1947. The two nations have fought several wars against each other, and relations are peaceful but uneasy. There is also ethnic and political violence within both countries. In India, the Congress Party (the successor to the Indian National Congress) was the dominant political party until the 1990s. Among Hindus, Gandhi remains a revered historical figure.

What Do I Read Next?

E. M. Forster's first novel, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, was published in 1905. Set in Italy, it concerns the tragic relations between an English family and a young Italian man.

Forster's third novel, *A Room With a View* (1908), is also set in Italy. It too focuses on a clash of cultures, contrasting the conventional behavior of English characters with the more spontaneous life of the Italian characters.

Considered second only to *A Passage to India* among Forster's novels, *Howards End* (1910) is a subtle study of English class distinctions and the uneasy relationship between aesthetic and materialistic outlooks on life. An Edwardian novel of manners, it is the most "English" of Forster's novels. In it, Forster coined the motto that best expresses his view of how to live a full life: "Only connect." ("Only connect the prose and passion, and both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its height.")

Forster expressed his ideas about the novel as a literary genre in a series of lectures that he gave at Cambridge University in 1927. These lectures were collected and published in the same year under the title *Aspects of the Novel*. Forster mentions particular novels by important writers and discusses the qualities that make a good novel.

Forster gave a factual account of his travels in India in a nonfiction work, *The Hill of Devi*, published in 1953.

Ruth Praver Jhabvala's 1975 novel *Heat and Dust* traces the parallel experiences in India of an Englishwoman and her great-niece some SIXty years apart. Jhabvala also wrote the screenplays for Ishmail Merchant and James Ivory's film adaptations of Forster's *Room With a View*, *Maurice*, and *Where Angels Fear to Tread*.

The English writer Paul Scott wrote a series of four novels known collectively as *The Raj Quartet*. Set In India from 1942 to 1947, the books follow relations between the English and Indians In the years leading up to India's Independence. The four books are *The Jewel in the Crown* (1966), *The Day of the Scorpion* (1968), *The Towers of Silence* (1972), and *A Division of Spoils* (1972).

For Further Study

Malcolm Bradbury, "Two Passages to India. Forster as Victorian and Modern," in *Aspects of E. M. Forster*, edited by Oliver Stallybrass, London, 1969, pp. 124–25.

Bradbury sees Forster as "a central figure of the transition into modernism".

Tony Davies, "Introduction," in *A Passage to India: Theory and Practice Series*, edited by Tony Davies and Nigel Wood, Open University Press, 1994, pp. 1–22.

Davies discusses Critical commentary on *A Passage to India*, from early reviews to contemporary analysis.

Philip Gardner, "E. M. Forster" in *British Writers, Vol. VI. Thomas Hardy to Wilfred Owen*, General Editor Ina Scott–Kilvert, The British Council and Charles Scribner's Sons, 1983, pp 397–413.

Gardner identifies and analyzes several levels on which the action of the novel moves, with special attention to the symbolic element

Philip Gardner, *E. M. Forster: The Critical Heritage*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973.

A good survey of Critical interpretations of and reactions to the works of Forster up to the early 1970s.

Francis King, *E. M. Forster*, Thames & Hudson, 1988. This copiously Illustrated biography in Thames and Hudson's popular "Literary Lives" series provides an engaging introduction to Forster's life and work King discusses Forster's writing of *A Passage to India* in the context of the author's travels and concerns. For general readers.

Stephen K. Land, "A Passage to India," in *Challenge and Conventionality in the Fiction of E. M. Forster*, AMS Press, 1990, pp. 189–217.

Land's chapter on *A Passage to India* touches on many of the major Issues in the novel and makes frequent comparisons to Forster's other works.

F. R. Leavis, "E. M. Forster," in *Scrutiny*, No.7, September, 1938, pp 188–202

An essay by the influential British critic that helped to canonize Forster as a major twentieth-century novelist.

Rose Macaulay, *The Writings of E. M. Forster*, London, 1938

James McConkey, *The Novels of E. M. Forster*, Cornell University Press, 1957.

McConkey's book remains valuable both for its close study of Forster's novels in general and for Its perceptive and useful discussion of *A Passage to India*.

Frederick P. W. McDowell, "E M Forster," in *Dictionary of Literary Biography, Vol 34, British Novelists, 1890-1929: Traditionalists*, edited by Thomas F. Staley, Gale Research Company, 1985, pp 121–51.

A survey of Forster's life and works, with a thorough synopsis of *A Passage to India* and a discussion of the book's symbolism.

Jeffrey Meyers, "The Politics of *A Passage to India*," in *Journal of Modern Literature*, Vol. 1, No.3, March, 1971, pp. 329–38.

Meyers calls attention to the political and historical references of *A Passage to India*, which he believes have been Ignored or underestimated by previous critics.

Leland Monk, "Apropos of Nothing: Chance and Narrative in Forster's 'A Passage to India,'" in *Studies in the Novel*, Vol. 26, No.4, 1994, pp. 392–403.

Monk examines the narrative techniques of each of the novel's three sections and contends that the third is concerned with the importance of chance.

Judith Ruderman, "E M Forster" in *Encyclopedia of World Literature in the 20th Century*, revised edition, Vol 2, General Editor Leonard S Klein, Continuum Publishing Company/Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1982, pp. 121–25.

Ruderman notes that Forster's novels move from speech into silence, and that in *A Passage to India* Forster "recognizes the limits of the humanistic creed" and suggests that "human intercourse may be impossible and language in vain."

Chaman L Sahni, *E M Forster's Passages to India. The Religious Dimension*, Heinemann, 1981

A study of Moslem–Hindu relations in the novel and the book's representation of religion and religious symbolism.

Wilfred Stone, *The Cave and the Mountain: A Study of E. M Forster*, Stanford University Press, 1966.

A book–length analysis of all Forster's novels. Stone regards Forster as not only a liberal humanist but also a visionary prophet akin to D. H. Lawrence. In Stone's interpretation, the cave in *A Passage to India* is a symbol of the "underworld of human experience".

Virginia Woolf, "The Novels of E M Forster," *Atlantic Monthly*, Vol 115, No 5, November, 1927; reprinted in Woolf's *The Death of the Moth and Other Essays*, London, 1942, and in *E. M. Forster: The Critical Heritage*, edited by Philip Gardner, Boston and London, 1973, pp. 321–24.

An early assessment of Forster's output by one of his leading contemporaries. Novelist Woolf notes Forster's similarity to Jane Austen in the way he captures "the shades and shadows of the social comedy," but she finds that in *A Passage to India* the realistic and symbolic aspects of Forster's narrative technique do not mesh successfully.

Sources

Parminder Bakshi, "The Politics of Desire: E. M. Forster's Encounters with India," in *A Passage to India: Theory and Practice Series*, edited by Tony Davies and Nigel Wood, Open University Press, 1994, pp. 23–64.

Benita Parry, "The Politics of Representation in 'A Passage to India, ", in *E M. Forster: Contemporary Critical Essays*, edited by Jeremy Tambling, MacMillan (London), 1994, pp. 133–50.

Review of *A Passage to India*, in *Times Literary Supplement*, June 12, 1924, p. 37.

Jenny Sharpe, "The Unspeakable Limits of Rape: Colonial Violence and Counter–Insurgency," in *Genders*, No. 10, Spring, 1991, pp. 25–46.

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Introduction

Purpose of the Book

The purpose of Novels for Students (NfS) is to provide readers with a guide to understanding, enjoying, and studying novels by giving them easy access to information about the work. Part of Gale's "For Students" Literature line, NfS is specifically designed to meet the curricular needs of high school and undergraduate

college students and their teachers, as well as the interests of general readers and researchers considering specific novels. While each volume contains entries on “classic” novels frequently studied in classrooms, there are also entries containing hard-to-find information on contemporary novels, including works by multicultural, international, and women novelists.

The information covered in each entry includes an introduction to the novel and the novel's author; a plot summary, to help readers unravel and understand the events in a novel; descriptions of important characters, including explanation of a given character's role in the novel as well as discussion about that character's relationship to other characters in the novel; analysis of important themes in the novel; and an explanation of important literary techniques and movements as they are demonstrated in the novel.

In addition to this material, which helps the readers analyze the novel itself, students are also provided with important information on the literary and historical background informing each work. This includes a historical context essay, a box comparing the time or place the novel was written to modern Western culture, a critical overview essay, and excerpts from critical essays on the novel. A unique feature of NfS is a specially commissioned critical essay on each novel, targeted toward the student reader.

To further aid the student in studying and enjoying each novel, information on media adaptations is provided, as well as reading suggestions for works of fiction and nonfiction on similar themes and topics. Classroom aids include ideas for research papers and lists of critical sources that provide additional material on the novel.

Selection Criteria

The titles for each volume of NfS were selected by surveying numerous sources on teaching literature and analyzing course curricula for various school districts. Some of the sources surveyed included: literature anthologies; Reading Lists for

College–Bound Students: The Books Most Recommended by America's Top Colleges; textbooks on teaching the novel; a College Board survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; a National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; the NCTE's Teaching Literature in High School: The Novel; and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) list of best books for young adults of the past twenty–five years. Input was also solicited from our advisory board, as well as educators from various areas. From these discussions, it was determined that each volume should have a mix of “classic” novels (those works commonly taught in literature classes) and contemporary novels for which information is often hard to find. Because of the interest in expanding the canon of literature, an emphasis was also placed on including works by international, multicultural, and women authors. Our advisory board members—educational professionals—helped pare down the list for each volume. If a work was not selected for the present volume, it was often noted as a possibility for a future volume. As always, the editor welcomes suggestions for titles to be included in future volumes.

How Each Entry Is Organized

Each entry, or chapter, in NfS focuses on one novel. Each entry heading lists the full name of the novel, the author's name, and the date of the novel's publication. The following elements are contained in each entry:

- **Introduction:** a brief overview of the novel which provides information about its first appearance, its literary standing, any controversies surrounding the work, and major conflicts or themes within the work.
- **Author Biography:** this section includes basic facts about the author's life, and focuses on events and times in the author's life that inspired the novel in question.
- **Plot Summary:** a factual description of the major events in the novel. Lengthy summaries are broken down with subheads.
- **Characters:** an alphabetical listing of major characters in the novel. Each character name is followed by a brief to an extensive description of the

character's role in the novel, as well as discussion of the character's actions, relationships, and possible motivation. Characters are listed alphabetically by last name. If a character is unnamed—for instance, the narrator in *Invisible Man*—the character is listed as “The Narrator” and alphabetized as “Narrator.” If a character's first name is the only one given, the name will appear alphabetically by that name. • Variant names are also included for each character. Thus, the full name “Jean Louise Finch” would head the listing for the narrator of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, but listed in a separate cross-reference would be the nickname “Scout Finch.”

- **Themes:** a thorough overview of how the major topics, themes, and issues are addressed within the novel. Each theme discussed appears in a separate subhead, and is easily accessed through the boldface entries in the Subject/Theme Index.
- **Style:** this section addresses important style elements of the novel, such as setting, point of view, and narration; important literary devices used, such as imagery, foreshadowing, symbolism; and, if applicable, genres to which the work might have belonged, such as Gothicism or Romanticism. Literary terms are explained within the entry, but can also be found in the Glossary.
- **Historical Context:** This section outlines the social, political, and cultural climate in which the author lived and the novel was created. This section may include descriptions of related historical events, pertinent aspects of daily life in the culture, and the artistic and literary sensibilities of the time in which the work was written. If the novel is a historical work, information regarding the time in which the novel is set is also included. Each section is broken down with helpful subheads.
- **Critical Overview:** this section provides background on the critical reputation of the novel, including bannings or any other public controversies surrounding the work. For older works, this section includes a history of how the novel was first received and how perceptions of it may have changed over the years; for more recent novels, direct quotes from early reviews may also be included.
- **Criticism:** an essay commissioned by NfS which specifically deals with the novel and is written specifically for the student audience, as well as excerpts

from previously published criticism on the work (if available).

- **Sources:** an alphabetical list of critical material quoted in the entry, with full bibliographical information.
- **Further Reading:** an alphabetical list of other critical sources which may prove useful for the student. Includes full bibliographical information and a brief annotation.

In addition, each entry contains the following highlighted sections, set apart from the main text as sidebars:

- **Media Adaptations:** a list of important film and television adaptations of the novel, including source information. The list also includes stage adaptations, audio recordings, musical adaptations, etc.
- **Topics for Further Study:** a list of potential study questions or research topics dealing with the novel. This section includes questions related to other disciplines the student may be studying, such as American history, world history, science, math, government, business, geography, economics, psychology, etc.
- **Compare and Contrast Box:** an “at-a-glance” comparison of the cultural and historical differences between the author's time and culture and late twentieth century/early twenty-first century Western culture. This box includes pertinent parallels between the major scientific, political, and cultural movements of the time or place the novel was written, the time or place the novel was set (if a historical work), and modern Western culture. Works written after 1990 may not have this box.
- **What Do I Read Next?:** a list of works that might complement the featured novel or serve as a contrast to it. This includes works by the same author and others, works of fiction and nonfiction, and works from various genres, cultures, and eras.

Other Features

NfS includes “The Informed Dialogue: Interacting with Literature,” a foreword by Anne Devereaux Jordan, Senior Editor for Teaching and Learning Literature (TALL), and a founder of the Children's Literature Association. This essay provides an enlightening look at how readers interact with literature and how Novels for Students can help teachers show students how to enrich their own reading experiences.

A Cumulative Author/Title Index lists the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series.

A Cumulative Nationality/Ethnicity Index breaks down the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series by nationality and ethnicity.

A Subject/Theme Index, specific to each volume, provides easy reference for users who may be studying a particular subject or theme rather than a single work. Significant subjects from events to broad themes are included, and the entries pointing to the specific theme discussions in each entry are indicated in boldface.

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“Night.” Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4.
Detroit: Gale, 1998. 234–35.

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Malak, Amin. “Margaret Atwood's “The Handmaid's Tale and the
Dystopian Tradition,” *Canadian Literature* No. 112 (Spring, 1987), 9–16;
excerpted and reprinted in *Novels for Students*, Vol. 4, ed. Marie Rose
Napierkowski (Detroit: Gale, 1998), pp. 133–36.

When quoting material reprinted from a book that appears in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Adams, Timothy Dow. “Richard Wright: “Wearing the Mask,” in *Telling
Lies in Modern American Autobiography* (University of North Carolina
Press, 1990), 69–83; excerpted and reprinted in *Novels for Students*, Vol.
1, ed. Diane Telgen (Detroit: Gale, 1997), pp. 59–61.

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The editor of *Novels for Students* welcomes your comments and ideas. Readers who wish to suggest novels to appear in future volumes, or who have other suggestions, are cordially invited to contact the editor. You may contact the editor via email at: ForStudentsEditors@gale.com. Or write to the editor at:

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